Please note, situations related to COVID-19 are subject to frequent change. This FAQ is an evergreen document that will be updated on a regular basis as situations and approaches evolve.
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Building Access/ Vaccination/ EHTERAZ

1. Do I have to be vaccinated to attend the building?

Yes, all faculty, staff, students and visitors are required to be fully vaccinated (2 shots + 14 days after the second shot). For those who are not vaccinated, proof of a weekly rapid antigen test valid within the last 7 days is required. All students must provide proof of vaccination ASAP on their student record. Students who do not provide proof will have a hold placed on their account until they provide this documentation. For students who are not vaccinated, a formal exemption form must be completed with appropriate documentation and approved by VCUarts Qatar and VCU Richmond for approval. Even if the exemption is approved, students must still provide the Rapid Antigen Test weekly to enter the building.

2. How can I get the vaccine?

The COVID-19 vaccinations are administered by Primary Health Care Center (PHCC) by invitation. You can visit the following link to register for the Vaccine-> COVID-19 Vaccine Registration. You can contact PHCC customer care at 107 (within Qatar) or at +974 4406 9917 for further inquiries.

3. I received a text message from PHCC medical team to take the COVID-19 vaccination. What do I need to carry with me if I am scheduled by PHCC for the COVID-19 vaccination?

Please carry your original Qatar ID card and your Hamad Health Card. Vaccinations are only provided to individuals who hold residence permits in Qatar.

4. I got my COVID-19 vaccine outside Qatar. How can I validate and update the status of my vaccination on EHTERAZ app?

In order to validate and update the status of your vaccination taken outside Qatar, the following information must be provided to CPESE16000@hamad.qa and HQCProtocol@hamad.qa.

- Name
- QID
- Vaccine Name
- 1st dose (dd/mm/yy) & Lot Number
- 2nd dose (dd/mm/yy) & Lot Number

Along with the above information, copy of a complete/full abroad vaccination certificate (1st and 2nd dose) must be attached to the email and must have the below:

- Authority logo
- Authority stamp
- QR code
In case a vaccination card is missing the logo, stamp and QR code, kindly contact your home country embassy to check regarding authentication process for validation of COVID-19 vaccination taken outside Qatar to update the status on EHTERAZ.

Please be informed the vaccination record card is **not an alternate option**. If you are currently outside Qatar, you can log in to [ehteraz.gov.qa](http://ehteraz.gov.qa) portal and fill in the required information in order to confirm vaccine abroad validation.

5. Which protocols do I need to follow while in the building?

- Everyone in the building will be required to correctly wear a face covering at all times in public spaces (including restrooms) and to follow social distancing requirements. Face coverings should only be removed when seated and socially distanced to eat/drink, or while alone in a private room with the door closed.
- Social distancing guidelines should also be respected in all areas including common spaces such as hallways, elevators, and restrooms.
- Color-coded floor and wall signage, as well as video display terminals, are installed throughout the building to ensure that social distancing traffic flow measures are followed.
- VCUarts Qatar will apply the Ministry of Public Health’s (MoPH’S) 1.5 meter (physical distancing) rule and 1.5 square-meter (sqm) per person room/office/work area occupancy capacity limit guidelines to determine room capacity in each space at VCUarts Qatar.
- Room capacity in each space at VCUarts Qatar will be clearly identified on door signage for ease of recognition and to ensure social distancing guidelines are met.
- Disinfection wipes and sprays will be available throughout the VCUarts Qatar building for use by community members. Hand sanitizers will also be provided. Community members are required to wipe down surfaces within their workspace before and after use, with special care given to common-touch surfaces, such as departmental printers.
- Greater care and attention to detail will be given to common touch areas throughout the building by QF-contracted cleaning staff including handrails, elevators, break rooms, washrooms, and prayer rooms. Deep cleaning operations will be undertaken by the QF-contracted cleaning staff in high-traffic areas and on nights/weekends.

6. Does everyone need a new ID card?

Yes! VCUarts Qatar has a new ID card for all faculty, staff and students. Students with a QF Hawiyati card can use it to gain access to the building temporarily, but should bring it in to replace it with a new VCUarts Qatar ID card. For those who weren’t issued ID cards (mostly first-year and second-year students), please bring your QID for identification to sign up for a new card. New cards are being issued now. Old cards must be relinquished or there will be a fine for the old card.

7. Are children allowed in the University building?

No. As we strive to limit the occupancy of the building to those that work and study or have business at VCUarts Qatar please make other arrangements for your children. Please also keep in mind that all building occupants need to meet building access requirements which include: being fully vaccinated or having a rapid test within the last 7 days, displaying a green Ehteraz app and having a temperature of less than 38° degrees Celsius.
8. Can I access VCUarts building if my EHTERAZ app is showing an error and while it’s being currently resolved through the MoI IT center?

If Employees are having issues with their EHTERAZ app they should make every attempt to have it resolved through MOI. In the meantime, employees will be provided access if they provide a copy of their official vaccination certificate to the security, have a temperature of less than 38° degrees Celsius and a negative rapid test completed within the one-week period.

9. Will I be reimbursed for Antigen results or PCR test results by VCUarts Qatar?

VCUarts Qatar will not cover these costs; the costs need to be covered by the employee. Antigen tests are required for building access, and these are quicker and less expensive than the PCR test.

10. What happens if my EHTERAZ shows an error although I am vaccinated?

According to the MoI technical support hotline 109, please try the below options:

A. Uninstall and reinstall the application. If this doesn’t work, call 109 to open a technical support ticket for you. You will receive the ticket number through SMS. Wait for the call from the technical support team.

B. Make sure your Ehteraz app is updated and your phone’s Operating System is updated

C. If the above doesn’t work, try the following steps
   - Settings > Apps > EHTERAZ > Clear Data and Clear Cache
   - Force stop the app in the App Info then open it again
   - Restart the phone then open Ehteraz again
   - Uninstall then reinstall
   - Click on the little yellow lock icon with “Press to verify”.
   - The app will then ask for verification details
   - Close VPN then restart phone and app

D. If the above doesn’t work, try changing your sim card into a new phone and re-install the EHTERAZ app.

11. I do not plan to get vaccinated. What documents do I need to provide to the security to access the building?

   - Unvaccinated individuals must undergo regular weekly Rapid Antigen testing to gain access to the building and must present a green EHTERAZ as well.

12. Where can I get PCR or Antigen Test?

   - Testing is available at a number of local clinics in Doha, including the QF Clinic where the cost is 50 QAR for a rapid test. The cost of testing and weekly scheduling is the responsibility of the individual.

13. I am not vaccinated. Can I continue to work remotely, if I do not want to get an Antigen test?

   - The expectation is that all employees are prepared to work on campus, which ideally means that employees should make every effort to be fully vaccinated as soon as possible. Any exception to this must be addressed through reasonable accommodations due to medical or religious reasons, working in confidence with the HR Department at VCUarts Qatar.
14. Can I apply for a Flexible Work Arrangement (FWA), since I do not intend to get vaccinated and prefer to work remotely?

- FWAs are available to provide flexibility for employees who find value in working remotely part of the week, and are for all eligible staff members based on certain criteria. They are not intended as a substitute work arrangement for individuals who choose not to get vaccinated.
- FWAs only allow a certain percentage of remote work and all employees are still required to work from their designated workspaces in VCUQ building the rest of the time. FWAs must also be discussed with the supervisor prior to executing the formal agreement via DocuSign. Training modules are available through Talent@VCU for UAP employees and through the Intranet under the HR section for local hires and hourly hires.

15. What if I have been asked to return to campus to work, but I fall under a high-risk category and would like to request certain accommodations?

Employees with elevated health risks should share their concerns with their supervisors and contact the Interim Director of Human Resources to disclose their situations. They will be connected to the ADA Coordinator in Richmond to initiate their request for accommodation and review their eligibility. The ADA Coordinator will schedule an online meeting to further understand the situation and gather more information before making a final decision. Supporting documentation will also be requested during the review process. ADA accommodations are reviewed and approved by the Office of Equity and Access Services in Richmond and are determined on a case-by-case basis. More details can be found at https://equity.vcu.edu/ada/. Once a decision has been made, the ADA Coordinator will inform you, your supervisor, and the Interim Director of Human Resources, with a final agreement being sent via DocuSign for signatures and recordkeeping.

Read about resources for those in high risk groups. More information is also available at the Ministry of Public Health.

VCUarts Qatar will follow guidance from the Office of Equity and Access Services in Richmond, as well as Qatar’s Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) on the specifications for the health and safety of vulnerable populations. VCUarts Qatar will ensure that everyone who has ADA accommodations approved as a result of their special circumstances will have their situation carefully and confidentially managed. VCUarts Qatar will continue to be as flexible as possible while meeting the university’s academic goals and operational requirements.
Travel and Immigration

If you are outside the country or plan to leave the country please note the following – travel situations change quickly so please ensure you are up to date using these resources:

1. What precautions should I take if I am returning to Qatar?

Information on precautions can be found by clicking on this hyperlink: Qatar Travel & Return Policy. We also encourage you to review the information provided on the following websites:

- Green List Countries & FAQs
- Hotel quarantine packages
- Charts for various zones which outlines the required documentation while returning to Qatar - Green Zone, Yellow Zone, Red Zone, East Asian Countries
- Important notes regarding vaccination certificate, quarantine rules, and PCR test requirements
- Demo video on EHTERAZ pre-registration (optional for Residents)

2. What if my QID has expired while I am outside Qatar?

If your QID has expired while you have been outside of Qatar, you must make every effort to return to Qatar as soon as possible. Further delays may lead to the risk of your QID not being reinstated by the immigration authorities or may delay the issuance of your re-entry permit.

If your QID is sponsored by VCUarts Qatar/QF then please contact HR immediately to receive the necessary authorization permits from the relevant authorities before booking your flight(s) to re-enter Qatar. Once you have successfully completed your quarantine period, as per the latest guidelines published by MoPH, you can contact HR to renew your QID.

Reporting an illness, suspected or positive cases of COVID-19

1. What if I am feeling unwell and have a mild temperature? Can I still come to campus if I am not displaying the usual symptoms of COVID-19?

Do not report to campus if you are feeling unwell, even if you are not displaying the usual symptoms of COVID-19. You should immediately notify your supervisor and follow the guidance provided below (returning to campus after an illness). If your scope of work does not allow you to work remotely from your current location or you are unable to work due to your illness, please submit a leave application through the appropriate online HR portals.

If you are feeling unwell and are displaying symptoms of COVID-19, please call the MoPH hotline at 16000 immediately and follow their guidance. If you test positive, do not come to campus. You should notify your supervisor to establish an AWA if you are able to work during the quarantine period. If you cannot work during the quarantine period, please contact the Interim Director of Human Resources for guidance on COVID-19 specific leave eligibility.
If you arrive on campus with a temperature of 38° degrees Celsius or higher, you will not be permitted to enter the building. The security guards at the entrance check body temperatures and will prevent anyone with a temperature of 38° degrees Celsius or higher from entering the building, even if the employee has been cleared by the MoPH and their Ehteraz status is Green.

2. **What if I feel unwell and show symptoms consistent with COVID-19 while on campus?**

Please notify the Interim Director of Human Resources immediately if you feel unwell and develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19 while on campus. You will be sent home immediately to isolate and you will be required to contact the MoPH for further guidance on the next steps. If you do not feel well enough to drive home, an isolation room will be made available (Rm 102a) at VCUarts Qatar until you are able to drive home or can make arrangements to be taken home.

3. **What should I do if I test positive for COVID-19?**

- You will receive a “Next Steps Notification” letter from HR that outlines the reporting obligations and other COVID-19-related protocols to be followed by VCUarts Qatar. Your access to VCUarts Qatar's premises will be temporarily suspended. As part of shared accountability, you will also be provided with the following checklist outlining your obligations.
- Please report all positive or suspected cases of COVID-19 infection immediately to the Interim Director of Human Resources via kumara8@vcu.edu or phone 3013-3505.
- Please notify your supervisor immediately and establish an AWA if you are able to work from home or from an MoPH quarantine facility due to your illness. If you are unable to work from home or from an MoPH quarantine facility, or if you need time to take care of a family member, you must enter a leave request for the time you will be out through the appropriate online HR Portal. Supporting documentation from a health care provider must be provided to the Interim Director of Human Resources at kumara8@vcu.edu.
- Please provide a copy of the test result or certificate from the health care provider to HR for record keeping and leave administration purposes.
- Please notify your residential compound manager regarding your situation to allow them to take the necessary precautions and follow sanitization protocols for the disinfection of the residential compound, or building and facilities.
- If the MoPH asks you to quarantine/isolate at home, please ensure that you and/or your family members follow their instructions and take all the precautions as per their guidance.
- If you or your family members feel anxious about your current situation and would like to talk to someone, please reach out to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) through their toll-free number: 00-800-100-250 or request a call back at +44-203-727-0693.
- Once you or your family members have recovered and completed the quarantine period, please ensure that you submit a clearance certificate to return to work that has been issued by a registered healthcare provider or a copy of the negative test result to the Interim Director of Human Resources at kumara8@vcu.edu. This document must be submitted and 24-hours' notice must be given for the Interim Director of HR to notify the Facilities & Safety department that your building access privileges have been restored.

4. **When can I return to campus after an illness (after falling sick or testing positive for COVID-19)?**

You will only be permitted to access the building by our security personnel if your Ehteraz app displays the Green status and you pass the temperature screening. In all other circumstances, please schedule a Zoom appointment with the Interim Director of Human Resources via kumara8@vcu.edu to discuss how to proceed on a case-by-case basis.
5. What if I was in close contact with a person who tested positive for COVID-19?

Close contact is only determined by guidance from the MoPH via contact tracing. Every confirmed case has contact tracers assigned to determine who is at risk and who should be tested or quarantined. You should wait to be contacted by the MoPH - don’t assume you have contracted the virus.

Close contact can be very subjective – there are numerous reasons why a contact may or may not be considered close enough/long enough to pass on the virus. Simply being in the same hallway or walking by them or being on their front step for a few minutes may not qualify as ‘close’.

It is natural to be nervous when you hear of a case in your environment, but you do not have to take any action as the MoPH will advise you if they believe you have been exposed to risk.

If you develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19 – whether or not you were in contact with a known positive case – you should call 16000 for advice or proceed to a designated testing center to be tested immediately.

6. What should I do if I’m concerned about another employee’s health status?

Speak with your supervisor about your concerns or contact the Interim Director of Human Resources via kumara8@vcu.edu or 3013-3505. Do not confront the employee on your own.

Students’ return to Campus

1. What if students can’t come to campus or don’t want to come to campus?

In-person attendance is required except in classes specifically designated and approved for online delivery.

The school recognizes extenuating COVID-19-related circumstances may prevent a student from temporary in-person attendance. A student may request remote access through the Temporary Remote Access Exception Waiver Form with appropriate documentation—underscored in this waiver form. VCUarts Qatar curricula are designed to be implemented in an in-person setting. Therefore, requests for online access are only considered in true extenuating circumstances. The burden of proof for short term exceptions to the in-person model is on the student.

Students who have an approved disability should consult with Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, Dr. Katherine Wildman. If a student believes their waiver is relevant for a reasonable accommodation, the student can submit an accommodation request through Personal Development and Counseling Services. This process requires written documentation from an attending physician among other requirements and may take several weeks for processing.

2. What should I do if a student advises that they are at high-risk of contracting COVID-19?

VCUarts Qatar will follow guidance from the Office of Student Accessibility and Educational Opportunity in Richmond as well as Qatar’s Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) on the specifications for the health and safety of vulnerable populations. It will ensure that everyone who requests accommodations as a result of their special circumstances will have their situation carefully and confidentially managed. VCUarts Qatar will continue to be as flexible as possible while meeting its academic goals and operational requirements.
3. **How will materials be distributed?**

Each department will handle the distribution of materials individually and communicate its plans with students.

4. **What kinds of return-to-campus plans are the other universities in Education City pursuing?**

All Education City institutions have some form of in-person instruction. Some schools have immediately begun the semester in-person while others have started online for two weeks and will then shift to on-campus instruction.

5. **Can students opt out of face-to-face and if so, will we then be expected to offer a blended learning environment?**

In-person attendance is required, except for those courses which are specifically being offered in the online modality. See the “Temporary Remote Access Exception Waiver” for extenuating circumstances.

6. **Is there a space set up for the asynchronous classes on the schedule?**

No, we don’t have spaces specifically assigned for asynchronous classes. Asynchronous classes are held at their own time and space. Alternatively, students have access to the library study room spaces.

7. **When students move from classroom to classroom, will there be classroom sanitation between classes?**

We will follow the cleaning protocols that are standard practice during the pandemic. This includes a cleaning of all classrooms each evening as well as a deep clean on the weekend. Each classroom will also have a supply of sprays and wipes, and it is recommended that students wipe down their learning surface and chair as they arrive for class, and faculty can do the same. If an illness is reported, the area will be closed and deep cleaning will take place.

8. **Is PASS/FAIL still in effect?**

Yes. The Pass/Fail Policy remains in effect and is applicable to undergraduate students only.

As in prior terms, students may select the pass/fail grade option for eligible courses no later than the last day to withdraw from a course. Note, however, that in Fall 2021 the last day to withdraw (and/or select pass/fail grades) is NOVEMBER 5, 2021 (and NOT the last day of classes as it was during AY 2020-21). Please refer to the Academic Calendar.

Information about the Pass/Fail Policy is available from the [VCUarts Qatar website](http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/university/attendance) or the [VCU website](http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/university/attendance).

VCUArts Qatar students must use the VCUArts Qatar Pass/Fail form to select the Pass/Fail grade option for their courses at VCUArts Qatar. This form is available from the [VCUarts Qatar website](http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/university/attendance) only.

9. **What is the attendance policy for students?**

The VCU policy has not formally changed. While the attendance requirements may vary widely from one department to another and from one course to another, students must abide by these requirements. Students are responsible for knowing each instructor’s policy.

For more details on VCU attendance policy, check: [http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/university/attendance](http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/university/attendance)
10. How will we ensure that students understand how to attend classes safely?

The VCUArts Qatar Fall 2021 Return to Campus Plan, which every student will receive, has guidance for students on how to attend the building and classes safely.

Students will also see other supplementary means of communication, including FAQ's, videos and regular reminders with consistent and frequent health and safety messaging.

11. If employees/faculty/students don’t comply with distancing what is the process/policy for dealing with this?

VCU has developed videos and FAQ for shared responsibility to empower all on how to deal with non-compliance. Everyone is encouraged to advise gently, don’t confront, and educate. Conduct policies are in place through Student Affairs and VCUArts Qatar Human Resources for students and employees/faculty who are consistently not complying.

12. The MOPH guidelines state that all students need to be facing forward and that teachers should not move around the room. Are we space planning with this in mind?

This guidance is specifically for K-12 schools. Faculty should feel free to organize their classroom environment as they deem appropriate, while complying with the social distancing guidelines.

13. How are we limiting mixing between classes and during breaks?

We are limiting spaces for congregation (removing the majilis spaces for example) and keeping cafeteria visits brief, for eating and drinking only. However, this constitutes a change in behavior for students and may be difficult for some, so there will other interventions such as frequent messaging, peer coaching and gentle interventions that will be needed as we transition back to campus.

Faculty Advisory Committee: Q&A

Will VCUArts Qatar resume email notifications regarding contact spread/contract tracing as they seemed to have stopped?

Protocols have not changed for the notification of contact spread and contract tracing. The email notifications have ceased in recent weeks because fortunately we have not had any cases that had a connection to our organization or facility. Should we have another case, either in students or employees/faculty, then a notice will go out.

What are the protocols for when a spread happens on campus/in class?

-Andrea Cecetka (Andi) is notified by Human Resources (HR) or Student Affairs of a confirmed positive case which has been in the building.

--Andi notifies: Dr. Lamyaa A. Banimurad, QF Clinic

Hamad Al-Kuwari, City Operations

The MoPH contact tracing team

-Student Affairs will work with the student to answer the first round of the MoPH contact tracing team questions as they are received by Andi. Andi will then keep an open dialog with the MoPH and act as their liaison.
--If the MoPH determines that the case does not need to be traced further, then Student Affairs works with the student on notifications to faculty, accommodations, etc.

---The confirmed positive student is placed on the temporary access restricted list at the main entrance until they can provide documentation to Student Affairs that they have tested negative and their EHTERAZ has turned back to Green.

---All space(s) identified will be deep cleaned by the QF cleaners.

---A message will be sent out via the VCUQAlert email to inform the community of the case and steps being taken. No names will be released in the message.

OR

--If the MoPH determines that a lecture/studio course roster will need to be tested in relation to the positive student, HR and the faculty member(s) will be notified as well as the members of the Crisis Management Team (CMT).

---The confirmed positive student is placed on the temporary access restricted list at the main entrance until they can provide documentation to Student Affairs they have tested negative and their EHTERAZ has turned back to Green.

-All space(s) identified will be deep cleaned by the QF cleaners.

-A message will be sent out via VCUQAlert to inform the community of the case and steps being taken. No names will be released in the message.

-Andi will fill out and submit the MoPH forms titled ‘Contact Investigation-Schools and Close Contact Test Request for Schools’ with all of the appropriate data with assistance from Student Affairs (students) and the faculty member(s) affected to have the testing done on campus in the COVID-19 isolation room (102a).

--It is important that those identified as close contacts do not go to Primary Health Care Corporation centers (PHCCs) for testing and take part in the testing at the university so the case can be properly traced.

--Andi will work with the MoPH to see if those that have been identified (Faculty and students) need to stay in quarantine until they are tested (this step has changed and depends on vaccination status and the Ct level of the confirmed positive student).

---If so, Student Affairs will help close contact students notify the other instructors of classes with those students in them that they will not be attended in-person until results are received and they are cleared by the MoPH to return to the building.

---Dr Cherif Amor will work with the faculty member(s) identified as close contacts to determine how their other courses are handled until results are received and they are cleared by the MoPH to return to the building.

--The faculty member(s) will work with Andi, Cherif, and Student Affairs to determine the date/time scheduled for the test. Ideally, the testing will take place ASAP.

---The MoPH allows these tests to be scheduled between 8:30am-1:30pm and 4:30-9:30pm seven days a week; no tests will be scheduled until the MoPH receive the completed Contact Investigation-Schools and Close Contact Test Request for Schools forms.

-If there are any cross-registered students that are included in the testing, their COVID compliance officer will be notified (a member of HVAP; Andi has the list).
-A testing time will be communicated to those who have been identified as contacts. It is **mandatory** that those who have been identified show up for the test.

--If they do not show up, their EHTERAZ will automatically turn grey. The MoPH will follow up with Andi on next steps.

-The MoPH will inform Andi of the quarantine time (if any) after testing and next steps (this step has changed and will depend on the vaccination status of those in close contact and the Ct value of the confirmed positive case).

-Results will be received from those tested by the MoPH via SMS and only reported to Andi by the MoPH if there are additional positive cases as they relate to building operations.

-An additional message will be sent to the community stating either a) no additional confirmed positive cases have been identified or b) additional confirmed positive cases have been identified and the MoPH required next steps.

--If spread has occurred then the faculty member will work with Cherif on how they are comfortable to proceed. The CMT will be involved in their roles as necessary.

-Once the case is concluded, those involved will be asked to provide information on how the process can be improved.

-All of the above information is subject to change without notice depending on MoPH requirements.

**What happens when a faculty member becomes ill with COVID-19? What are the expectations regarding teaching if they cannot be on campus?**

The faculty member must contact their Chair or Director, and the Interim Director of Human Resources immediately. If the faculty member is able to continue teaching remotely, they can discuss the work plan with their supervisor and accomplish their teaching obligation. It is the expectation that they will make every effort to return to campus once they have tested negative and their EHTERAZ app turns Green again.

If the faculty is feeling unwell, they are eligible to take a leave of absence through the Emergency Leave policy addressing COVID-19 (PHEL leave) up to 80 hours. Specific documentation will be requested from HR before HR can process their leave of absence due to COVID-19 illness. Eligibility and leave information can be found here -> [https://hrvcu.edu/covid-19/](https://hrvcu.edu/covid-19/). In this case, the Chair or Director must make alternative plans to cover the course syllabus either through adjuncts or shift the teaching load on existing faculty as deemed fit.

The faculty member will only be permitted to access the building by our security personnel if their Ehteraz app displays the Green status and pass the temperature screening.

**For those faculty who wish to record class lectures or presentations and share them with students who are remote, who is the most appropriate person to reach out to for online instructional support in IT?**

The best option is to reach out to VCUQ IT Department’s Chief Technology Officer Mirza Baig and he is at mabaig@vcu.edu
For those students that qualify for exemptions (religious/medical) due to COVID-19, faculty request confirmation that they have the autonomy to choose what is best for both themselves and the student on a case-by-case basis.

The school recognizes extenuating COVID-19-related circumstances may temporarily prevent a student from in-person attendance. A student may request remote access through the Temporary Remote Access Exception Waiver Form with appropriate documentation underscored in the form. Requests undergo a review by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, relevant department Chairs/Directors, and the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs.

If remote access is granted, the school will issue a temporary remote access recommendation notice to the course instructor(s). Specific arrangements for remote access (e.g., synchronous, asynchronous, individual online discussions/critiques, etc) will be offered at the discretion of each instructor. The waiver approval does not exempt students from actively participating in class i.e., students will continue to be called upon to answer questions and/or participate in classroom conversation, breakout rooms, chat, etc. Remote access recommendations and implementations have a set start and end date.

For the few faculty who are teaching asynchronously, they request a bit more written guidance in terms of expectations, support/resources.

We have noted this request and the Dean’s Office will reach out to those departments in the effort to offer additional support.

A few faculty suggested that weekly testing of students who are unvaccinated seems insufficient and asked if daily rapid testing could be considered.

We are aligned with national standards and testing protocols. The MoPH is only requiring weekly tests; this began in Phase 2 (June 18, 2021).