Covid-19: Code of conduct for Teaching and Working in Spring Semester 2021

Regulations updated as of 1 March 2021
(replaces all previous versions)

President’s Board, University Administration
St. Gallen, 1 March 2021

The University Management reserves the right to adjust the rules of conduct at any time if necessary.
I Introduction / Updates

Interaction, communication and the inspiring exchange of ideas in teaching, research and university services are central to the University of St.Gallen’s self-image. Unfortunately, staying and working together on campus will only be possible to a very limited extent in the near future.

**Basic behavioural measures**: If you have symptoms of the disease, you must stay at home. In case of a suspected or positive test for Covid-19, proceed according to the instructions.

All employees must work from home whenever possible. Only where this is not possible or not sensible for operational reasons is presence on campus permitted. According to the Federal Council directives, there is no entitlement to compensation for expenses such as payments for rent, energy or additional IT equipment in the home office.

Anyone who has to do their work on site at the HSG but wants to avoid public transport can use the HSG parking garages free of charge from now until at least, the 28 February 2021.

Particularly vulnerable persons are given additional protection. To this end, the Federal Council introduces the right to home office or a leave of absence for particularly vulnerable persons who cannot work from home due to their job. They will be released from work duties with full pay until 21 March 2021, provided that the assignment of alternative employment is not reasonable. Please contact your superior about this and observe the Federal Ordinance, in particular Article 27a, paragraph 5.

The dispensation from the mask requirement has been restricted by the Federal Council. A medical certificate from a doctor or psychotherapist is required as proof of medical reasons.

Work meetings at the HSG are still possible in principle, but only if all Corona protection measures are observed.

The following will continue to apply until at least 5 April 2021 (begin Semester Break): lectures, courses and seminars will be held exclusively digitally, including in executive education - even if the 5-person group size rule is observed.

Those who wish to be vaccinated against Covid-19 in the coming weeks and months can do so during their working hours, choosing the closest vaccination centre.

Learning areas are available as far as possible. However, the principle must continue to apply that the learning areas are only visited by those students who do not have the opportunity to study at home.

Despite a certain measure of fatigue on the part of most of those involved, the HSG counts on the self-responsibility of all university members. Especially in the current situation, we as an institution and as individuals have an even greater responsibility towards the community and must adapt our behaviour accordingly. Only in this way can we ensure that our campus will be open again to a familiar extent in the future - which is the clear goal of all of us.

We would like to thank all university members for their responsible compliance with the protective measures and their understanding of and support for the substantial restrictions that are currently associated with them.

The following updated instructions are effective as of 1 March 2021.
2 General

a) Health: The health of students, researchers, faculty and staff is the most important thing.

b) Presence: Until further notice and until at least 5 April 2021, teaching will take place online (distance learning), as well as in executive education. The alternative scenarios for tightened Covid 19 measures are in force. During the same period, a home office obligation also applies, as far as is operationally possible. The principle of the HSG as an attendance University in teaching and work does not change.

c) Personal responsibility: At the centre of the protective measures is the self-responsible action of one and all individuals.

d) Hygiene and protection: The general hygiene and protection recommendations of the federal government and the canton must be followed. In addition to the existing facilities for hand washing, the university has provided hand disinfection stations located throughout the campus.

e) Symptoms of illness: Persons with symptoms of illness must remain at home at all times and are encouraged to seek medical advice and assistance by telephone.

f) Facilitation: Wherever possible, the university creates the conditions to ensure the success of studies or the performance of work by means of suitable measures (e.g. recording lectures, finding appropriate solutions in study-related hardship cases or online access for administrative work); this applies to both healthy and sick persons as well as to persons who belong to a particularly vulnerable group or are in quarantine.

g) Mandatory wearing of masks in general: All persons, regardless of their age, who are in the interior rooms of the university buildings (incl. teaching rooms, library, offices) must wear a protective mouth-nose mask that complies with the official recommendations. The mask obligation also applies to short distances such as changing offices or going to the toilet; likewise, in outdoor areas if the distances are not guaranteed. To be noted: The mask obligation is to be considered as a supplement to the basic distance rules. This means that learning and working situations should be organised in such a way that the distances can be maintained. Persons without a protective mask must leave the university premises immediately.

Exceptions: The mask requirement does not apply in situations where an individual is alone in rooms/offices. Neither does it apply if persons are released from the obligation to wear a mask by a doctor (see also page 2 of these rules of conduct).

h) Distance: The personal distance of at least 1.5 metres must be maintained whenever possible.

i) Members of high-risk groups: They are given additional protection. To this end, the Federal Council has introduced the right to home office or a leave of absence for particularly vulnerable persons - who cannot work in a home office due to their job and to whom no reasonable alternative home office activity can be assigned. You will be released from work duties with full pay until 21 March 2021. Please contact your supervisor(s) about this and refer to the Federal Ordinance, in particular Article 27a, paragraph 5. Students who are among the most vulnerable are requested to contact the relevant service unit.

j) Tracing: The University of St.Gallen strongly urges all its members to use the SwissCovid app provided by the Federal Government.
Note: The more precisely the whereabouts pattern of a person who has tested positive can be reconstructed, the fewer people will have to submit to a quarantine order.

k) **Social events**: For the time being, social HSG events will no longer take place (aperitifs, team events, etc.), either on campus or externally. In particular, the provisions of the Federal Covid 19 Ordinance of 18.12.2020 concerning "events" must be complied with at all times. Events organised by external providers are not possible on campus until further notice.

l) **Catering**: The specific protection concepts for so-called company canteens and restaurants apply. Consumption may only take place when an individual is seated. In principle, dining services only offered to those who cannot relocate their work to the home office in general or for individual situations. **The announcement of identity and presence via QR code at the seat is obligatory**. The HSG restaurant is open to a very limited extent and with significantly reduced service hours. **Please try not to always schedule your meals between 12 and 1 p.m. so that contacts in the catering areas can also be reduced.**

m) **Cleaning**: The premises are regularly and extensively aired. Work and contact surfaces are regularly cleaned and disinfected.

n) **Unisport**: Starting March 1, 2021, Unisport will offer a greatly reduced outdoor program (i.e., non-contact sports - 15 people max) in addition to the continued online offerings. There are no shower or changing facilities available on campus. Up-to-date information always available at: [sport.unisg.ch](http://sport.unisg.ch)

o) **Suspicion or positive test for Covid-19**: Please proceed according to the instructions.
3 University teaching and learning

a) The standard period of study will continue to be guaranteed. An alternative scenario for tightened Covid-19 measures was deposited for each course and is now in force.

b) Until further notice, teaching will take place exclusively online.

c) The online tools provided by the University (Canvas, Teams, Zoom, etc.) are mandatory for use by students and lecturers. Forwarding them to other collaboration tools or making their use mandatory is not permitted for data protection and cyber security reasons, among others (cf. IT usage regulations).

d) The University offers suitable examination options that take into account the official pandemic protection requirements and organisational parameters applicable at the time of the examination.

e) Learning areas are available as far as possible. However, the principle must continue to apply that the learning areas are only visited by those students who do not have the opportunity to study at home.

To note: It is mandatory to wear a protective mask even when seated - except in situations of eating and drinking. Drinks and refreshments may not be used as an excuse to avoid wearing the mask for a longer period of time.

f) The library remains open for lending and returns. It would be preferable to use the postal service. You will always find the latest information here.
4 Work activities

The following rules form the basis for the organisation of work activities, including work meetings. Events with a teaching character (cf. HSGacademy, internal continuing education) will take place exclusively online until further notice. For the time being, the work activities are based on the principles below as long as online teaching is in effect at the same time.

a) **Preventive measures:** Supervisors and employees are instructed to adhere to protective measures and re-organise work flow and personal interactions within their teams in such a way that a) infections and quarantine orders do not spread within the team and b) operations can continue to run as smoothly as possible.

b) **Home office:** Within the framework of the current special situation, relocations to home office **must** be carried out where this is possible. Presence should be limited to what is operationally necessary. This means that the organisational units must examine how home office can be implemented in the best possible way and how individual tasks and team interaction can continue to be performed. According to the Federal Council directives, there is no entitlement to compensation for expenses such as payments for rent, energy or additional IT equipment in the home office.

c) **Availability:** Even when working in a home office, there is an obligation to be available in time slots set by superiors - whether on-site or online. Persons who are particularly at risk are encouraged to find appropriate solutions with their supervisor on their own responsibility (see page 2 of this code of conduct).

d) **Cross-border commuters:** The insurance status due to the Covid 19 restrictions will not change for the time being. Cross-border commuters who work in their home office due to Corona remain insured in Switzerland. This “flexible application of the subordination rules” was agreed for Germany, France, Italy and Austria until 30 June 2021. [Further information](#).

e) **Care responsibilities:** The University of St.Gallen is aware that employees with care obligations are not always able to work their usual hours under the more difficult conditions. If employees have to take on additional care duties as part of the Covid 19 measures (cf. care of children under 12, care of persons, etc.), overtime and flexitime balances should first be reduced for this purpose. The partners of the employees concerned who are required to provide care should also be included in the responsibility for care.

In the event of existing or impending negative balances, an individual solution is to be found in a discussion between the employee(s), line manager(s) and the HR department in order to prevent cases of hardship - whereby in particular the possibilities of the Order on Compensation for Loss of Earnings (EO) concerning Covid-19 are to be taken into account.

f) **Self-isolation:** Persons who go into self-isolation to wait for test results do their work from home. If this is not possible, an agreement is made with the superiors, whereby minus balances should not arise as a result of self-isolation, cf. above explanations under letter 4e).

g) **Officially ordered quarantine:** Persons who have to go into quarantine by order of the authorities (travel to risk areas, contact tracing) should carry out their work from home. If this is not possible, an agreement should be made with superiors, whereby minus balances should not arise as a result of quarantine, cf. above explanations under letter 4e). **Exception:** If the
dangerous stay with persons or the journey to a risk area was made willingly and knowingly and for purely private reasons, a hardship regulation cannot be justified.

h) **Online tools**: The online tools provided by the university (O365, TEAMS, etc.) are mandatory in their use. The forwarding or use of other collaboration tools is not permitted, in particular for data protection and cyber security reasons (cf. [IT usage regulations](#)).

Please also always note the following additional information:

- [Mandatory quarantine for persons arriving in Switzerland (BAG)](#)
- [Regulations Corona Employment Replacement (EO)](#)