

# Action plan for conducting face-to-face examinations

during the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic (as of: 29 July 2020)

## I. Introduction

In accordance with the currently applicable legislation and the general directive issued by the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs of NRW, it is once again possible to conduct written and oral examinations at higher education institutions in NRW. This document defines the protective measures and rules of conduct applicable in this context at the University of Duisburg-Essen. These regulations are a supplement to the internal action plan.

As the overall conditions and legal provisions are currently subject to continuous change, this action plan will be gradually adapted and expanded as required.

If rooms for an examination are booked via the central system, the Facility Management Department will implement all necessary organisational and protective measures on the campus, at the building entrances and on the way to the location of the examination in accordance with Sections II.1 and II.2 below. If the rooms for an examination are not booked via the central system, the faculty conducting the examination is responsible for ensuring that Sections II.1 and II.2 are fulfilled. The faculty conducting the examination will bear responsibility for ensuring that both the actual examination room and the examiners/invigilators meet all organisational and protective measures.

## II. Conducting written examinations

### 1. Allocation of examination rooms, capacity restrictions and room setup

The usual process for the allocation of centrally managed examination rooms by the Facility Management Department continues to apply. An overview of the available examination rooms including the maximum number of seats that may be used in accordance with the currently applicable protective measures will be published. In the case of centrally allocated rooms, it will be ensured that adequate forced or manual ventilation is possible. Information on the maximum permissible number of seats will be provided as part of the room allocation notification.

There is no absolute maximum to the number of participants of an exam; the limit depends on the size of the room in combination with the minimum distance requirement.

The Facility Management Department will clean the examination room and, in particular, the desk surfaces in accordance with the recommendations of the Robert Koch Institute before making it available to the faculty conducting the exam. In the examination rooms, the Facility Management Department will label and number the seats that may be used in accordance with the distance requirements and remove surplus seats or mark them as unavailable.

## **2. Access to the building and the examination room**

If examination rooms have been allocated via the central system, the Facility Management Department will regulate access, check whether each person has a right to be admitted based on the student card and guide the exam candidates to the entrance of the examination room by means of suitable systems in cooperation with third-party security service providers. A limited number of surgical masks will be available at the building entrances for candidates who have forgotten to bring their own face masks.

A minimum distance of 1.5 metres must be kept between all persons present. Marks will be applied on the floor to ensure this distance is kept.

Hand sanitiser will be made available at the building entrances. Candidates must wear face masks inside the buildings until they reach their seats in the examination room.

## **3. Within the examination room**

The examiner/invigilator is to check the candidates' identity as they enter the room. Alternatively, the candidates' identity may be checked once they are seated as long as the candidates have not yet removed their face masks and the examiner/invigilator also wears a face mask. The examiner/invigilator is to guide the candidates to their respective seats in a suitable manner and point out the applicable hygiene requirements before the start of the examination. During the examination, it is not required that face masks be worn.

The minimum distance of 1.5 m must also be kept when answering students' questions during the exam (if this is not possible, please refer to Section II.6).

## **4. Leaving the examination room during the exam and at the end of the exam**

If candidates leave their seat during the examination or upon finishing the exam, they must wear their face masks. They must use the indicated entrance and exit ways in order to limit the number of encounters where the minimum distance is not adhered to.

## **5. Use of sanitary facilities in the context of examinations**

No specific requirements result from the protection regulations. The stipulations specified in the internal action plan apply. Thus, units that are immediately next to one another without separation, e.g. washbasins, may not be used simultaneously.

## **6. Rules for examiners and invigilators**

As a rule, the 1.5 m minimum distance requirement must be met. Moreover, the examiner/invigilator is to wear a face mask in situations during the examination where the minimum distance to others cannot be kept for practical reasons. Since the students also

wear face masks at the beginning and the end of the examination, mutual protection is ensured.

If, during examinations, situations occur where the minimum distance cannot be kept and only the invigilator wears a mask, they must wear an FFP2 mask without a valve as a last resort in the sequence of protective measures. As these FFP2 masks fall into the 'respiratory protection' category as defined in DGUV- rule 112-190 by the German Social Accident Insurance umbrella organisation and involve a certain degree of respiratory resistance, further conditions apply (wearing time restricted to a maximum of 75 minutes straight, two minutes of recovery time without wearing a mask per five minutes of wearing time – i.e. a 30-minute break after 75 minutes; instruction of invigilators; if FFP2 masks are to be worn for more than 30 minutes per day, [recommended preventive health care](#) is required). The organisational units are responsible for ensuring that these conditions are met.

Pursuant to requirements by the local authorities of Essen and Duisburg, the examiner/invigilator has to document which candidate occupied which seat. The numbering of the seats can be used for this purpose.

## **7. Additional regulation for examination rooms that are not booked via the central system**

In contrast to rooms that centrally booked via the Facility Management Department, users must rearrange seats themselves in the meeting rooms of the individual organisational units.

As an approximation, every fourth seat in every other row of seats may be used in order to conform with the distancing rule, but this also depends on the individual room. It is assumed that three desks (0.6 m x 1.2 m) will be required for every two students and that one row of desks will have to remain unused between two occupied rows of desks. For an estimate of the maximum number of persons allowed for an examination room, divide the initial number of available seats by five. This will give you a good approximation of the number of seats that can be used.

The attached seating plan serves to illustrate how the distance rule can be applied within a room by rearranging furniture and removing surplus desks and chairs. However, empty rows of desks may be left in the rooms as spacers. Chairs should be reduced to the number that can actually be used.

### **III. Conducting oral examinations**

#### **1. Allocation of examination rooms, capacity restrictions and room setup**

With the exception of the oral part of DSH examinations, rooms for oral examinations are independently allocated by the faculties or the responsible units.

When selecting examination rooms, 10.5 square metres of floor space must be allowed for each person present in order to ensure that the minimum distance of 1.5 metres can be kept. The minimum distance between all persons must further be ensured by distance markings, sealing off areas or the arrangement of furniture.

It is recommended to additionally install plexiglass barriers between the persons present if the room design allows this in order to enhance protection.

A maximum of two candidates may participate in an examination at the same time. In order to allow members of the university to attend as stipulated by the faculty-specific doctoral degree regulations, the defence of a doctoral dissertation may be made available as a video stream in full or in part as required.

Before the start of the examination, table surfaces, in particular, must be cleaned in accordance with the recommendations by the Robert Koch Institute.

#### **2. Access to the building and the examination room**

In the case of individual oral examinations, the units responsible for the examination are to ensure that candidates are picked up from and accompanied back to the building entrance if possible.

If multiple oral examinations are held, the examination times must be scheduled in a way to avoid gatherings of larger groups of people. Access must be controlled by guiding the candidates from the building entrance to the examination room and back by means of marked one-way walkways.

Candidates must wear face masks inside the buildings until they reach their seats in the examination room.

#### **3. Within the examination room**

The examiner/invigilator is to check the candidates' identity as they enter the room. The examiner/invigilator is to guide the candidates to their respective seats in a suitable manner and point out the hygiene requirements before the start of the examination. During the examination, it is not required that face masks be worn. The examination room is to be ventilated for at least ten minutes after each individual exam.

#### **4. Leaving the examination room during the exam and at the end of the exam**

If a person leaves the room during the examination or upon finishing the exam, they must wear their face masks.

#### **5. Use of sanitary facilities in the context of examinations**

No specific requirements result from the protection regulations. The stipulations specified in the internal action plan apply. Thus, units that are immediately next to one another without separation, e.g. washbasins, may not be used simultaneously.

#### **6. Supplementary rules for examiners and invigilators**

As a rule, it is to be made sure that the minimum distance of 1.5 m metres is kept. The examiner/invigilator is only to wear a face mask in situations during the examination where the minimum distance to others cannot be kept for practical reasons. Since the students also wear face masks at the beginning and the end of the examination, mutual protection is ensured. Both parties wearing face masks is a preferable scenario compared to only one party wearing an FFP2 mask as the latter involves further conditions (see Section II.6 for details).

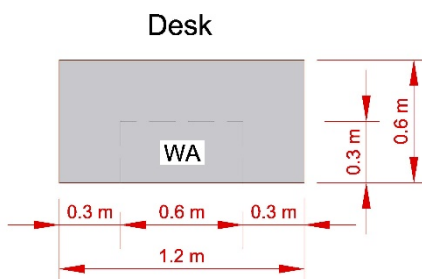
## Attachment

### Seating plan template for examination and meeting rooms:

#### Premises regarding the working space:

- Standard sizes for the desk (1.2m x 0.6 m), the chair (0.5 m x 0.8 m) and persons (0.6 m width)
- Students sit at the centre of the desk.
- The desk is divided into a working area (WA) and an unused area.
- The unused part is included when calculating the minimum distance.

#### Diagram:



#### Brief description of a potential setup of an example room:

The specified spacings are the absolute minimum lengths to allow a 1.5 m distance to be kept between the individual persons.

A person will not use the entire surface of the desk. Thus, the part that is not used (0.3 m on each side) can be included in the calculation of the distances. Therefore, there has to be at least a 0.9 m distance between desks in the same row.

The minimum distance between two rows of desks is the space required for the chair plus the stipulated safety distance of 1.5 m. As 0.3 m of the desk's depth are taken into account, the minimum distance between desk edges is 2.0 m.

The pathway through the room has also been closely calculated. It combines a path along the wall with a width of 0.6 m (see red area) and an empty space of 1.2 m width up to the outer edge of the desks. Thus, in total, there has to be a minimum distance between the wall and the edges of desks of 1.8 m.

If there is a pathway through the room with sets of desks on both sides, this path must have a minimum width of 3.0 m (2 x 1.2 m distance from the desks plus 0.6 m for the walking area).

Seating plan:

