



Announcement regarding the upcoming start of studies

Dear employees,
Dear students,
Dear faculty members,

Autumn is approaching and the start of studies at the FH Upper Austria is imminent. I hope you were able to recover well during the summer months and gather strength for the challenges ahead of us. After the lockdown last spring, autumn will be a good start to the new academic year. Together we will prepare the grounds for our students to commence their studies at the FH Upper Austria well.

I am happy to inform about the details of the planned autumn semester and I would like to thank you in advance for your active participation regarding the upcoming challenges.

1. General aspects

Together with selected universities in Austria, the FH Upper Austria participated in a task force led by our ministry of education, science and research in developing a guideline to safeguard university operations. The result is a compendium of recommendations for the handling of study and research operations as well as measures for general administration at universities.

According to these proposals, we have set up a COVID19 crisis management structure internally. For details please see the excerpt in the attachment with further regulations for our university.

In addition, three so-called "**security levels**" have been defined in the university's crisis management team. Those ensure a transparent and clear management on the school level. In principle, we respond to the 'traffic light system' provided by the federal government, but we may deviate from this depending on the region and situation. An overview of the security levels can also be found in the attachment.

In general, **wearing a mask is compulsory** if ordered by the authorities or if a safety distance is not possible to keep. Depending on the development of the situation in Upper Austria, it is possible that at security level 1 the obligation to wear masks becomes effective for students and is recommended for teachers and employees, respectively. In this case, masks have to be brought along and worn until the student reaches his or her seat in the lecture hall. Furthermore, groups of employees or students can be ordered to wear a mask, if a suspect case emerges in this group. The crisis management team will make an announcement in this case.

The processing of information in case of suspected cases has been defined according to the specifications of the Federal Ministry of education, science and research. To report a suspected case or to report an infection or contact person according to the

classification category 1, a new mailbox corona@fh-ooe.at is provided. Furthermore, questions may be addressed to the crisis coordinators using the phone extension -11450.

2. Studies

The general hygiene regulations still apply for the upcoming semester. Students should be placed in classrooms and lecture halls using a 'chessboard style' (1m safety distance provided by keeping empty places left/right/in front/behind of each place occupied). Please obey the required safety distance also when entering and leaving the rooms. Avoid the formation of groups in front of and inside buildings. Wait in front of the washrooms if you realize that the safety distance cannot be maintained within them. For using cafeterias and canteens, the safety measures issued by the respective operator have to be obeyed. If security level 1 is announced, we ask you to stay in the libraries or school buildings only as long as absolutely necessary before the beginning and after the end of the courses.

As far as **contact tracing management** is concerned, we are planning to register your presence from security level 2 onwards. To register students, **QR codes** will be fixed to the seats in the classrooms and lecture halls. When you take your seat, scan the QR code on the seat with your smartphone and follow the instructions. At the end of the course, repeat this action to log out again. The data collected in this process will be treated in accordance with the **GDPR** (general data protection regulation).

Regarding the execution of **gargling tests**, randomized monitoring is planned. Tests of 60-100 persons per week are planned. Analysis will be carried out in labs at our campuses in Wels and Linz. We consider monitoring as a core element of an early warning system with regard to clustering. Our main focus is to avoid the formation of clusters. Participation in these tests is voluntary and should include different test persons. We explicitly point out that the gargling test does not represent a medically reliable diagnosis. It does not exempt you from contacting the official hotline (phone: 1450) if necessary and also it does not exempt from following officially ordered measures. Of course, the anonymity of sample submission and analysis is guaranteed.

In case of a **suspicious case** among students, a notification via email (corona@fh-ooe.at) as well as contacting the official hotline (1450) is mandatory. As long as test results are pending, the respective student does not enter the university premises and his/her cohort is required to wear a mask also during the course. Depending on the test result, further procedures follow the instructions of the authorities.

Students with a quarantine notification issued by the authorities are suspended from class attendance for the duration of the quarantine. The guidelines issued by the university academic council for the handling of the study program are still valid until revoked.

International students who have to start the fall semester in their home country will be integrated into the cohorts as soon as possible.

3. Research & Development

For **company visits**, the regulations of the visited company apply. Starting with security level 2, R&D employees are required to work in "**shifts**" (alternately on campus and in home office). From security level 3 only critical R&D infrastructure is to be operated;

and employees work from their home offices. Staff planning is carried out by the school's Head of Research Center.

4. Infrastructure

Before the beginning of the semester, the school's **air condition and filter systems** were serviced by the facility management department. Employees are advised to use to supply fresh air as often as possible if weather conditions permit. **Ventilation intervals** in the facilities are clocked in such a way that the rooms are ventilated in full capacity during the break periods. Every morning, a **complete cleaning** is scheduled; and critical areas such as washrooms are subjected to an increased cleaning interval. Since the university's AC systems have a so-called dual-circuit system, it is recommended to set this individually if intervention in the operation of the systems is possible.

Beyond these precautionary measures the facility management department provides **disinfectants** for cleaning workplaces in teaching and lecture halls and/or laboratories. Students are required to clean their places before and after the lecture.

5. Events

For events, the current federal regulations apply. For any scheduled events in these challenging times, the congress and event management department offers special training courses and schedules (especially for graduation ceremonies).

We wish you a good start into the new academic year! Please act responsibly! Please observe the safety and hygiene regulations in your own and others' interest. Take care of your health and minimize your social contacts if you feel ill. This is how we will make it through these times altogether.

I wish you and your relatives good health for the upcoming weeks.

Thank you for your commitment and all the best!

Dr. Gerald Reisinger
President