

### **CIRCULAR 3 OF 2020**

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EXECUTIVE OFFICER

## **1 TELEPHONE ENQUIRIES**

Most TISC staff will continue to work remotely for the time being, so email remains the preferred enquiry method; however, we will roster staff to provide a telephone enquiry service from 9am to 3pm weekdays, on the usual TISC number (9318 8000), from Monday 4 May.

## **2 SPECIAL TERTIARY ADMISSIONS TEST SESSIONS**

Because of current social distancing requirements, TISC is currently not able to conduct in-person Special Tertiary Admissions Test sessions. Applicants for Semester 2 university entry, who wish to sit the test during May, should contact TISC for information about the availability of online testing sessions run by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER). Further information is available on the TISC website.

We are considering ways we can safely reinstate in-person testing as social distancing measures are modified.

## **3 STATEMENT FROM AUSTRALASIAN CONFERENCE OF TERTIARY ADMISSIONS CENTRES**

TISC continues to work with universities, the School Curriculum and Standards Authority and partner admissions centres throughout the country to monitor the current situation and ensure that university admission for the 2021 academic year progresses smoothly for all current Year 12.

A joint statement from the tertiary admissions centres is attached to this Circular for your information.

## **4 DISTRIBUTION OF UNIVERSITY COURSE GUIDES**

The delivery of the WA Universities' Course Guides to schools has been postponed until later in Term 2. A date is currently being negotiated with the universities, printers and mailing house. Please contact the Prospective Students Offices' at the Universities if you have any queries about their Course Guides. Please contact TISC ([sullivanw@tisc.edu.au](mailto:sullivanw@tisc.edu.au)) if you wish to adjust the number of Course Guides your school will receive.

## **5 UNIVERSITY ENTRY PATHWAYS – COVID 19**

You will be aware that some universities are announcing alternative entry pathways for 2021 entry, to provide reassurance to Year 12 students during the current period of uncertainty.

With ongoing cooperation between TISC and SCSA, we are confident that students on the ATAR pathway can be awarded a valid and reliable ATAR at the end of 2020.

We would encourage all students to continue working solidly on their Year 12 studies, even if they secure an early offer, to make sure they are adequately prepared for subsequent tertiary study or other opportunities.

## **6 TISC VIDEOS**

Last year, TISC released a handful of explanatory videos on selected topics. This year, we are producing a larger number of videos, splitting topics, so that students, parents and teachers can access the information of particular relevance to them more easily.

The first few videos will be published on the TISC website in the week commencing 4 May, with more released throughout the year. The initial range of videos will cover the ATAR, how the ATAR is calculated and entry requirements summaries for ATAR students, VET students and IB students.

Further videos will cover marks adjustment processes (scaling, etc), the application process, making preferences work for you, how offers are made and how to respond to an offer.

A particular emphasis of the videos will be to highlight the relevance of various processes in a situation such as that facing all Year 12 students this year.

We will also produce segments specifically addressing some of the most common questions that students ask during presentations, such as: applying for double degrees and double majors; taking a gap year, etc.

We hope you and your students find them useful.

## **7 TISC SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT**

Most of TISC's engagement with schools occurs in Term 3, around the time applications open. At the moment, it is not clear whether or not currently booked school visits for Term 3 will be able to proceed as planned.

TISC will keep in touch with schools who have booked a presentation to clarify arrangements as the situation develops through Term 2.

If we are unable to visit a school in person, it is hoped that the videos being produced will be able to provide most of the information that students need.

TISC sees its engagement with schools as one of its most valuable services, so be assured that we will do our best to continue that engagement as seamlessly as possible throughout the year.

## **8 SUBSCRIBE TO TISCUpdates**

TISC emails subscribers when school circulars or new information about university admission are published on TISC's website. To subscribe, click the link under the Resources menu on the home page of [www.tisc.edu.au](http://www.tisc.edu.au).

**24 APRIL 2020**

**JOINT NATIONAL STATEMENT ON UNIVERSITY ENTRY FOR 2020 YEAR 12 STUDENTS**

The disruption caused to 2020 Year 12 students by COVID-19 has led many to question whether entry to university will be different for them compared to previous years.

The Australasian Conference of Tertiary Admissions Centres (ACTAC), comprising admissions centres across Australia, has released the following information to help dispel any confusion for students and parents:

- **All tertiary admissions centres, universities, and education authorities are working together to ensure a pathway to university for those currently studying Year 12.**
- **The ATAR will be calculated in all states and territories as in previous years.**  
In Queensland, the introduction of the ATAR for the 2020 cohort will continue as planned.
- **The ATAR is widely used across Australia because it is a fair and nationally consistent tool for university entrance**, in terms of both allocating places and predicting readiness for university study. Any changes to a state's examination and assessment processes in response to COVID-19 can be accommodated within the ATAR framework.
- As in previous years, **other pathways that exist alongside the ATAR can be used by universities**. For example:
  - The use of other criteria such as interviews, tests and portfolios for specific courses
  - Special entry schemes for specific groups such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
  - The consideration of Year 11 results as part of some early offer schemes in NSW, ACT, and Tasmania

These pathways are in addition to the ATAR; they do not replace the ATAR.

- While universities have autonomy in their admissions processes and may adopt specific schemes in response to COVID-19, **there is already a clear and nationally consistent process for Year 12 students that uses the ATAR** as the primary basis of admission.
- **Information about the admissions criteria for courses and universities will be available on tertiary admission centre websites by August**. This will include final details of any special COVID-19 admission schemes that are offered.

For more information please contact the tertiary admissions centre in your state or territory.