Covid-19: Code of conduct for Teaching and Working

Updated instructions as of 7 June 2021
(replaces all previous versions)

President’s Board, University Administration
St.Gallen, 7 June 2021

The university management reserves the right to adapt this code of conduct at any time if necessary.
I Introduction

Fundamental principles of the code of conduct: 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.

Interaction, communication and the inspiring exchange of ideas in teaching, research and university services are central to the self-image of the University of St. Gallen (HSG). Unfortunately, however, staying and working together on campus and in the University’s other properties is still only possible in a limited capacity.

The HSG counts on the self-responsibility of all university members. In the current situation, we as an institution and as individuals are particularly responsible to the community and must adapt our behaviour accordingly. Only in this way can we ensure that the campus will once again be open 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 continued responsible compliance with all of the following behavioural and protective measures, as well as their understanding of and support for the substantial restrictions that are unfortunately currently associated with them.

The following updated instructions are valid from Thursday, 3 June 2021.
2 General

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

b) **Self-responsibility:** At the centre of the protective measures is the self-responsible action of one and all individuals.

c) **Hygiene and safety:** 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 operates hand disinfection stations.

d) **Symptoms of illness:** Persons with symptoms of illness must remain at home at all times and are advised to seek medical advice and assistance by telephone. Please proceed according to the directions.

e) **Presence:** Teaching and continuing education may take place in presence, provided that all protective measures and official regulations are observed - in particular, the obligation to wear a mask and maintaining the minimum distance of 1.5 metres continue to apply. The same requirements apply to external events in the HSG properties. A home office recommendation also applies. Anyone who wants to work on site may do so. However, as soon as more than one person is present in a room, the mask requirement and the minimum distance must be observed in addition to the general protective measures.

f) **Enabling:** 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 or transmission of lectures, hybrid forms of events, finding appropriate solutions in study-related hardship cases or online access for administrative work); this applies both to healthy and sick persons as well as to persons who belong to a particularly vulnerable group or are in quarantine.

g) **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. They will be released from work duties with full pay until further notice. Please contact your supervisor about this and refer to the federal regulation. Students who are among those at particular risk are asked to contact the relevant service unit.

h) **Obligatory wearing of masks in general:** All persons who are in the interior rooms of the university buildings (incl. teaching rooms, library, office rooms) 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 only does not apply in situations where individual presence in rooms/offices results. Neither does it apply if persons are released from the obligation to wear a mask by a doctor.

i) **Distance:** The personal distance of at least 1.5 metres must be maintained whenever possible.
**Social events:** Restraint is still advisable when planning purely social events such as aperitifs. However, they can be held. The rules for catering establishments apply. That means inside: distance or barriers, a maximum of four people per table, a maximum of 30 people per event, collection of contact details of all guests and compulsory seating. Outside: Same rules with a maximum of six people per table, maximum of 50 people per event. No mask is required to be worn at the table, but anyone moving around the restaurant - indoors and outdoors - must wear a mask. Masks are compulsory for staff.

**Mensa:** The specific rules for catering establishments apply (see also point above, “Social Events”). The HSG restaurant offer is open to a reduced extent and with reduced service hours.

**Unisport:** Unisport offers its programme within the framework of the official requirements. The latest information is always available at: sport.unisg.ch
3 University teaching and learning

a) The **standard study periods** should continue to be guaranteed as far as possible. An alternative scenario for tightened Covid 19 measures was deposited for each course and is now in force.

b) Preparations for teaching in the **autumn semester 2021** are underway, details of which will be communicated at a later date.

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 policies**).

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

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

**Please note:** Even when seated, it is compulsory to wear a protective mask - except in situations of eating and drinking. Drinks and refreshments must not be used as an excuse to avoid wearing the mask for a longer period of time.

f) For the time being, the **library** remains open exclusively for lending and returns. Please use preferably the **postal service**. You will always find the latest information [here](#).

g) **Covid tests ("Betriebstestungen") at the HSG.** Students can also use the weekly Covid 19 tests at the HSG. See **point 4b** below.
4 Work activities

The following rules form the basis for the organisation of work practice incl. work meetings. Seminars of an educational nature (cf. HSGacademy, internal executive education) will take place exclusively online until further notice. The work practices will temporarily follow the principles below.

a) **Precautionary measures:** Supervisors and employees are instructed to carry out preventive work organisation and personal behaviour within the bounds of proportionality in such a way that a) infections do not affect the employees themselves or the entire team and b) operations can continue as smoothly as possible.

b) **Self-testing on HSG premises:** Employees (and students) of the University of St.Gallen can now test themselves for Covid-19 once a week. The tests are free of charge for both employees/students and the University. The federal government and the cantons bear the costs. The test day at the HSG is **Monday from 10 a.m. until close of office (10 p.m. at the latest)**. The tests are voluntary but are highly recommended by the HSG. The main aim is to find symptom-free infected persons and thus to interrupt chains of infection. In addition, contact quarantine is waived for employees of organisations that offer testing at least once a week to staff working on site. Further information is available on the [intranet](#).

c) 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.

d) **Working from home:** Within the framework of the current special situation, relocations to the home office are to be carried out where this is operationally possible (cf. so-called official home office recommendation). However, the presence for work in the HSG properties is permitted, whereby the obligation to wear a mask and the minimum distance of 1.5 metres must be implemented as soon as more than one person is present in a room. 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.

e) **Availability:** Even when working in a home office, there is an obligation to be available in time windows 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.

f) **Work meetings** and other **operationally necessary activities** that must take place in presence are possible at any time, but only in compliance with all Corona protection measures and with a **maximum of 30 people**.

g) **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" has been agreed for Germany, France, Italy and Austria until 30 June 2021. [Further information](#).

h) **Caring duties:** 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, support of persons, etc.), overtime and flexitime balances should first be reduced for
this purpose. Likewise, if possible, the employees’ caregivers (e.g. partners) should be included in the care responsibility.
In the event of existing or impending negative balances, an individual solution should be found in a discussion between the employee(s), line manager(s) and the HR department in order to prevent hardship cases - whereby the possibilities of the income compensation (EO) regarding Covid-19 should also be taken into account.

i) Self-isolation: Persons who go into self-isolation to wait for test results are recommended to 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 4f).

j) Statutorily mandated quarantine: Persons who have to go into quarantine by order of the authorities (travel to risk areas, contact tracing) should also carry out 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 quarantine, cf. above explanations under letter 4f). 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.

k) 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 policies).

Please also take note of the following further information at all times:

- Mandatory quarantine for incoming travellers (BAG)
- Regulations for coronavirus income compensation (EO)