



澳門特別行政區政府
Governo da Região Administrativa Especial de Macau
高等教育局
Direcção dos Serviços do Ensino Superior

Guidelines on the Start of the Academic Year 2020/2021 for Higher Education Institutions in Macao

As the academic year 2020/2021 will begin shortly, local higher education institutions are proactively making preparation for the start of the new academic year. They are to continue the preventive measures of the novel coronavirus pneumonia, make students feel at ease with their study, and safeguard the right to education for students who are not able to return to campus. To this end, the institutions should implement proper measures to coordinate its teaching and management activities in line with the overall policies for virus prevention in Macao, thereby providing a safe campus and a sound academic environment for students and faculty members.

The Health Bureau has made recommendations for higher education institutions and students in relation to personal health management, recreational and sports activities, sports facility managements, among others. It has published the guidelines on the prevention of novel coronavirus pneumonia – *Advice to Higher Education Institutions and Students; Advice on Management of Sports Facilities; Advice on the Management of Collective Festive Events, and Recreational and Sports Activities; and Advice on Class Resumption for Higher Education Institutions*. These guidelines are updated in a timely manner, and the institutions may get the updates via the link to the special webpage against epidemics by the Novel Coronavirus Response and Coordination Centre:

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

Regarding teaching arrangements and student management, the institutions may refer to the following advice:



Arrangements for the start of semester

- The institutions may arrange classes to start in an approach that suits the actual circumstance best, such as starting all classes together or by batches.
- Regardless of the approach, classes for different years and different subjects should be scheduled at a different time if possible, to avoid drawing in crowds of students at the same time on the same floor of a teaching building.

Teaching arrangements

- Appropriate measures should be devised to make students feel at ease with their study. Where a student has a justifiable reason for not being able to return to campus, or in the events of *force majeure*, their institution should provide suitable learning support (such as online education) to facilitate their study;
- When providing online teaching (including online education only intended to supplement classroom teaching), the institutions should set out requirements for course syllabus, assignment, teacher-student interaction, assessment, and so on. In line with the assessment methods of the discipline, the teaching staff may have the students sit an exam in the classroom, via the Internet, or grade them with their reports and homework assignments;
- Regarding online teaching and preparing teaching materials, the institutions should provide adequate support to teaching staff;
- Where online teaching is carried out through live-streaming videos, and where the communication or the class is disrupted for a certain reason, the institutions should provide records of the said class or arrange a supplementary class;
- Course syllabus, teaching materials, records of teacher-student interaction, assessment results, student attendance and assessment reports of online teaching should be documented for



澳門特別行政區政府
Governo da Região Administrativa Especial de Macau
高等教育局
Direcção dos Serviços do Ensino Superior

future reference in the cases of result inquiry, teaching evaluation, or inspection visits.

Student management

- Considering that the day-to-day learning of some students may be affected by the outbreak, the institutions need to review the requirements for supplementary classes, make-up exams, leave, deferral or withdrawal of studies, and resumption of studies. Also, the assessment methods of various disciplines should be re-examined in accordance with the adjustment made to the teaching arrangements.
- In response to the timely updates of the prevention guidelines, the institutions should establish a consulting channel for students to understand the arrangements of the institutions and the matters to note, as well as disseminate information and respond to student enquiry timely. A counselling mechanism should also be established to assist the students who have been affected by the outbreak.

Internships and exchange activities

- Students shall undertake the internships and/or study exchanges in accordance with the study plans of their programmes. The institutions are required to ensure that the safety and health conditions of the venues where the internships and study exchanges are arranged are satisfactory. Specifically, they should comply with the prevention and health measures as set out by the Health Bureau for the respective sectors;
- In view of the outbreak of the novel coronavirus pneumonia across the world, the institutions should consider suspending students' outgoing internship or exchange arrangements overseas, especially where it concerns places with high incidence of the pandemic;



澳門特別行政區政府
Governo da Região Administrativa Especial de Macau
高等教育局
Direcção dos Serviços do Ensino Superior

- The institutions which continue with their outgoing exchange programmes should reassess their feasibility and have contingency plans in place. In view of the constant changes in the novel coronavirus pneumonia, the institutions should pay close attention to the latest development of the outbreak in different places, and should have appropriate channels in place to keep in contact with the students and their families;
- Where an incoming exchange student has completed their study in Macao and intends to return to their original place of residence, their institution should communicate with the student concerned and enable them to return home in a timely and suitable way. At the same time, the institution should be aware that the student may encounter unforeseeable travel restrictions when returning to their original place of residence.

Other

- The institutions are required to set up a centralised mechanism to disseminate information. Through their designated channels, the institutions may communicate timely with faculty members and students and avoid confusion of information.
- Where a faculty member and/or a student is a suspected or confirmed case of the novel coronavirus pneumonia after the start of the academic year, their institution should notify the Health Bureau and the Higher Education Bureau of the incidence as early as possible. Where it is a confirmed case, any faculty member or student with close contact with the said patient is also required to follow the measures and guidelines of the Health Bureau.

Higher Education Bureau
19 August 2020