

COVID-19 Student Vaccination Policy FAQs

I'm not vaccinated against COVID-19. How often do I need to have a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT)?

Unvaccinated staff and students may attend any of our campus locations for up to three days following a negative RAT result. For example a student who has a negative RAT on Monday can come to campus for the next three days – Tuesday Wednesday and Thursday. If they wanted to come to campus on Friday they'd need another RAT with a negative result before attending. A student with learning activities on, say, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday could have a test on Tuesday before attending and be covered through to their Friday class.

Will Flinders University provide the Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) required for an unvaccinated student to attend campus?

No, these won't be provided on campus. Students need to source and undertake a RAT prior to attending campus.

I can't afford the Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) to meet my testing requirements – what can I do?

Flinders wants no student to be disadvantaged under this policy. Course delivery will continue to occur both in-person and online to provide flexibility of access. Students who meet existing hardship criteria can apply for financial support to help cover the cost of tests.

I need to enter health care settings for study – what is the vaccination requirement?

Anyone entering a health care setting for any reason must be fully vaccinated. Beyond work placements, this includes for reasons such as studying, attending a tutorial or accessing resources such as labs or libraries. It's important to note health care settings have a requirement that a booster must be received within four weeks of becoming eligible for an individual to be considered fully vaccinated.

More information about vaccination and boosters is available at [SA Health COVID vaccination FAQs](#).

I'm a student who needs to attend an external site for my placement and I'm COVID-19 vaccinated, but I'm still required to have frequent RATs which I can't afford – what can I do?

Flinders is negotiating with external providers to find a sustainable solution regarding supply of RATs for our students going on placement. Students who meet existing hardship criteria can apply for support to help cover costs.

I'm from overseas – does my COVID-19 vaccination qualify or will I need regular RATs?

Our policy is for COVID-19 vaccines approved or recognised by Australia's Therapeutic Goods Administration. If your vaccine falls outside the TGA list you'll need to produce regular RAT results to attend our campuses.

I'm a commencing student in a course which doesn't have an external COVID-19 vaccination requirement – do I need to be vaccinated to attend campus?

We strongly encourage vaccination as the most effective means of minimising risk to yourself and others from COVID-19. It's safe, effective and is available free of charge to Medicare card holders at our Bedford Park campus, as well as via state government vaccination centres and many GPs and pharmacies. You can attend our campuses without a vaccination provided you return a negative Rapid Antigen Test within three days prior to every visit to campus, wear a mask at all times and observe physical distancing.

I've had one dose of vaccine and am booked to receive my second – can I attend campus? Do I need to have a RAT before doing so?

If you've commenced your COVID-19 vaccination and are scheduled to have your second shot within the recommended timeframe for that vaccine you can attend campus without doing RATs.

I've contracted COVID-19 and recovered, but I've heard that I might return a positive result for days or weeks afterwards – does this prevent me coming to campus?

This is an issue with PCR tests, but not RATs. PCR tests can return a positive result during the period when individuals have recovered and are non-infectious but could be shedding the virus from their system. RATs don't track the virus, but rather, the body's reaction to it (antigens) so RATs performed after recovering from infection won't produce a positive response to shedding. SA Health advice on isolation and recovery can be found [here](#).

Why are the vaccinated not having to do Rapid Antigen Tests too?

Evidence shows that people who have been vaccinated are less likely to transmit, fall seriously ill, or die from COVID-19 than those who are not vaccinated. Because the risks to our community are greatly reduced through vaccination, vaccinated people don't need to undertake regular RATs.

Given students and staff have high COVID-19 vaccination rates, and other places are easing requirements, why are these policies needed?

We are delighted that so many students and staff understand the importance of vaccination and have chosen to help protect themselves and others by being vaccinated against COVID-19. Even with our strong vaccination rate, we believe our policy is important – it reaffirms our commitment to doing all we can to encourage wellbeing and safety and helps provide confidence to our community. We also don't know what new COVID-19 variants might emerge and having these policies in place can provide clarity in managing the pandemic into the future.

Can you please clarify mask wearing, as I have a medical exemption from wearing one?

You are required to wear a mask while on campus. Students who are medically exempt from wearing masks – such as those living with disabilities or respiratory issues – can attend campus without wearing a mask, so mask wearing by others helps protect the vulnerable in our community, as well as providing self-protection. We encourage everyone to be aware that not everyone can wear a mask and they shouldn't be judged for being mask-free.