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**Directive on Hygiene and Infection
Protection Measures for Courses and
Examinations to Maintain the University's
Operations under Conditions of Coronavirus**

as of 16. September 2021

Universität zu Köln



Duty of inspection and right of objection:

In accordance with Section 12 of the Higher Education Act of North Rhine- Westphalia (Hochschulgesetz – HG NRW), procedural or validity violations of higher education law, other applying regulations or other forms of autonomous university law can no longer be asserted after one year has expired since the publication of these Guidelines. Exceptions can be made if

1. the Guidelines were not published in the prescribed manner,
2. the Rectorate has in advance objected to the decision of the committee responsible for ratification,
3. flaws in form and procedure have been asserted against the University in advance describing the violated legal provision and fact causing the flaw, or
4. upon publication, the legal consequences of the limitation period for inspection and objection were not clarified.

P U B L I S H I N G I N F O R M A T I O N

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DISCLAIMER: THIS TRANSLATION OF 'Richtlinie über die Hygiene- und Schutzmaßnahmen bei Lehrveranstaltungen und Prüfungen im Corona-Betrieb der Universität' IS NOT LEGALLY BINDING.

Directive on the Hygiene and Infection Protection Measures for Courses and Examinations to Maintain the University's Operations under Conditions of Coronavirus

(Hygiene and Infection Protection Directive – Courses and Examinations)

as of 16.9.2021

Pursuant to Section 16 subsection 1 sentence 1 of the Higher Education Act of North Rhine-Westphalia (Hochschulgesetz – HG NRW) in the version of the Amended Higher Education Act (Hochschulzukunftsgesetz – HZG NRW) of 16 September 2014 (Official Gazette of North Rhine-Westphalia p. 547), last amended by Article 10 of the Act on the Consistent and Solidarity-Based Management of the COVID-19 Pandemic in North Rhine-Westphalia and on the Adaptation of State Legislation with Regard to the Effects of a Pandemic of 14 April 2020 (Official Gazette of North Rhine-Westphalia p. 218b), the Rectorate of the University of Cologne has issued the following Directive by resolution of 31.08.2021:

Section 1

Object and Scope of Application

(1) This Directive presents the regulatory situation (predominantly according to state law) relevant for courses and examinations and embeds university-specific regulations within it. The University shall announce organizational details concerning its implementation on its website and through its other communication channels.

(2) For teaching and examinations at the Faculty of Medicine where patient care is affected, the regulations, if existing, of the Faculty of Medicine and/or University Hospital Cologne shall apply.

Section 2

Principles

(1) The holding of courses and examinations is governed by the regulations of the Federal Government and the State of North Rhine-Westphalia as well as the provisions of this Directive.

(2) General hygiene rules (especially good hand hygiene, coughing/sneezing etiquette) shall be observed at all times. Reducing personal contact and keeping a distance of 1.5 metres are recommended.

(3) All persons suspecting or uncertain about a possible coronavirus infection – e.g. cough, fever, cold or loss of smell and taste – shall have this checked professionally without delay (e.g. by a doctor or through a rapid antigen/PCR test).

(4) Attention is herewith drawn to the existing house bans regarding a suspected coronavirus infection (subsection 3) or quarantine.

Section 3

Preparing Courses and Examinations in Indoor Areas

(1) Prior to all face-to-face activities, the person in charge must prepare and provide a supplementary "Coronavirus Risk Assessment". The deans or the heads of the Central Institutions responsible shall regulate the details, e.g. by preparing and providing such risk assessments for specific standard uses of course rooms.

(2) The concerns of persons who might be affected by a severe SARS-CoV-2 infection and who cannot be vaccinated shall be taken into account in an appropriate manner and on a case-by-case basis upon presentation of a respective medical certificate. The same shall apply in the event that the person lives in the same household as a person at high risk or is in regular contact with them, for example because they are responsible for that person's care.

(3) The formation of groups and public traffic in and in front of buildings shall be avoided in advance by planning with foresight.

Section 4

Holding Courses and Examinations in Indoor Areas

(1) Courses and examinations in indoor areas may only be held with the number of persons permitted for the respective room (permitted number of places plus lecturer).

(2) Only persons who have been vaccinated or tested may take part in courses and examinations in indoor areas – this shall also apply for teaching staff or examiners or the person assisting them.

(3) It is compulsory to wear at least a medical mask continuously during courses and examinations and in the waiting area.

In exceptional cases, it is possible to dispense with wearing a mask in courses and examinations at fixed seats or standing areas in the following circumstances:

1. By persons giving a lecture, talk or other type of presentation and in oral examinations by examinees and examiners, provided they are at least 1.5 metres away from other persons.
2. When eating and drinking if this is absolutely necessary.
3. When communicating with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing.
4. By persons who cannot wear a mask for medical reasons; the existence of medical reasons shall be proven by means of a medical certificate, which must be presented on request; they shall keep a distance of 1.5 metres from other participants.
5. In practical classes with laboratory activities without test persons, especially those involving hazardous substances, biological substances, genetically engineered organisms and radioactive substances; in cases of doubt, consulting Staff Unit 02.2. is recommended.

Section 5

Ventilation

(1) All rooms shall be ventilated regularly and sufficiently by their users.

(2) All course and examination rooms should have permanent technical ventilation with filters or a good supply of fresh air. If this is not possible, these rooms must allow for the following window ventilation:

- a) It must be possible to open the windows fully.
- b) Rooms must be ventilated by opening windows fully at the beginning of activities and then at regular intervals. The recommended intervals in course and examination rooms are no more than 20 minutes.
- c) A ventilation time of 3 to 10 minutes is recommended.
- d) Meeting and examination/lecture rooms must additionally be ventilated before use, especially if other persons have used the room previously.

Teaching staff or examiners shall ensure such window ventilation if there is no permanent technical ventilation. Rooms in which ventilation according to sentences 1 and 2 is not possible may only be used as course and examination rooms after approval by Division 5 (Facility & Property Management).

Section 6

Cleaning

Course and examination rooms are cleaned by central services once per working day. In addition, cleaning materials are provided so that users can clean their individual workplaces. The latter is generally users' own responsibility; they are urged to do so at regular intervals by the person in charge. In the event of irregularities, the person in charge shall notify Division 5.

Section 7

Field Trips

Field trips are in-person courses outside the University, usually in a public setting. The coronavirus regulations issued according to the law of the federal states or countries visited shall apply for all phases of a field trip. This concerns, for example, the permissible group size in public spaces, the use of (public) transport, museums, restaurants, accommodation, etc. The person in charge of the field trip is responsible for ensuring compliance.

Section 8

Term of Validity

This Directive shall enter into force on the day after its announcement and remain valid until 31.03.2022.

Cologne, 16.9.2021

The Rector
of the University of Cologne

Professor Axel Freimuth