

# Action plan for conducting face-to-face classes

during the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic

As of: 14 June 2021

## I. Introduction

With decreasing infection figures, it is once again possible to conduct face-to-face classes at higher education institutions in NRW to a limited extent in accordance with the currently applicable legislation and the general directive issued by the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs of NRW. However, even with falling incidence rates and an increasing number of vaccinations, the necessity to conduct a class face-to-face must still be appropriately weighed against the risks that exist during the coronavirus pandemic. According to an agreement between the University Board and the deans, the current summer semester is generally to be continued as a 'hybrid semester' as has been planned.

The existing separate concepts for practical courses (e.g. in the Faculty of Chemistry, physical education, etc.) will not be affected by this.

This document defines the protective measures and rules of conduct applicable in this context, which are based on the regulations for incidence level 1 as defined in the Coronavirus Protection Ordinance (CoronaSchVO) and are a supplement to the internal action plan.

## II. Preparing face-to-face classes

### 1. Determining which classes take place on campus

In view of the decreasing incidence figures and the currently applicable legislation, university management would like to allow face-to-face teaching in small groups (usually 20 to 30 people; 50 people maximum) in principle. The University Board would like to request that this opportunity only be used in special cases, especially for classes intended for students who took up their studies in the summer semester 2020 and later or students who will complete their studies soon.

Classes for which it is absolutely necessary that they take place on campus because they require special facilities, equipment or other specific conditions (e.g. laboratories, recording studios and piano rehearsals in the field of the arts) were already allowed in the past few months and this will continue to be the case.

### 2. Room allocation and capacity requirements

A maximum of 50 attendants may participate in face-to-face classes, in both lecture and seminar form, in suitable rooms.

During the current summer semester 2021, room capacities will remain adjusted to allow minimum distances of 1.50 m to the nearest person (simple traceability is sufficient). The capacities of lecture halls will not be increased until the examination period, which starts in

mid-July, in order to make more effective use of the rooms as more relaxed restrictions will allow distances shorter than the current minimum. An [overview of the available rooms](#) will be made available.

For the semester that is already underway, rooms can still be booked via the Room Allocation team of the Facility Management Division at any time.

Classes and meetings organised decentrally may be held in premises managed by the faculties.

### **3. Accessibility and room setup**

The Facility Management Division will implement all necessary organisational and protective measures for centrally managed rooms (labelling of seats that may be used and of entrances and exits, cleaning after each use, sanitiser, etc.). The faculties are responsible for developing and implementing a hygiene concept for rooms that cannot be booked via the central system.

In all cases, the respective faculty is responsible for conducting the class.

The buildings will be open again, thus providing free access to all rooms.

### **4. Ventilation of lecture halls and classrooms**

Fresh air is provided via forced ventilation systems in all lecture halls. Classrooms without exterior walls and some recently refurbished classrooms with windows (e.g. in S06 or R11T) are also connected to ventilation systems. Thus, aerosols that may be virus-laden are regularly removed with the exhaust air. Partial recirculation, which is usually applied in order to save energy, has been switched off. Most lecture halls are equipped with displacement ventilation systems, which provide each seat with fresh air and thus provide additional protection from infection.

## **III. Conducting face-to-face classes**

### **1. Testing**

In accordance with UDE's testing concept, everyone involved in classes is requested to conduct a self-test or get a rapid test done at one of the two test centres at the Essen and Duisburg campuses before individual classes or block seminars in order to increase safety when groups of people gather. Immunised individuals (fully vaccinated or recovered from Covid-19) do not need to be tested anymore. Teaching staff may or may not check their students' signed statements, test records or immunisation records at their own discretion.

### **2. Access to the building and the classroom**

Where groups of people gather, medical face masks must be worn even outside buildings.

Students who have been admitted to classes can freely access the relevant building on the day the class is held. The security service will walk the building for monitoring purposes, but general access controls at the entrances will not be conducted.

An obligation to wear medical face masks applies during the entire time spent inside buildings. Hand sanitiser will be made available at the building entrances. A minimum distance of 1.5 metres must be kept between all persons present. Please take note of signs and labels in buildings (one-way system).

### 3. Within the classroom

Medical face masks must also be worn during class. Teaching staff are to decide upon suitable protective measures in laboratories, workshops and other rooms where practical courses are conducted.

Before the class starts, the applicable hygiene requirements must be pointed out to the students. A corresponding template has been made available: [Brief instructions](#) for students can be downloaded from the coronavirus information page for this purpose.

In centrally managed lecture halls and seminar rooms without windows, proper ventilation is ensured by means of forced air-handling systems. All other classrooms must be thoroughly aired for at least five minutes approximately every 20 minutes. When airing rooms manually, you may find the CO2-Timer app from the German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV) helpful, which includes a timer function on your mobile phone: [Lüften leicht gemacht: eine kostenlose App gegen dicke Luft](#) (ventilation made simple: a free app to clear the air; only available in German). If you prefer 'analogue' aids, you can request a DGUV calculator disc from the Staff Unit for Occupational Safety and Health (☎ 0201/18-34499), on which you can set the number of persons and square metres to have it display the required ventilation intervals.

### 4. Record of attendants

If the minimum distances are kept in classrooms, an obligation to keep a seating plan does not apply – a list of attendants is sufficient for documentation ('simple traceability' in accordance with Section 8 of the Coronavirus Protection Ordinance (CoronaSchVO)).

[UDE's digital recording software](#) can be used to track participants on the individual days of class. A new QR code is to be created for each meeting. This can be done directly via the LSF system. However, a QR code can also be created without connecting to the LSF system. The QR code, which the students have to scan using their mobile phones, is to be made available to students before or at the start of the examination. Please be advised that students have a duty to cooperate if this instrument is used. The QR code will route the students to the central recording software, which will ask them to enter their current contact information.

The data below is to be entered in mandatory fields in accordance with the CoronaSchVO:

- First name and last name
- Address (street, additional address information, city, postcode)
- Phone number
- Email address
- Seat number information if applicable (currently not required)

If students are unable or do not wish to enter their data via smartphone, you as teaching staff must provide a list in which the data can be put down manually. The recorded data is intended to be used by the health authorities to trace infections. The University's administration is obliged to provide the data to the authorities upon request. The data will be automatically deleted from the system after a four-week retention period.

### 5. Leaving the classroom

The indicated entrance and exit ways must be used in order to limit the number of encounters where the minimum distance is not adhered to. Teaching staff are to organise departure from the room in such a way that the minimum distance is kept between all individuals (special regulations regarding escape routes, etc. may apply in laboratories).

Attendants of classes are requested to limit their presence in buildings and on campus to a minimum before and after their classes where possible.

#### **6. Use of sanitary facilities**

Medical face masks must also be worn in washrooms. Please make sure you keep a safe distance from others. Units that are immediately next to one another without separation, e.g. washbasins, may not be used simultaneously.

#### **7. Further regulations and information for teaching staff**

As a rule, the 1.5 m minimum distance requirement must be met. Teaching staff must also wear a medical face mask unless they work behind the transparent shields that have been mounted in lecture halls.

#### **8. Right to request individuals to leave the premises**

Individuals may be requested to leave the premises in order to ensure compliance with the stipulations of the action plans. The house rules have been modified accordingly. If an individual refuses to comply with the rules, they must be requested to leave the class and the building immediately. In such cases, the individual's personal details are to be noted wherever possible.

In difficult cases, teaching staff can call for support from the security service provider. The number for the security service – also for the Duisburg campus – is: 0201/183-2614. The person staffing the concierge unit in S05 will subsequently inform security service staff near the relevant room.

#### **9. Coronavirus infections**

If a student informs teaching staff or the faculty that they have been diagnosed with Covid-19, this must be reported to the Registrar's Office immediately. [Studierendensekretariat-essen@uni-due.de](mailto:Studierendensekretariat-essen@uni-due.de)

#### **10. Support and questions**

The Facility Management Department and the Staff Unit for Occupational Safety & Health and Environmental Protection can provide consultation and assistance for implementing the required protective measures.

In addition, the central [corona@uni-due.de](mailto:corona@uni-due.de) inbox has been set up.