



The Return to Campus: How SafeZone Helps

Preparing for the Return to Campus

Daily COVID-19 infections are continuing to increase significantly in the new year, which is exacerbating anxiety about public safety. Concerns continue to mount about lockdowns and when they will end, amid the sluggish vaccination rollout. Once vaccinations are distributed and lockdowns are lifted, returning to campus will be very different. The way higher education institutions execute the return to campus will play a critical role in how your organisation is viewed by students and staff alike, with significant exposure to your university's reputation and brand. In this white paper, we'll cover what's needed to prepare your university for the return to campus during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Across the globe, staff and students alike are highlighting safety as the number one priority/consideration for their return to campus. As a result, university executives are actively searching for solutions to implement to reassure students and staff their university is taking all the necessary steps to meet their duty of care. For example, the American College Health Association released, "[Considerations for Reopening Institutions of Higher Education in the COVID-19 Era](#)", which features factors institutions should address in order to protect the health and safety of the campus community, including **"Implementation of close monitoring and tracking of in-person attendance and seating arrangements to facilitate contact tracing in the event of an exposure."** Likewise, in the UK, the [CEO of the Russell Group, Dr. Tim Bradshaw](#), recently accentuated this point when he said: "The impact of Covid-19 is wide-ranging but will inevitably see fewer students studying abroad, and the global competition for those students will be fierce. **Safety will be a factor on the minds of many**, so it is critical that the Government works overseas, and in collaboration with the sector, to highlight the UK as a safe destination for international students."



As universities dive deeper into their preparations for students and staff returning to campus, continuing our focus on the [Safe Return to Campus](#), we examine the specifics of [how SafeZone can help higher education institutions provide a safer learning environment amid the complexities and challenges of operating with COVID-19](#). In this white paper, you'll learn how SafeZone can help you with all of the following:

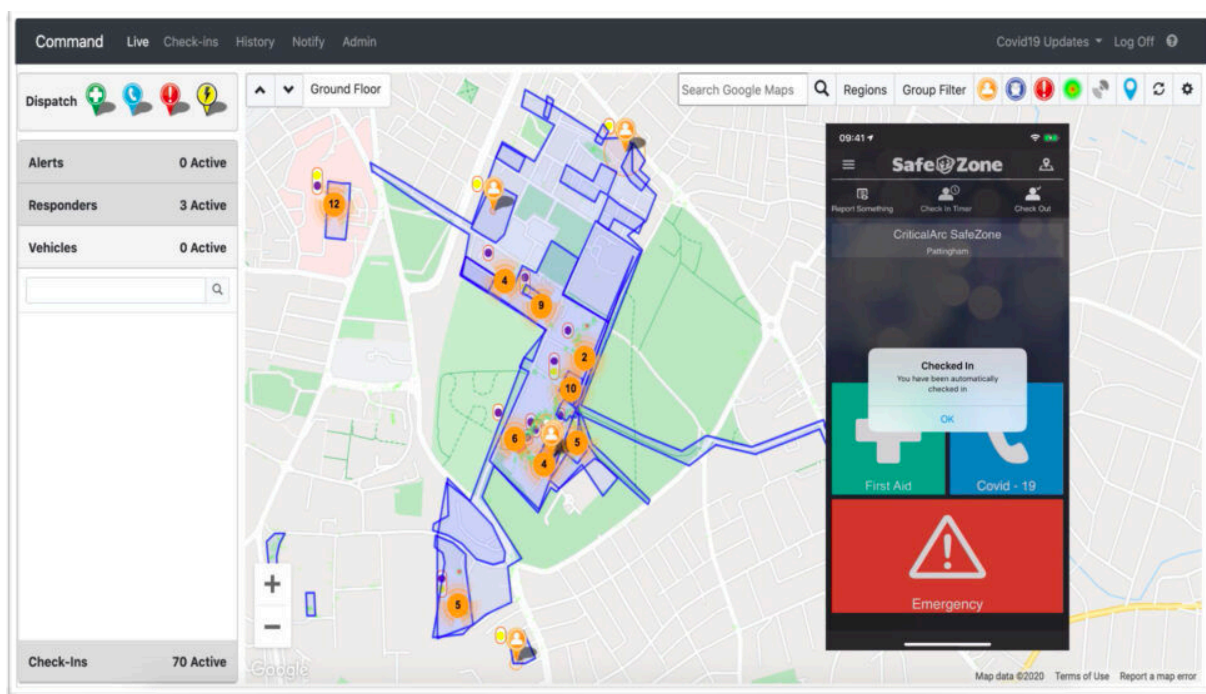
- ✓ Contact Tracing, providing an ability to playback where an individual went on campus and who they came near
- ✓ Heat maps to show where people congregated on campus (for cleaning/sanitization)
- ✓ Monitoring compliance with social distancing
- ✓ Communicating information on COVID-19 guidelines and directives
- ✓ Sending targeted communications by role and geographic area
- ✓ Supporting high risk individuals as well the vulnerable
- ✓ Protecting lone workers
- ✓ Positively shaping perceptions of safety
- ✓ Enhancing security operations & team management
- ✓ Delivering long-term strategic value well beyond the pandemic
- ✓ This information is also summarized in our [latest video on COVID-19 solutions](#).

Surveying and Pre-Registration

Most universities have created a process whereby those coming to campus are required to complete an online survey to confirm they have neither tested positive for COVID-19 nor have any of its symptoms. Generally, they funnel entry to the university through particular access points so they can prompt those entering campus to complete the survey.

But how can universities keep track of who is and isn't on campus and who has/has not completed their survey? To address this, SafeZone enables customers to easily create zones around the perimeter of their campus and can be set up to a) message members of the university community to manually check in with the SafeZone App to share their presence or b) automatically check-in as they enter the campus, which is fast and convenient.

As part of the check-in process, if a user has completed the survey, they can be added to an approved user group. SafeZone then provides the Security and Health & Safety team with the ability via SafeZone Command to see who has completed the survey and who has not. This helps with verification/compliance so the security team can understand what level of compliance they're achieving and then direct message those that need to complete the survey in order to remain on campus. To ensure timely and accurate information, SafeZone also automates the check-out function so the user doesn't have to remember to check out when leaving campus.



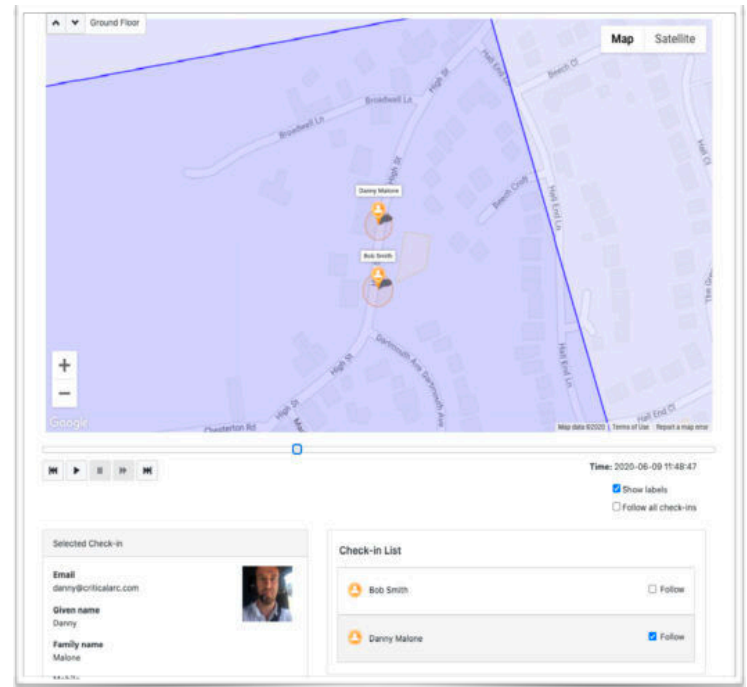
SafeZone can be programmed to automatically check-in or check-out staff and students when they enter/exit campus.

SafeZone can be programmed to automatically check-in or check-out staff and students when they enter/exit campus. During the early stages of 'Return to Campus' many universities are more prescriptive of the conditions that need to be met in order for people to return to campus. For example, a wide range of Universities including Leicester University, Northeastern University, and University of South Australia are among those that require all staff and students returning to campus to use the SafeZone App to check-in when they enter campus as a mandatory requirement.

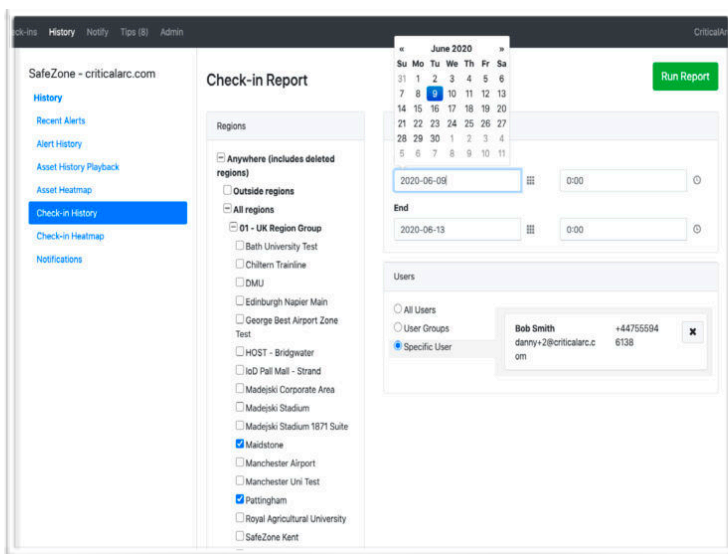
Contact Tracing Solution

How will you support Contact Tracing if/when someone has COVID-19 symptoms, so you can see where the infected person went and who they may have come into contact with as they travelled across campus? Universities are actively searching for services that can help them address this situation and with several companies positioning their offering as a *contact tracing solution*, it is key for your organisation to understand what the capabilities of each vendor and how they can help position your organisation to deal with this challenge.

Regardless of geographic location, with over 88 million cases worldwide in January, and over 500,000 new cases each day it's clear COVID-19 isn't going away anytime soon. It's likely that at some point during the first semester back, each university will have several students and/or staff that test positive or exhibit symptoms of COVID-19. When they do, you need the ability to identify those who may have come into contact with an infected person ("contacts") and the ability to collect further information about these contacts. By tracing the contacts of the infected individuals, testing them for infection, treating the infected and deep cleaning the exposed areas, you can help reduce infections in the population.



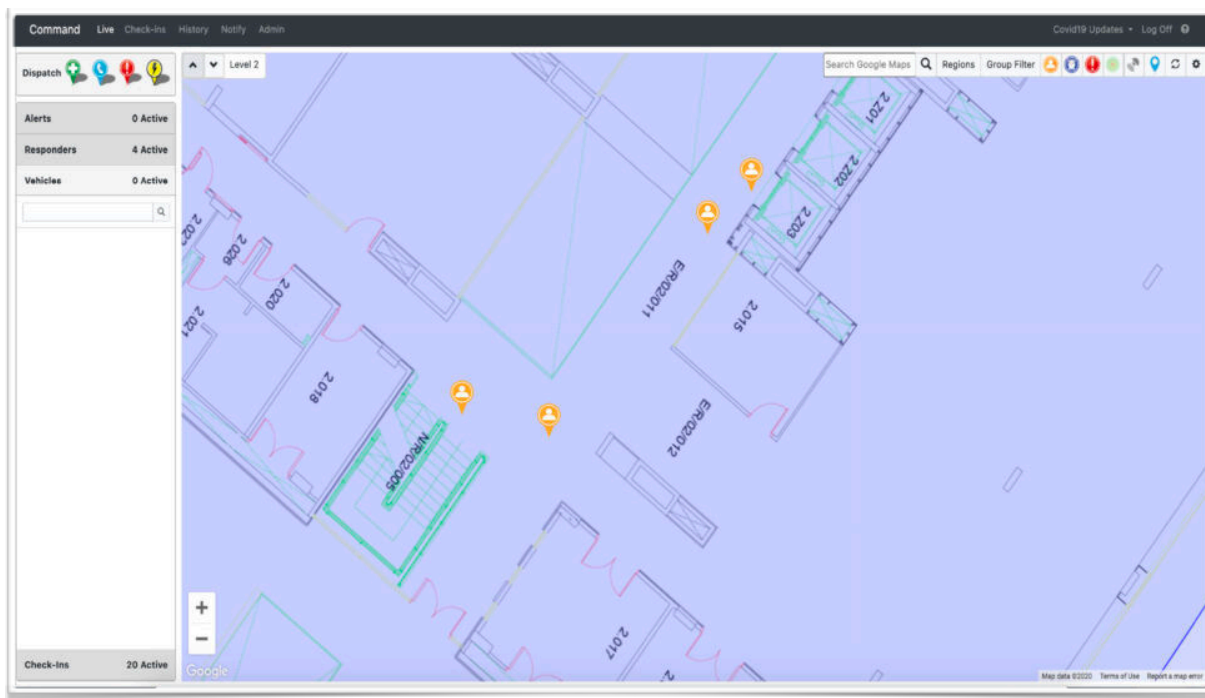
SafeZone Command offers the ability to look up a person who has COVID-19 and trace their actions across campus.



Contact tracing by searching for a user's movements by name location and time period

It all sounds so simple, but given that student populations are constantly changing and often consist of tens of thousands of individuals, how can you obtain this information in real-time? There are two scenarios in which SafeZone can help. In the first scenario, the customer does not have Indoor Positioning beacons installed on campus but has purchased the SafeZone solution. In this case, those on campus need to have downloaded and activated the SafeZone App. If they do feel ill with coronavirus symptoms, they can use the app to raise an alert and call for assistance. This alerts the security and safety team who has requested assistance. They can then swiftly deploy medical and security personnel to respond to the incident. In addition, they can now begin running a playback recording to track and trace where and when the individual entered and exited various buildings so they can pull up corresponding CCTV records to see who they came into proximity with, and where in the building they went. This provides the university with a starting point so the security team can take decisive actions and doesn't have to await 'contact tracers' to manually interview people, including those that are ill and may not be able to recall the details of where they went on campus and who they interacted with.

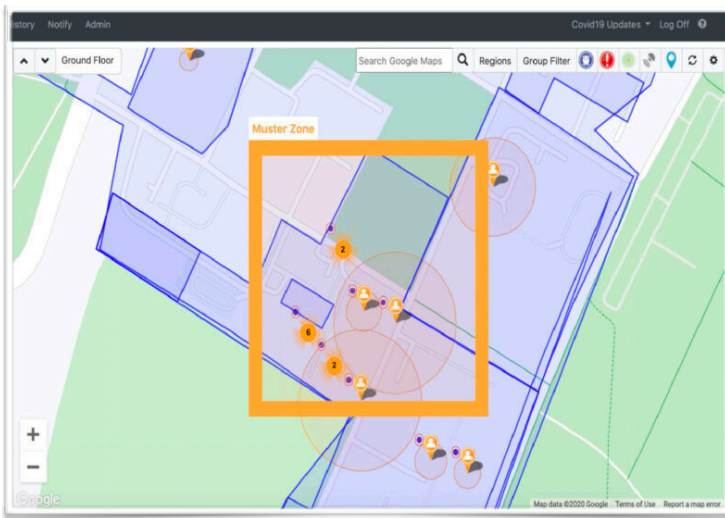
In the second scenario, the university has a series of bluetooth beacons deployed around campus in addition to SafeZone which when combined, comprises the foundation for SafeZone's **Indoor Positioning Solution**. In this case, if someone does test positive, and they were checked in with their bluetooth on, the university has a more comprehensive understanding of what floors and rooms the person went into in each building with time-stamped reporting. And with the floor-by-floor information, the university can direct the facilities teams of which rooms, floors and buildings require a deep cleaning. This added level of granularity is also especially useful with responding to a medical or critical incident, as first responders know exactly where the person is in the building down to a sub-3-meter level. The ability to understand not just the building, but the floor, wing, and room where a person is located means a much faster response and of course, seconds save lives in emergency management.



Indoor positioning provides a more granular view i.e. a floor by floor view.

This same indoor positioning technology can be leveraged for additional enhancement to the student experience such as wayfinding. SafeZone also provides the ability to generate heat-maps for a better understanding of where the individual spent the most time, which again is helpful for understanding which facilities require a deep cleaning to help mitigate the spread of the virus.

Occupancy Monitoring



SafeZone can be used to send a targeted communication in a crowded area asking them to disperse and adhered to social distancing guidelines.

One of the more challenging tasks for safety and security teams will be monitoring compliance with social distancing guidelines. Sure, universities are developing creative solutions to address classroom density, but it's the common areas in food courts, dining halls, student union buildings and libraries that will prove more difficult. Using the SafeZone indoor positioning solution, universities can develop an understanding of the density of people in particular areas or buildings, per floor. Should they detect a potential breach of policy, they can use SafeZone to send a targeted communication to those in the area asking them to disperse, as well as deploy an officer to encourage cooperation. SafeZone also works well in outdoor spaces such as parking lots where students may gather before a sporting event, or an outdoor area where guest speakers or protests sometimes occur.



SafeZone Command can generate heat maps to provide to facilities teams to better understand where deep cleaning is required.

Equally important is the need to understand what areas of each building were used, and to what extent, so the building can be properly cleaned and sanitized. For example, at Northeastern University in Boston, they use SafeZone to generate a daily heat map of staff and student traffic across campus, which they share with their Facilities team so they have a clearer understanding of the level of sanitation and cleaning required.

Protecting the Most Vulnerable on Your Campus

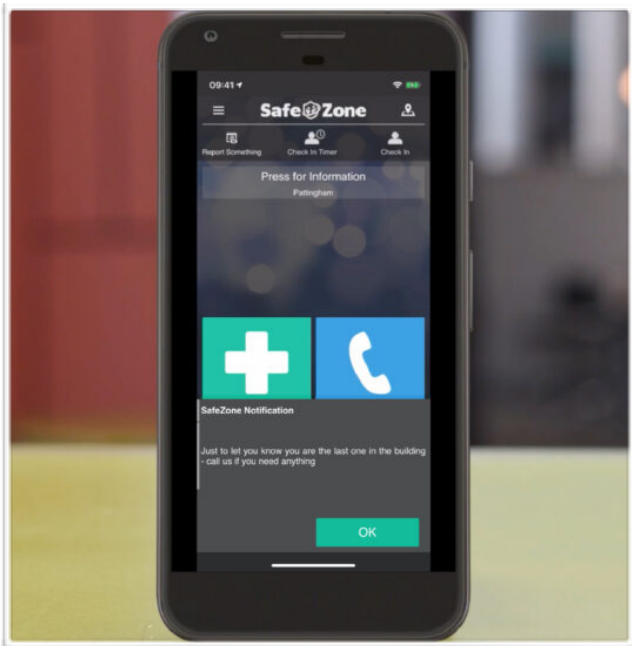
When you have a limited campus population, and are operating with shortfalls in staff, it's especially challenging to support the more vulnerable members of your community. Those with disabilities, complex medical needs or who have mental health issues such as depression or paranoia, require special care and treatment e.g. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs). Under normal circumstances, the university has a wide array of resources available to help these individuals but during the COVID-19 pandemic, most of these staff are working from home so the burden falls on the security and safety teams to fill in the gaps.



Given this, It's important for safety and security teams to be able to see where these individuals are on campus so they can cater to their needs. SafeZone makes it easy for your team to do just that – as long as individuals are checked in with the app, they can be added to a PEEP's Group and your team can communicate directly with them. Plus, each individual has the ability to build a profile which can help first responders better understand any medical complications or conditions the person has. Also, in the event of a critical incident such as a fire, you can send instructions for how to evacuate to those in wheelchairs, and verify they received the instructions and no longer require assistance. Overall, this helps universities fulfil their obligations to fulfil their duty of care to this important facet of the campus community.

Protecting Lone Workers

In times of a sparsely populated campus, lone workers are more prevalent. Because there are fewer students, staff and contractors around campus, those that do return to campus, frequently do so as a lone worker. Many are not familiar and/or comfortable with this situation and are looking for reassurance it's a safe working environment. And even for those that feel confident, it's important for your team to have an understanding of staff and students working in laboratories alone e.g. conducting dangerous experiments.



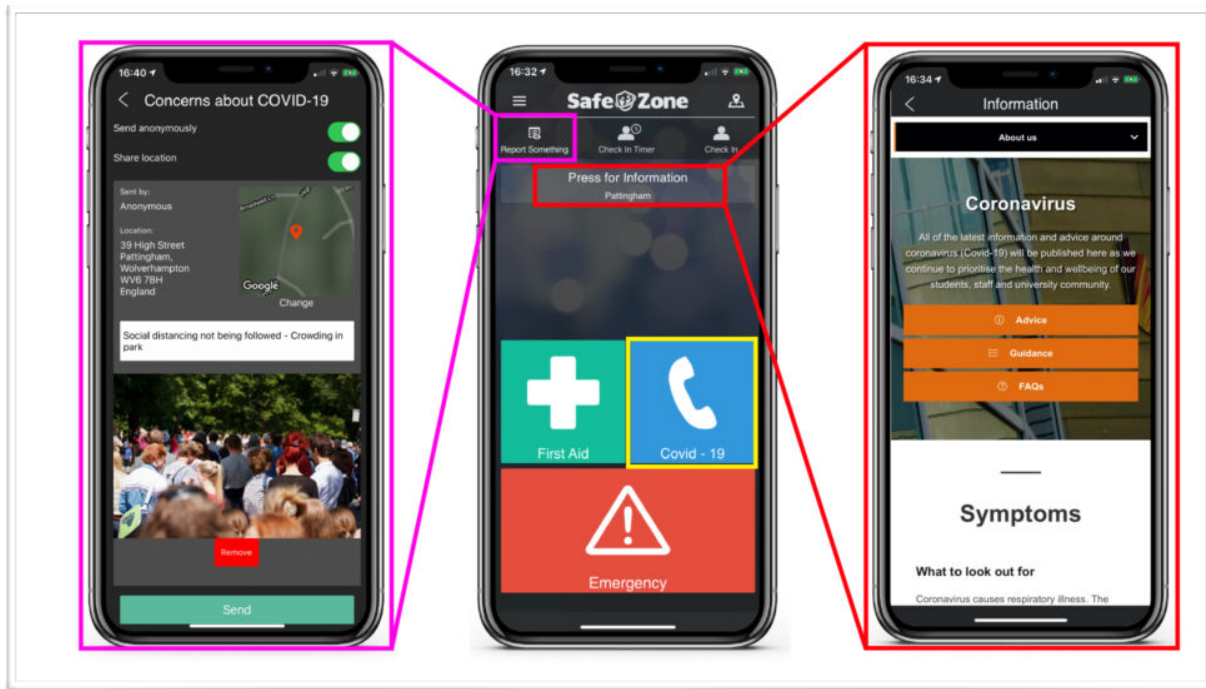
Security teams can direct message lone workers and make sure they're OK.

SafeZone provides security and health & safety teams with visibility to lone workers.

As part of their COVID-19 strategy, campuses such as Northeastern and Imperial College London require all lone workers to use the SafeZone App to check-in. Universities can then modify patrol patterns so security personnel proactively check in with the lone workers, both in-person and with the app to make sure everything is OK. This attentive care greatly enhances lone workers' perceptions about their safety when back on campus so it's a win/win for everyone.

Communicating Information on COVID-19

Universities have developed COVID-19 web pages where they post updates, guidelines and updates on the university's plans to address COVID-19 as well as requirements for wearing PPE, social distancing norms, surveys to complete, approvals required to be on campus etc. But many students struggle to know where to go for additional information and this can be particularly challenging with international students who often have both language and cultural barriers. SafeZone makes it easy for students by providing one-button connection to the university's resources. There are three different ways in which CriticalArc helps customers customize the SafeZone App to better support their day-to-day COVID-19 needs.



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1. Many universities, such as Teesside University, have **redbadged the blue button** on the SafeZone App to read, "COVID-19". If a student or staff member is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, they can hit this button for immediate medical attention
2. There is also an **information banner** above the green and blue buttons and several universities have labelled this "COVID-19 information" this directs the university community to the website for COVID-19 updates (non-emergency issues). This banner has the intelligence to support geo-context actions i.e. a person arriving on campus could see a reminder to complete the survey to verify they are not exhibiting signs of the coronavirus. Or if they leave campus, it could direct them to a different web page designed for off-campus support.
3. Third, all members of the campus community have access to the **"Report Something"** feature, which enables security teams to turn your community into your ears and eyes – especially when you have less people on campus – to raise any potential issues which require attention. For example, a student could report they're concerned about a friend's wellbeing or notice that a hallway or classroom needs to be cleaned, or even anonymously report a lack of social distancing in a dining facility.

They key here is by using these resources, each university can empower their campus community to stay informed and take action to help create a culture of safety and community on campus.

Targeted Communications

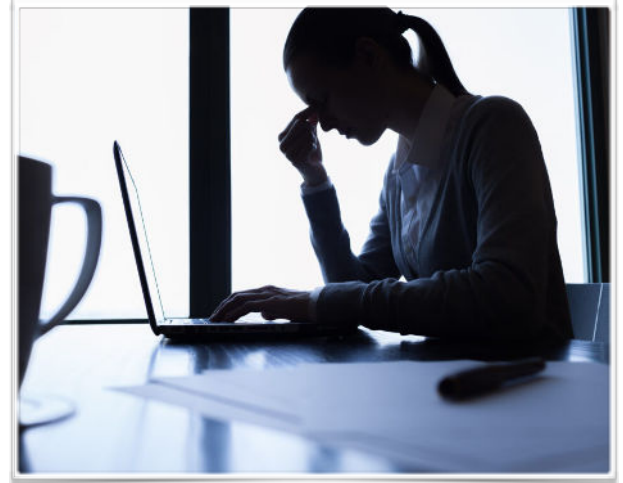
In addition to those capabilities, campus security and safety teams can use SafeZone to generate geo-targeted communications to members of the campus community. For example, rather than sending out a broadcast message to the entire campus about overcrowding in a food court, that message can be sent to just those individuals in geographic proximity to the situation.

SafeZone enables command and dispatch teams to send communications targeted by geographic area, as well as role. Notifications can be targeted based on roles and locations. For example, if a fire broke out in the kitchen of a dorm/residence, the dispatch team could notify building wardens, fire marshals and campus security in a particular sector of the university with details, while also generating an evacuation notice to those students in that building. Not only is this type of targeted communications more efficient, it also alleviates stressing staff and students not impacted by a particular incident.

Enhancing Security Operations & Team Management

Because SafeZone helps with the efficient and effective deployment of resources, it assists your team with maintaining a strong presence that will deter would-be opportunists. Even with a limited staff, your team will be able to help ensure physical security is maintained across campus. And although limited staff will be on campus, your team will be equipped to escalate issues for the team best positioned to respond through the ability to assign and escalate issues to the appropriate team for assistance e.g. Mental Health, Student Wellbeing, etc.

Universities have a duty of care to also monitor the wellbeing of staff working from home. SafeZone makes it easy to do so. With a lightly staffed security team with more lone workers and incremental responsibilities, you need a Force Multiplier to help your team address incremental responsibilities. For example, many administrative workers have been told to continue working at home and some universities are converting traditional office space into supplemental classrooms. This non-traditional use of these building facilities has an impact on security operations such as patrol patterns. In addition, with a lot more administrative staff working from home, the university has a duty of care to be able to monitor and ensure these individuals are OK and monitor their wellbeing. SafeZone's ability to support check-in of remote workers is perfect for this application.



Positively Shaping Perceptions of Safety

When staff and students are uneasy about returning to campus due to the potential health risks, it's essential to provide reassurances to help make the university community feel safe and secure. And SafeZone makes it easy to reassure all those who feel insecure about the return to campus by enabling them to check-in with the app so your team know they're on campus and proactively check in with them. Furthermore, this is a great asset to have in place to help showcase to prospective students and their parents of how safety and security is being managed to safeguard their son or daughter.



Based on this, it's critical for your safety and security team to take action in tangible and overtly visible ways to reassure everyone your team is ready, willing and available 24x7 to quickly respond and assist as needed. Having a broad physical presence, aided by SafeZone's command and control technology, will help allay concerns for staff, returning students and prospective students and their families. And at a time when universities are facing shrinking enrollment, it's strategically important to convey to all prospective and incoming students that their safety is of the utmost importance.

Recapping Your New Capabilities:

With SafeZone, you'll be able to deliver all the following capabilities to help your university address COVID-19:

- ✓ Demonstrate to students, their parents and staff how you'll help keep them safe, even with COVID-19 as an ongoing threat
- ✓ Support Contact Tracing if/when someone has COVID symptoms, so you can see where the infected person went and who they may have exposed as they traveled across campus
- ✓ Know how to respond to, isolate and protect those in quarantine or self-isolation in dorms or accommodation due to COVID symptoms or exposure to someone suspected of having COVID-19
- ✓ Manage high risk individuals, those with disabilities, PEEP's, previous victims of crime
- ✓ Notify facilities staff of the need to deep-clean the rooms potentially infected with COVID-19
- ✓ Monitor and protect lone workers working in high risk environments
- ✓ Support visitors to campus and help them check-in and comply with COVID-19 guidelines
- ✓ Effectively and efficiently communicate with the university community about specific issues and target specific segments of the population based on their role, location, or department
- ✓ Provide maximum visibility of your security / police officers and deter would be opportunists from targeting individuals operating alone or in smaller groups
- ✓ Manage special events i.e. graduation ceremonies and sporting events

Delivering Short-Term and Long-Term Strategic Value

By deploying SafeZone across your campus community – **a solution that you can test and turn up in a matter of *days* not *months*** – you can make a material impact by providing staff and students with a service that makes them feel more confident the university has their safety foremost in mind as they begin to gradually return to campus.

But in today's shrinking budget environment, it's not good enough to purchase a solution with a limited shelf-life. University leaders are looking for strategic long-term value and with SafeZone you're investing in a proven solution that's entrusted by leading higher education institutions all over the world. Through real-time visualization and enhanced communications, the SafeZone solution will streamline operations and transform your ability to manage personal safety, security and emergency situations so you can better protect your most important asset, your people.

You'll foster a culture of safety and security throughout the university that will continue as a strategic long-term priority that serves the entire campus community for years to come.

Author: Glenn Farrant, CEO of CriticalArc



[Learn more about SafeZone](#)



About CriticalArc

CriticalArc is a global technology innovator and the creator of the distributed command and control solution, SafeZone®, which has been adopted by dozens of universities and hospitals across the world. SafeZone fundamentally changes the way businesses manage safety and security operations across dispersed campuses and multi-site organisations, allowing proactive response that positively impacts the outcome of any incident.

Headquartered in Sydney, Australia, CriticalArc has offices and operations in the UK and North America providing an international delivery capability and reach. For more information on CriticalArc and SafeZone, please go to www.criticalarc.com, email contact@criticalarc.com or telephone **+44 (0) 800 368 9876**

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