

Technical FAQ for students in China

5 March 2020



This is a Technical FAQ that answers common IT-related questions from students currently in China due to the COVID-19-related travel restrictions imposed by the Australian Government.

There may be updates to this FAQ, in which case this document will be updated and shared with you again.

For a general University information sheet on the status and effects of COVID-19, please [click here](#) (UTAS web page).

If you have a question or feedback that is not included in the FAQ below, please contact the Service Desk [online](#) or call +61 3 6226 2600.

The Service Desk is operating extended hours for students in China on weekdays from 5am to 9pm (Beijing Time) and weekends and statewide Tasmanian public holidays from 7am to 2pm (Beijing Time).

As a UTAS student currently in China due to the COVID-19 travel restrictions, how can I keep studying?

The University has established a third-party Virtual Private Network (VPN) which provides you and all other current students in China with access to the University's My Learning Online (MyLO) system.

Using this VPN means you will be able to access the benefits of MyLO at similar levels of quality as for students currently based in Australia – albeit with some differences, such as the inability to access or open YouTube videos and Google links.

Who can use this VPN?

Only current students in China with UTAS credentials can use this VPN. This VPN is provided for your use to access MyLO while you are in China only.

Is it legal for me to download this VPN while I'm in China?

We have been advised that this VPN arrangement is permitted by the Chinese Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT). Therefore, we do not anticipate issues with your using the VPN.

How do I download the VPN?

If you are currently in China, please refer to this [install guide](#) (KB) or [install guide](#) (PDF) to install the VPN software you need to use to access MyLO while in China.

How does the University know if this VPN will work?

The Service Desk initiated testing of this VPN solution involving students and academics in China for a week-long period prior to launching on Friday 21 February 2020, ahead of the start of Semester 1.

However, there may be issues you experience despite the testing. If you require support, contact the Service Desk [online](#) or call +61 3 6226 2600.

How do I know which MyLO services I can use using this VPN solution?

You will be able to access most MyLO content. The University's IT support page for delivery of MyLO content into China has been updated to reflect the testing of this VPN solution. You can [view it here](#) (UTAS web page).

Where do I get more information about using MyLO?

You can view a student guide on how to use MyLO [here](#). A full list of student support resources is viewable [here](#) (UTAS web pages)

What if I have a problem with the VPN?

If you have questions or need support regarding the download of this VPN software, first please check that:

- All of your software is licensed and up-to-date
- Allow for some time for initial downloading and access of the VPN service.

If you continue to have issues with the VPN, please contact the Service Desk [online](#) or call +61 3 6226 2600. The Service Desk is operating extended hours for students in China. Weekdays: 5am to 9pm (Beijing Time). Weekends and statewide Tasmanian public holidays: 7am to 2pm (Beijing Time).

The Service Desk is also actively monitoring the performance of the VPN service.

What do I do if I get an error message when establishing the VPN connection?

If you see a message that says, "Unable to establish the VPN connection", you need to ensure you have logged into the VPN using your UTAS username — not your email address. A password-reset may also help.

If you receive an 'error code 14', that indicates a username / password issue. Try logging in again and if it still fails, a password reset may help.

If you still have an issue, contact the Service Desk [online](#) or call +61 3 6226 2600. The Service Desk is operating extended hours on weekdays from 5am to 9pm (Beijing Time), and weekends and statewide Tasmanian public holidays from 7am to 2pm (Beijing Time).

How fast will this VPN service be once I start using it?

The VPN should allow you to access and use MyLO at speeds similar to those for students using MyLO in Australia. Having said that, **your Internet ISP provider and connection method remains outside of Service Desk's control.**

For the best experience, we advise you **use individual mobile data**, rather than shared WiFi when using the VPN.

You should also **use Google Chrome** because that is the browser that worked best during testing of this VPN service.

Will my VPN password expire?

No, your password has been set not to expire. This has been done to minimise the need for you to contact the Service Desk during this busy time.

Is there a recommended browser I should be using?

The Service Desk recommends that you use Google Chrome because that is the browser that worked best during testing. For instance, for Blackboard Collaborate (web-conferencing), using Google Chrome has fixed the problems that some students were experiencing with their camera rotations and background noise.

Can I use the VPN on Mac, as well as Windows?

Yes. Just be sure that whichever operating system you use is a current licensed version.

It takes me up to 20 minutes or more to download the VPN software and instructions. Is this normal?

We are hearing reports it can up to 20 to 30 minutes to open the VPN software and instructions so that you can download it. Please be patient as this link opens.

Will this VPN give me access to western apps that are not available in China?

No. There are a number of services blocked within the VPN service, to align with Chinese Government policies. You will not be able to access blocked apps in MyLO with the VPN we have given you.

How can I watch course videos on MyLO if I am in China?

You will be able to use Echo360, as part of the MyLO suite of programs, to watch course-related videos. In the unlikely event that is not possible, lecturers have been advised to provide you with a transcript of the videos or a written summary, instead.

I am having issues watching video content using Echo360 – what should I do?

If you are having difficulties with logging in to Echo360 or viewing recordings, please be sure you are using the latest browser and have cleared both cookies and your cache. Please see the below links for recommended browser settings and make sure your settings match these.

[For Chrome users](#)

[For Safari \(iOS\) users](#)

If you are still experiencing issues, please contact the Service Desk [online](#) or call +61 3 6226 2600.

The audio and video on my Echo360 recordings are out-of-sync (audio and video doesn't match) – what can I do?

Prior to 2 March 2020, some students experienced an issue where Echo360 recordings were out-of-sync, but that issue has now been resolved. However, please note that recordings made prior to 2 March will remain out-of-sync and, unfortunately, that is unable to be fixed.

Will I be able to web-conference using this VPN service?

Yes, you can use Blackboard Collaborate as part of the MyLO suite of programs, just the same as in Australia.

Can I use Skype or Zoom using this VPN service?

Blackboard Collaborate and WeChat are available for collaboration and communication.

Can I access Google links or YouTube videos as part of coursework using this VPN service?

No. Google links and YouTube videos will not be accessible using this VPN service, due to current restrictions in China. If your lecturer has included any Google links or YouTube video links in MyLO which you are accessing from inside China, you will not be able to access them.

Please ask your lecturer to provide other links rather than Google links.

For course-related videos, your lecturer should use Echo360 instead of YouTube. In the unlikely event that is not possible, lecturers are advised to provide you with a transcript of any videos or a written summary, instead.

What are the Service Desk's hours for students in China?

The Service Desk has instituted extended hours and priority access for students currently outside Australia due to the COVID-19-related travel restrictions imposed by the Australian Government.

The extended hours are weekdays from 5am to 9pm (Beijing Time), and weekends and statewide Tasmanian public holidays from 7am to 2pm (Beijing Time).

Contact the Service Desk [online](#) or call +61 3 6226 2600.

Is the University's IT Self-service portal available in China?

Yes. [Click here](#) to access the IT Self-service portal.

Do I need to download and use this VPN if I'm not in China?

No. If you're not in China, you should be able to access MyLO in the usual way. If you have any issues doing this, please contact the Service Desk [online](#) or call +61 3 6226 2600.

Other questions:

Who should I talk to if I have a non-IT related question regarding my travel restrictions or COVID-19?

Please visit [this web page](#) (UTAS web page) which provides the links we think you should need.

If you have any issues accessing this page, or other non-IT questions, please email UConnect at U.Connect@utas.edu.au.