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## UNIVERSITY OF PRIMORSKA GUIDELINES FOR WORKING AT THE PREMISES OF THE UNIVERSITY IN TIMES OF ACTIVE MEASURES AGAINST THE SPREAD OF THE COVID-19 DISEASE

Koper, November 2021

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## INTRODUCTION

University of Primorska issued Guidelines for working at the premises of the University of Primorska in times of active measures against the spread of COVID-19. Depending on the epidemiological situation, professional opinion, applicable national measures and recommendations and instructions of competent authorities, the rector of the university decided which activities can be performed at the university premises and which still have to be carried out in an adapted manner and elsewhere. Guidelines are applied to each activity carried out at any given moment at the university premises.

The instructions have been adopted to limit spread of the COVID-19 epidemic, minimize damage and ensure the university's activities are functional under all conditions.

The most important measure to control infection is for sick people to stay at home. Three additional measures are crucial to limit the spread of the virus via respiratory droplets: sneezing and coughing hygiene; hand hygiene, in particular frequent handwashing and avoiding touching the face with dirty hands; and maintaining a minimum interpersonal distance of 1.5 meters between people. These measures are important to prevent direct and indirect contact with microorganisms and reduce the chance of infection even before the signs and symptoms of disease appear.

Regular ventilation is very important as well.

To ensure additional safety of students and staff, a vaccine/test/recovery system is in place. Therefore, only people who have been vaccinated, regularly tested or have recovered from the disease in the last half a year, can enter in the university buildings. With this, the university community is preventing severe disease cases (vaccinated and recovered people) and limit rapid spread of the disease (with regular test and detection).

Despite implementation of all measures, cases of COVID-19 and other infections may still occur. However, the chances of spreading the virus will be significantly lower if these measures are undertaken to prevent infection.

### Basic instructions:

- Sick employees must stay at home;
- Users of university premises regularly disinfect their hands;
- Indoors, a minimum interpersonal distance of at least 1.5 meters between individuals must be maintained;
- If minimum interpersonal distance cannot be guaranteed, protective masks must be worn;
  - All rooms are regularly ventilated;
- People entering the university fulfil the vaccine/test/recovery system.

All further instructions follow these guidelines and define individual situations in more detail. These guidelines are not universal, however, so instructions must be read critically, and measures must be adapted to the specifics of each individual room and activity. When in doubt, use a pragmatic approach that follows these basic guidelines.



## GENERAL ABOUT THE DISEASE

The SARS-CoV-2 virus infection can cause the coronavirus disease 2019 or COVID-19.

The incubation period (time between infection and disease onset) can be up to 14 days, averaging at about 6 days. The disease is most often manifested through symptoms of respiratory infection, ie with malaise, fatigue, cold, fever, cough and in more severe forms with a feeling of shortness of breath. In about 80% of those infected, the disease is mild. In children, the course of the disease is usually lighter, and the risk of severe symptoms and complications increases in the elderly (especially over 60 years) and people with associated diseases such as cardiovascular disease, lung, liver, kidney, diabetes, immune disease, etc. The more severe course of the disease is characterized by pneumonia. Microbiological testing is required to confirm or rule out a SARS-CoV-2 infection. SARS-CoV-2 infection is transmitted by humans by droplets, through respiratory secretions. Closer contact with the patient is required for transmission (distance to the patient less than 1.5 m). Infection is also possible through contact with surfaces contaminated with respiratory secretions. Consistent hand hygiene and coughing are thus most important to prevent the spread of the infection. Detailed instructions for the prevention of infection and more information on the website of the National Institute of Public Health: <https://www.nijz.si/en>.

## INSTRUCTIONS SEPTEMBER 2021

In November 2021, updated instructions were prepared, which:

- Update the self-testing implementation with valid guidelines and decisions;
- Define the check of the vaccine/test/recovery;
- Define the standard of the face masks (IIR ali FFP2);
- Update distance learning with the valid decisions for 2021/2022.



## GENERAL HYGIENE MEASURES

The new coronavirus is spread through secretions of the respiratory system and unclean hands; therefore, measures against contagion focus on:

- Maintaining an adequate interpersonal distance of 1.5 meters to prevent transmission through respiratory droplets; and
- Regular handwashing and disinfection of surfaces and objects to prevent contact transmission.
- Enabling the entrance to the university to people who fulfil the vaccine/test/recovery system.
  - Regular ventilation.

Hands are always considered to be contaminated, except immediately after being washed or disinfected.

When all described measures are taken, the possibility of contagion is decreased and we protect ourselves and others. There is no complete safety from contagion, and each individual must take responsibility for full execution of self-protective measures.

All students and staff must know general hygiene measures in order to ensure their consistent application and guarantee adequate safety conditions for the workplace against SARS-Cov-2 contagion:

- Frequent and thorough handwashing with soap and water.
- If soap and water are not accessible, hands must be disinfected with disinfectant put in place for this purpose. Alcohol content needs to be between 60-80%. Hand disinfectant should not be ingested. Disinfectant tissues (70%) may also be used. Products for cleaning/disinfection of surfaces should not be used on the skin.
- Hands need to be washed or disinfected after touching any door handle, staircase railing or after contact with any other surface in the building.
- Do not touch face (eyes, nose or mouth) with unclean/unwashed hands.
- Respect the minimum interpersonal distance of 1.5 meters between individuals.
- Observe correct hygiene for coughing and sneezing (before coughing/sneezing, cover the mouth and nose with a paper tissue or cough/sneeze into the elbow or upper arm). Paper tissues must be thrown away after each use and hands must be washed with soap and water.
- Indoor environments have to be ventilated thoroughly several times a day. This is recommended after every use of a single room (with windows open wide).
- People entering the university fulfil the vaccine/test/recovery system.
- When organizing events, we follow the instructions of the NIJZ, which apply to event organizers.

General guidelines for the prevention of contagion from the agent causing COVID-19 are accessible on the web page: <https://www.nijz.si/sl/preprecevanje-okuzbe-z-virusom-sars-cov-2019> (only available in Slovene, please use the online translation options).



## LIMITING ACCESS

Only **healthy students, staff and visitors** (without signs of acute respiratory infection) can enter the university premises.

The Broader Professional Committee for Occupational, Traffic and Sport Medicine has defined health restriction guidelines for employees returning to work upon reopening (Appendix 8). In the event that there is a child, adolescent or adult who has been excluded from school or work under these guidelines living in the student's or employee's household, we do not recommend returning to the workplace. Withdrawal due to health reasons is decided on a case-by-case basis by personal physician or an occupational medicine specialist.

Employees who have been ordered quarantine or self-isolation, or have developed signs / symptoms, inform the immediate supervisor of their absence and consult with the chosen or on-duty doctor. They return to work when they are completely healthy and their doctor allows them to do so.

Students who have been ordered quarantine or self-isolation, or have developed signs / symptoms, inform the faculty about their absence by filling in the application *Notification of absence from "live" study obligations due to COVID-19*. They return to the university premises when they are completely healthy and the doctor allows them to do so.

In case they are ill and cannot work/study remotely, they prove their excused absence with a doctor's certificate, as usual.

## VACCINE/TEST/RECOVERY SYSTEM

All people entering the university follow the vaccine/test/recovery system. With this, they ensure that they are protected with vaccination or recovery. People, who are not protected, undergo a regular COVID-19 Rapid Antigen test.

Students and staff sign a statement on fulfilling the vaccine/test/recovery system. Staff who filled in the survey and agreed with it, do not need to send additional statement. Staff, who did not submit a statement, or prove the vaccine/test/recovery system with a testing, regularly send a statement to their human resources office. Frequency of the statement is defined with the frequency of testing, defined by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and published on the university webpage.

## VALID PROTECTION WITH VACCINATION

Protection with vaccination is active when the second dose of a single or a combination of the below mentioned vaccines is administered:

- Comirnaty (Pfizer BioNTech)
- Spikevax (Moderna)
- Vaxzevria (AstraZeneca)
- Sputnik V (Russia's Gamaleya National Centre of Epidemiology and Microbiology),
- CoronaVac (Sinovac Biotech),
- COVID-19 Vaccine (Sinopharm).

For vaccine Janssen (Johnson&Johnson), the protection is active on the day of the receipt of vaccine.



For all who have recovered from the disease and have been vaccination within 180 days after the first symptoms or the positive PCR test with one of the above mentioned vaccines, can only be vaccinated once. They are protected with the first dose on the day of the vaccination.

## VALID PROTECTION AFTER RECOVERY

Protection after recovery is considering in the period of 10-180 days after the positive PCT test or the start of the disease symptoms.

## RAPID ANTIGEN TESTING

All students and staff, who are not protected with vaccination or disease recovery, undergo a regular testing. Frequency of testing is determined by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia, depending on the epidemiological situation.

Frequency of testing is published also on the university webpage.

**Students and staff can fulfill the testing requirement with a self-test.**

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF SELF-TESTING**

Regular self-testing is implemented at three locations: Confucius classroom in Koper, UP Faculty of Health Sciences (UP FVZ) and UP Faculty of Tourism Studies – Turistica (UP FTŠ – Turistica). Schedules are published on the university webpage. UP FVZ and UP FTŠ – Turistica notify their students and staff on the implementation of self-testing.

Everybody studying in other locations, perform self-tests before their study obligations, in line with faculty guidelines.

All students and staff perform tests at specified locations. A monitoring person is present at the testing site, monitoring the test implementation. They deliver the tests to staff, mark the presence and collect statement on fulfilling vaccine/test/recovery conditions. Monitoring staff cannot check the results, but can offer advice, if requested.

Students can receive 10 Rapid Antigen Tests for self-testing per month in a pharmacy. In the pharmacy they should show their health insurance card. Foreign students, without a health insurance card, show their certificate of enrolment and a personal document (passport, ID or temporary residence permit).

Staff receives the test at the self-testing location. Students bring their own tests to the location.

All students and staff fill in a record sheet and keep it as a proof of fulfilling a vaccine/test/recovery system.

Staff submit a statement on fulfilling a vaccine/test/recovery system to their human resources. Frequency of the statement is determined with a frequency of testing.



Authorised people at the university:

University member	Authorised staff
UP FHŠ UP FM UP FAMNIT UP PEF UP IAM UP ŠD UP UK	Aleš Oven Mojca Kleva Kekuš Boštjan Freljih
UP FVZ	Nela Panger Monika Marinko Irene Krulčič Novak
UP FTŠ - TURISTICA	

Tests for self-testing of staff are supplied by the university.

The relevant contact is Aleš Oven ([ales.oven@upr.si](mailto:ales.oven@upr.si), 051 232 948).

#### VACCINE/TEST/RECOVERY VERIFICATION

Each person proves their vaccine/test/recovery condition when entering university premises. The university and faculties organise verification with their staff or with the support of students.

#### ACTING IN CASE OF SUSPECTED INFECTION WITH SARS-CoV-2019

In the event that an employee or student has developed signs or symptoms of SARS-CoV-2019 during the day at the university, he / she immediately withdraws from the work or study process and informs his / her immediate superiors or professors or the department or the student office.

The student and the university member follow the adapted epidemiological guidelines.

#### MAINTAINING SAFETY DISTANCE

Students and staff are encouraged to keep a distance of at least 1.5 meters wherever possible.

#### PROTECTIVE GEAR

Students and employees must wear protective masks type IIR or FFP2 in common areas and in spaces where a minimum interpersonal distance of 1.5 meters cannot be guaranteed. Students and practitioners wear masks during their study activities. In performing other work obligations, staff may take off their protective masks if interpersonal distance is observed.

The rectorate publishes clear guidelines on the university webpage on when the masks are needed.



Students and staff should be familiar with the proper placement, wearing and removal of protective masks. It is their duty to make other users of the premises aware of the proper mask usage.

## MONITORING PRESENCE

In order to facilitate epidemiological research and identify close and risky contacts, in the academic year 2020/2021 the presence of students in the premises of the faculty in all study contents is monitored.

Each faculty determines their system for monitoring presence. It is recommended to use the student registration with a QR code.

## ROOM PREPARATION

### ENTRANCE TO THE BUILDING

Warnings shall be placed at University of Primorska building entrances that instruct:

- only healthy people can enter the premises,
- only people meeting the PCT system can enter the university,
- special entry / exit rules,
- general hygiene recommendations.

Disinfectant for hands and surfaces is available at each entrance as well as a rubbish bin for used masks and gloves at exit.

The number of entrances is optimized in such a way that fire safety is not endangered. An automatic meter is installed next to each used entrance.

### LECTURE ROOMS, LABORATORIES

At the entrance to each lecture room or laboratory, it is necessary to install:

- hand sanitizer,
- surface disinfectant,
- infographic with instructions for proper use of masks,
- poster with general hygiene measures.

If possible, the equipment in lecture halls and other work spaces should be arranged in such a way that the minimum interpersonal distance between individual students is respected or the pedagogical process is carried out in small groups.

### HALLWAYS AND OTHER COMMON AREAS

If possible, passage shall be indicated with floor markings along hallways and in common areas in order to minimize contact between individuals and mark/maintain interpersonal distance. In doing so, doors may also be designated for entering and exiting the building.



## SANITARY AREAS

Running water, soap and paper towels will always be available in the lavatories. Hand dryers will not be used during the active measures against the COVID-19 disease. Infographics that display proper hand washing technique are located next to the sinks.

Lavatory windows will remain open.

Floor markings may be installed in lavatory anterooms to ensure adequate interpersonal distance. Users should open lavatory doors with their elbow or a clean paper towel.

## OTHER COMMON STAFF SPACES

Employees should enter group spaces (kitchenettes, meeting rooms, photocopiers, etc.) only as needed and if they feel comfortable, paying attention to order, cleanliness and hygiene. Spray disinfectant will be present in these rooms so that surfaces can be disinfected quickly. These rooms should only be used if minimum interpersonal distance can be maintained. The maximum number of occupants should be clearly posted at the room entrance.

## OUTER SURFACES

Students and employees are allowed to occupy spaces in front of buildings, yards and other outdoor areas. We recommend maintaining interpersonal distance.

Applicable government ordinances on the gathering of persons in public places must also be considered.

UP FVZ can implement stricter measures due to the vicinity of the hospital.

## REDUCTION OF IN-PERSON CONTACT

Work is organized in a way that requires as few in-person contacts as possible. In study process, this can be achieved especially with the reorganisation of the schedule.

## SCHEDULE AND ORGANISATION OF GROUPS

Groups and schedule are organised in a way that there are as few changes of groups as possible. When a specific group occupies the lecture room, it remains in the same classroom for a longer time, while teacher change and lecture different content of different subjects consequetively. When the group changes (e.g. the next day), the same applies for them. In organising groups and schedule, students and the content that still needs to be taught are in focus.

A one hour window is recommended between two different groups occupying the same room. In this time, the surfaces which are often touched (doorknobs, fences) should be disinfected and rooms ventilated.



Classes and exam schedule are adapted to minimize the number of groups entering the building simultaneously (e.g. 15-minute delay of the start of activity, or similar).

## MEETINGS

Meetings and committee meetings may be held live or continue to take place via videoconferencing systems.

## ACCESS TO ROOMS

Before the group arrives, lecture room doors should be open, so that the students do not touch the doorknobs.

Each faculty defines the method of access to its premises, taking into account that there is as little restraint in common areas and contacts between individuals as possible. Students are allowed to enter individually and head directly to the lecture hall, where they take their place in the shortest possible time. Alternatively, students gather in front of the building and the group proceeds to the lecture hall together, with individuals keeping an eye on the appropriate interpersonal distance at all times.

Each faculty defines how their rooms can be accessed and takes into account guidelines and recommendations in place. Faculties can also organise personnel assuring that the guidelines and PCT system are followed.

## REMOTE LEARNING AND TEACHING IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2021/2022

Studies in the academic year 2021/2022 run in person. Deans and director adopted *Guidelines of the University of Primorska for the implementation of distant contact hours for undergraduate, master and doctoral study programmes in 2021/2022* on their September meeting.

A part of contact hours of a specific subject or other working hours with students can be implemented on-line or hybrid in the following cases:

- Occupational medicine doctor defined that the teacher is at risk and recommended limitation of contacts with students (in such cases, lectures, seminar exercises and seminars can be implemented from home, while students are in classroom).
- If the teacher is on a business trip abroad, he can make an agreement with the dean of the faculty to implement lectures, seminars and seminar exercises distantly, while students are in classroom.
- Contact hours of a specific subject implemented in cooperation with a visiting professor, can be implemented in hybrid form, where all students and the hosting professor are in classroom and the visiting professor is connected via a videoconferencing system.
- Following a decision of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia.

For this purpose, the University of Primorska purchased campus-wide ZOOM licenses for all its students and staff.



Uploading and sending documents is not a suitable form of distance/on-line studies. Higher education teachers still have to implement all contact hours with students, and they report on that in the UNIS application.

## REMOTE WORK

Staff with health risks can work from home.

The Rector of the University or the Dean or Director of a Member may order staff with health risks (Appendix 8) to work from home. When ordering and organizing the remote work, the rules on the remote work apply.

## SPECIFIC FORMS OF STUDY PROCESS

All forms of study process, which cannot be implemented distantly are allowed at the university premises.

All activities must follow the existing instructions and recommendations for individual activities (e.g. for accommodation in the tourist facilities, for the prevention of infections with the new coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 in sports, for bus transport, for tourism and catering, for the execution of massage services, for kindergartens and schools, and all other instructions and recommendations).

## CLINICAL EXERCISES

Contact between students and professors is possible during clinical exercises in programmes where they are needed. If this happens, even greater care should be given to personal protection, in line with the teacher's opinion (use of facemasks, gloves, other protective gear). Students should immediately afterward wash and disinfect their hands.

## LABORATORY EXERCISES

Laboratory exercises are implemented in specific lecture rooms. We recommend that the equipment is transferred to larger rooms, if this is possible (e.g. if exercises only foresee the use of microscopes). If this is not possible, laboratory exercises are implemented in intended spaces with additional care on preserving hygiene.

## FIELD EXERCISES

Field exercises are primarily implemented outdoors, so maintaining safety distance is the only measure. Students should organise their own transfer to the meeting spot and travel in personal cars alone or in smaller groups.

If a part of field work will be implemented in enclosed spaces, a house order and active measure in those buildings have to be observed.



## LIBRARY SPECIFICS

University libraries are open and offer all services, provided that the hygienic and epidemiological guidelines of the National Institute of Public Health for working in closed spaces are observed. Simultaneously, specifics of individual UP libraries are taken into account.

## STUDENTS RESIDENCE SPECIFICS

Besides general guidelines, there are special guidelines for student residences in place. They are in Appendix 2. Guidelines of student residences apply also to the students of the University of Ljubljana, who reside at the student residences of the University of Primorska.

## OTHER UNIVERSITY ACTIVITIES

These guidelines apply also to other activities of the university. At the same time, all recommendations of the NIJZ for specific activities (e.g. sports, events, etc.) have to be observed as well.

## VENTILATION, CLEANING AND DISINFECTION OF PREMISES

### ROOM VENTILATION

Offices, lecture rooms and laboratories must be thoroughly ventilated daily (all windows wide open). Windows should be open at all times, if possible; otherwise, room ventilation is required every hour.

If the building has mechanical ventilation, constant ventilation with external air flow with maximum flow should be maintained when people are using the buildings. More guidelines on ventilation can be found at:

<https://www.nijz.si/sl/navodila-za-prezracevanje-prostorov-izven-zdravstvenih-ustanov-v-casu-sirjenja-okuzbe-covid-19>

### REGULAR CLEANING

Offices and laboratories must be regularly cleaned and disinfected. Thorough cleaning is carried out at least once a day. Trash cans should be emptied at least once a day. Trash can bags that contain used masks must be tied at the time of removal, placed in another bag, labeled with the date of closure and stored in an inaccessible place for at least 72 hours. After that, they can be disposed of as mixed waste.

NIJZ recommendations are also taken into account when cleaning and disinfecting:

- for cleaning and disinfecting premises outside medical establishments:

<https://www.nijz.si/sl/navodila-za-ciscenje-in-razkuzevanje-prostorov-izven-zdravstvenih-ustanov-v-katerih-se-je-zadrzeval>



- for cleaning public toilets:  
[https://www.nijz.si/sites/www.nijz.si/files/uploaded/higienska\\_navodila\\_za\\_uporabo\\_in\\_ciscenje\\_javnih\\_sanitarij.pdf](https://www.nijz.si/sites/www.nijz.si/files/uploaded/higienska_navodila_za_uporabo_in_ciscenje_javnih_sanitarij.pdf)

## DISINFECTION OF SURFACES AND OBJECTS

Surfaces and objects that are touched frequently (hooks, holders, light switches, pull cords, etc.) are disinfected several times a day. In offices, lecture rooms, laboratories and other rooms in use, surfaces that are touched more frequently are disinfected after use and before the next group of students / employees enters. Disinfectant is also sprayed on tables and chairs after use.

Cleaning takes into account the recommendations for cleaning and disinfection of premises outside health care institutions during the COVID-19 epidemic, which are available at: <https://www.nijz.si/sl/navodila-za-ciscenje-in-razkuzevanje-prostorov-izven-zdravstvenih-ustanov-v-katerih-se-je-zadrzeval> (only available in Slovene, please use online translation options).

## SPECIAL GROUPS OF STUDENTS

### EMPLOYEES AND STUDENTS WITH HEALTH ISSUES

In the event that an employee or a student cannot return to University of Primorska premises due to health-related issues on recommendation from a physician, the university member will discuss the situation with them and find solutions to provide the student or employee with an options to perform their work differently or finds different solutions (e.g. fulfilling obligations the next academic year).



## APPENDIX 1: PROTOCOL OF THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

*University libraries are open and offer all services, provided that the hygienic and epidemiological guidelines of the National Institute of Public Health for working in closed spaces are observed. Simultaneously, specifics of individual UP libraries are taken into account.*

*General measures, followed by all librarians and library users:*

- 1) each library sets a maximum number of users, who can be present in a library at the same time – this information is visibly displayed at the entrance and the maximum number of visitors is not surpassed;
- 2) only healthy people without any signs of respiratory infection can enter the library;
- 3) entry to library is limited to the people who got over the disease, were vaccinated or were tested less than a week ago – the same rule already applies to lectures;
- 4) hand, sneeze and cough hygiene;
- 5) masks have to be worn in all library rooms, without exceptions;
- 6) interpersonal safety distance (1.5 metre) has to be observed;
- 7) regular hand disinfection;
- 8) regular air ventilation;
- 9) other general measures as recommended by NIJZ.

Ljubljana, Wednesday, 26 May 2021

Assoc. prof. Jonatan Vinkler, PhD, acting director of UP UK



## APPENDIX 2: HEALTH LIMITATION FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF

The Broader Professional Committee (BPC) for Occupational, Traffic and Sport Medicine adopted an opinion regarding workers who can be excluded from the working environment when anti-epidemic conditions are not met. The opinion was adopted on 27 March 2020 during the committee's sixth correspondence meeting and is supported by the Association of Pneumologists and Association for Occupational, Traffic and Sport Medicine.

The opinion applies to workers, educators and teachers working directly with children in kindergartens, elementary schools and high schools:

- pregnant women;
- workers on immunosuppressive medicine;
- workers with malignant disease on systemic cancer therapy (chemo-, immune-, target therapy);
- workers after organ/tissue transplantation who receive immunosuppressive therapy;
- workers with poorly controlled diabetes;
- workers with chronic lung disease on any kind of systemic anti-inflammatory or immunosuppressive (including biological) therapy, currently or within the last year, or workers who have regular recurrent inflammation due to COPD, bronchiectasis, asthma, lung fibrosis, systemic respiratory system autoimmune disease, lung cancer, immune deficiencies;
- workers with poorly controlled blood pressure;
- workers with severe mental or behavioral disorders;
- workers with other severe chronic disease as diagnosed by a specialist in occupational, traffic and sport medicine (contingent on risk evaluation); and
- workers above 65 years of age.

The listed conditions and diseases serve only as a guideline. A physician specialized in occupational medicine will determine on a case-by-case basis who can be excluded from the workplace.

University of Primorska accepts the BPC's opinion and applies it to all University of Primorska students and employees. Specialist doctor in occupational medicine or personal doctor decides individually on who to exclude from the working environment.