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(VUW, 2021)
[3 Dec 2021]

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON
TE HERENGA WAKA

9 December 2021 Student message

Decision on COVID-19 vaccine mandate, 9 December 2021

Kia ora koutou,

Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington will introduce mandatory COVID-19 vaccination for those studying, working, and visiting its campuses and premises in 2022.

The mandate will apply from Monday 31 January, requiring all staff and all students to be fully vaccinated if they enter University campuses or take part in face-to-face University activities. It will also apply to all contractors and visitors who wish to enter University campuses.

We will review our approach to a vaccine mandate every three months or at the end of Trimester 1 in June 2022.

Read the University's full requirements around vaccination against COVID-19 and information about who will be eligible for an exemption.

This decision is underpinned by a detailed risk assessment, as well as consultation with staff, students, unions, and University Council members.

As previously advised, a survey sent to all staff and students showed there was widespread support for a vaccine mandate with the vast majority of staff respondents saying they would be

more comfortable coming to campus if they were vaccinated (93%), their colleagues were vaccinated (90%) and students were vaccinated (90%).

For students, a high number of respondents agreed or strongly agreed they would be more comfortable at the University if they were vaccinated (89%), favoured staff being vaccinated (85%), as well as favoured other students being vaccinated (84%).

Alongside our other public health measures, this decision ensures the University meets its obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act and the Pastoral Care Code of Practice and also ensures the safety and wellbeing of our community. This is particularly important for the University as the survey revealed that 40 percent of our community are either part of, or have a family member who is part of, a vulnerable population.

We still have work to do with government agencies to finalise details of how the vaccine mandate will be applied and implemented and will keep you informed as decisions are made. I can assure you that we will be as respectful and empathetic as possible in implementing government guidelines, while also ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our community.

We know that many of you will have questions about how the mandate will be monitored and enforced on campus and we will provide guidance on this and other matters in the coming weeks.

For those who are yet to be vaccinated and wish to do so, Mauri Ora (Student Health and Counselling) are continuing to run a COVID-19 vaccination clinic on the Kelburn campus. The clinics are running until Friday 17 December on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays between 9.30 am and 3 pm, and no booking is required.

We have not taken this decision lightly, but I am confident it is the best possible course of action to ensure the safety of us all.

Please send through questions, feedback, or concerns to students@vuw.ac.nz

Ngā mihi,

Grant