

Osaka University's activity levels will be maintained at their current levels in response to Osaka Prefecture's requests and due to concerns over the spread of the Omicron variant, which has been confirmed to be community-acquired in Osaka Prefecture.

24 December 2021

To all Osaka University Staff and Students,

Regarding Osaka University's Activity Levels (1 January – 31 January)

On 22 December, Osaka Prefecture announced its requests to residents for 1 January – 31 January. Currently, the number of infected people nationwide, in Osaka Prefecture, and on campus remain low. However, the confirmation of a community-acquired infection case of the Omicron variant in Osaka Prefecture as of 23 December, as well as other factors, are contributing to concern that the infection could spread again.

At the beginning of the new year, we have many important events planned such as final examinations, thesis defenses, entrance examinations, and graduation and entrance ceremonies. In order to ensure that such events proceed safely, Osaka University's activity levels will be maintained at their current levels as we believe that it is necessary to continue the infection control measures that we have been taking so far to prevent the further spread of infection.

Since the Omicron variant is expected to be even more infectious than the Delta variant, we would like to ask each member of the community to be increasingly aware of basic infection control measures such as wearing masks, disinfecting hands with alcohol-based hand sanitizer, and proper ventilation.

We will adjust the activity levels as needed according to the infection status to carry out educational and research activities while implementing infection control measures.

Thank you for your attention,

TANAKA Toshihiro
Executive Vice President for Education

NARA Satoshi
Executive Director of Risk Management

Response Policy

Infection prevention countermeasures

(1) Countermeasures to observe while on campus

- Always wear a mask indoors, and while conversing or when it is difficult to have proper social distancing (about 2 meters) outdoors. Wear disposable (non-woven) types that are properly fitted around the nose, mouth, and chin.
Additional measures include keeping 1-meter distance with others even when everyone is wearing masks, minimizing conversation time, and not speaking loudly.

- As long as the weather allows, always ventilate air within classrooms, study rooms, offices, and other enclosed areas. It is especially effective to open doors by hallways and windows that are diagonally across from each other. Windows should be opened 10 cm to 20 cm wide and opening small windows in higher locations may also be helpful. Hallway windows should be opened as well.
If regular air ventilation is difficult, please circulate air properly in other ways, as listed below:
 1. Keep ventilation system running for 24 hours.
 2. If there is no ventilation system, turn on the ventilation fan during lectures and open windows during breaks.
 3. If there is no ventilation fan, open windows twice per hour (at least once every 30 minutes for 2 to 3 minutes). If there are windows on multiple sides of the room, open windows that are diagonally opposite from each other.

- Eat alone, or refrain from speaking while not wearing a mask when eating with others.

- If you have symptoms of a cold or are feeling sick, avoid coming to campus and call your primary care doctor (call your local COVID-19 Counseling Center if it is at night, a holiday, or if you do not have a primary care doctor).
In addition, there have been cases in which symptoms re-emerged and infection was detected, even after symptoms of suspected COVID-19 infection improved (including cases where the PCR test results were negative). As a precaution, please refrain from coming to campus for 24 hours after the improvement of symptoms and monitor your health status.

- Wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer in addition to cleaning high-touch surfaces as needed.

- Avoid the three C's (closed spaces with poor ventilation, crowded places with many people, and close contact), especially in enclosed areas such as classrooms, study rooms, and offices. Make sure the room is well ventilated.

(2) Daily activities

As requested by Osaka Prefecture on 22 December, thoroughly implement infection prevention measures for the following activities with a high risk of infection:

- Activities with a high risk of COVID-19 clusters, including extracurricular activities (especially overnight trips and matches), activities where many people may interact, and eating and drinking with others before or after such activities.
- Drinking and eating with others at home or a friend's house, and during travel.
- Drinking and eating at places where many people gather, such as New Year's parties and get-togethers before and after the coming-of-age ceremony.
- When eating with others, follow these 4 rules below:
 - Limit to 4 people or less per table.*¹
*¹ Family members, infants, children, and those requiring caregivers (the elderly, people with disabilities, etc.) are not included.
 - Finish eating and drinking within 2 hours.
 - Choose establishments who have obtained a gold sticker from Osaka Prefecture for thoroughly implementing infection control measures.
 - When eating with others, only take your mask off when eating and wear a mask*² when speaking.
*² People who have trouble wearing masks due to disease or other reasons are not included.
- Follow the above 4 rules when drinking and eating at places where many people gather, such as New Year's parties and get-togethers before and after the coming-of-age ceremony.
- Asymptomatic patients who are concerned about being infected should get tested for COVID-19.

Contact

- Regarding this notice: Office for Safety and Hygiene, Department of General Affairs
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- Regarding lectures/classes: Education Planning Division, Department of Education and Student Affairs
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- Regarding extracurricular activities: Campus Life and Career Support Division, Department of Education and Student Affairs
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- Regarding the work situation for OU staff: Personnel Division, Department of General Affairs
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