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Student Update COVID-19: 25 March 2020

1 message

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To: mynameisjade99@gmail.com

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ORMOND COLLEGE
THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

Student Update COVID-19: 25 March 2020

Staying or going? New restrictions introduced

ACTION REQUIRED

Dear students,

Overnight the Australian Government has [announced further restrictions](#) on gatherings and travel which have wide ranging ramifications for our community. Operating a residential college in this environment is significantly challenging but our commitment to stay open remains.

Today we need to take the most significant step we have so far and strictly limit the movement of people on and off our campus. After today those that remain **will not be able to leave campus except in the most exceptional circumstances**, so I ask you to read this email thoroughly and **complete the actions required by 3pm today (Wednesday 25 March)**.

Government introduces strict new measures

The government's most recent controls place strict restrictions on indoor and outdoor gatherings in addition to a ban on non-essential overseas travel to combat the COVID-19 outbreak. The Prime Minister urged Australians to "stay at home unless it is absolutely necessary you go out". He also warned that people hosting house parties could face criminal charges.

The Victorian Government has today warned further shutdown measures are imminent in light of rising cases in the State. The Premier advised that the restrictions announced by the Prime Minister last night were "stage two" of the nation's coronavirus response, but warned "there will be a stage three" implemented soon in Victoria. This may challenge our ability to continue to operate but we are committed to remaining open during "stage two" with new conditions.

New conditions of residence during COVID-19:

In light of this, we have no choice but to escalate our COVID-19 response. Ormond College will take further steps in order to ensure all social distancing measures are taken seriously and are successfully implemented.

The following new measures will be introduced from midnight tonight:

- **Students are to remain on the Ormond College campus at all times**, with the exception of essential travel that cannot be deferred or postponed. Essential travel is defined as the following:
 - Required medical, dental, or healthcare appointments
 - Essential work*, as approved by the Master
- **Students are no longer permitted to congregate outdoors in groups**. This includes social gatherings on Picken Lawn or any other outdoor space.

The following measures remain in place:

- **Students are not to gather in groups greater than two in student bedrooms** with doors and windows open.
- **If you are ill or unwell, you must inform reception ASAP** who will then coordinate appropriate assistance.
- **Unapproved or impromptu social gatherings are banned**. You are not to gather in groups of five or more in any indoor space in College, with the exception of the Dining Hall, where you are asked to comply with social distancing parameters.
- All students must comply with social distancing parameters of at least **1 person per 4 square metres** in accordance with the stipulated health guidelines.

**If you are able to postpone your external work until further notice, we strongly advise you to do so. If you are not able to postpone your work, you must gain approval from the Master, outlining details of your work situation. To gain the approval from the Master, please email mastersea@ormond.unimelb.edu.au.*

The College may further amend these Conditions of Residence in accordance with the latest Government advice.

Making the choice to stay or go

We are asking all resident students who remain at College to consider whether you feel confident in your ability to adhere to these increasingly stringent Conditions of Residence. If you choose to stay in College, you will be expected to live by the values we set and demonstrate deep respect for the rest of the community by adhering to these new restrictions. If you are found to be in breach of any of the below conditions, you will be asked to leave the College, and your position as a community member will be revoked.

Other than required medical appointments students cannot leave campus. Exercise must take place on Ormond College grounds only, and not in groups. Meals will continue to be provided and if you have a need to purchase something essential, you need to plan ahead as the College will make provision for a weekly community shopping order to be undertaken for those that remain.

A number of students have already made the decision to return home for their own personal reasons. For those students who remain at College, we ask you to consider the following options and notify us of your choice.

Option A: If you wish to remain at College, you are welcome to do so, and you will continue to have access to food, learning, community and support services. You will be required to formally agree to the above conditions. If you are off-campus currently and wish to return, **you must do so before 3pm on Thursday 26 March.**

Option B: If you are not confident in your ability to abide by these restrictions, or do not wish to do so, you should leave the College. While this is the last thing that I would want to ask of our students, it is necessary to preserve the health and safety of the community. If you choose to leave, you are still an Ormond College student, and will continue to have access to all of our online services.

If you choose to leave, please remember to:

- Notify reception
- Pack your things up but still leave anything you'd like to in your room
- Leave your room clean and tidy with nothing left on the floor or any surfaces in case we need to do a deep clean during your absence
- Return your key to reception

All students who wish to remain at College must complete the Conditions of Residence during COVID-19 agreement by 3pm Today (Wednesday 25 March).

If you chose to depart college, we ask that you do so by 3pm Thursday 26 March. If you cannot depart before that time please contact the Master directly via mastersea@ormond.unimelb.edu.au

COMPLETE CONDITIONS OF RESIDENCE FORM

Non-resident program suspended

With the implementation of these new measures, we have had to make the very difficult decision to suspend the non-resident program until further notice. These measures are all about restricting contact between people inside and outside of Ormond and with non-residents spending time outside the college, regrettably we have to make this significant decision. Non-resident students will still have access to online tutorials and consults where available, and wellbeing support. I want to reiterate the wellbeing support available as our psychologist and counsellor are available for appointments via zoom. I am pleased to see many students taking up this offer of support as we deal with a once in century event that is so challenging for us all.

Ormond staff working arrangements

Ormond has asked all employees who are not operationally required to be on campus, to work from home from Thursday 26th March until further notice. This measure will reduce the risk of transmission occurring at College through face-to-face contact of staff and students. Those staff who are required in operational roles on campus have been asked to follow the latest advice and stay home except for travel to and from work.

I apologise again for the disruption and disappointment you are all experiencing from these decisions. Our way of life at College has changed so significantly, and so swiftly. However, anyone listening to the Prime Minister's press conference last night would know we are still at the early stages of the pandemic and there are likely to be even more stringent controls ahead.

Those of us that remain on campus will need to support each other more than ever and I thank you in advance for your support in implementing these new measures.

Lara McKay

Master



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