



Guideline of the Rectorate of Graz University of Technology on University Operations in Connection with COVID-19

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	Created	Audited	Approved
Name	<i>Higher Education and Programme Development</i>	<i>Rector Kainz COVID-19 action committee</i>	<i>Rectorate's decision</i>
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1. Purpose

The purpose of this guideline is to ensure safe university operations in light of the COVID-19 pandemic by implementing appropriate measures.

2. Scope of application

This guideline applies to all TU Graz operations and all employees, students and visitors both at the university's own and external locations.

It is valid commencing on the day that the announcement appears in the University Gazette (Mitteilungsblatt) and extends through the winter semester 2022/23. This guideline represents a special regulation for university operations in epidemiological risk situations in connection with COVID-19 and thus supplements or replaces the relevant, generally applicable regulations (e.g. the House Rules of TU Graz). The validity of this guideline does not prevent the applicability and implementation of more specific, stricter COVID-19 prevention measures in areas that are not under the sole responsibility of TU Graz (e.g. external event locations).

3. Mailing list

To all members of TU Graz.

4. Further relevant documentation

- [Federal Act on the Organisation of Universities and their Studies \(Universities Act 2002, abbrev. UG 2002\) as amended](#)
- [Legal Regulations for Academic Affairs of the Statutes of Graz University of Technology as amended](#)
- [TU Graz COVID-19 Hygiene Manual as amended](#)
- [Reporting COVID-19 suspected cases or cases of illness of employees \(reporting obligation for employees of TU Graz\)](#)
- [Reporting COVID-19 suspected cases or cases of illness of students \(reporting obligation of TU Graz students\)](#)
- [2nd COVID-19 Higher Education Law \(in German: 2. C-HG or 2. COVID-19-Hochschulgesetz\) as amended](#)

5. Process responsibility

Member of the Rectorate responsible: Rector

6. Guideline

6.1 Preamble

With the help of this guideline, TU Graz ensures safe university operations during the COVID-19 pandemic and implements the applicable hygiene and safety standards, thus largely guaranteeing operations in all areas (operation, administration, teaching and research).

Depending on the epidemiological situation, TU Graz decides which measures are taken to ensure the safety of its employees, students and visitors, guided by the recommendations of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (German: BMBWF or Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung).

6.2 General regulations

The [TU Graz COVID-19 Hygiene Manual](#)¹ forms the basis for the corresponding rules of conduct for TU Graz members such as disinfection measures, ventilation, etc. TU Graz appeals to the personal responsibility of all university staff, students and visitors and expressly recommends a COVID-19 vaccination.

In the event of a suspected COVID-19 case, the process for reporting COVID-19 suspected cases or cases of illness among the TU Graz employees and students must be followed (contact tracing)².

The primary sources of information for members of TU Graz (internet³ and intranet⁴) are continuously updated. All members of TU Graz will be notified via e-mail if the respective measures change.

¹ See: <https://tu4u.tugraz.at/go/hygienehandbuch> (German) and <https://tu4u.tugraz.at/go/hygiene-manual> (English)

² The TU Graz reporting obligation and accompanying process is available on the intranet (see point 4). The reporting obligation of universities is established in the Epidemic Act 1950: Reporting suspected COVID-19 cases to the responsible health authorities, providing information about suspected COVID-19 cases and their contact persons as well as collecting the necessary personal data in compliance with the general principles of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

³ Bluesite: <https://tugraz.at/go/coronavirus>

⁴ TU4U: <https://tu4u.tugraz.at/bedienstete/unsere-tu-graz/coronavirus-faq-fuer-bedienstete/> (for TU Graz employees) and <https://www.tugraz.at/icoe/coronavirus/faq-studierende-students/> (for students)

6.3 Regulations for university operations

6.3.1 General regulations for university operations

Guided by federal recommendations, the TU Graz COVID-19 safety standards and measures are set by the Rectorate in coordination with the COVID-19 action committee and continuously kept up-to-date and available at: <https://tugraz.at/go/coronavirus>

In the event of an increased epidemiological risk, certain COVID-19 hygiene and safety standards may take effect, compliance with which is mandatory:

- FFP2 mask mandate
- Evidence of a low epidemiological risk⁵
- Restrictions on the use of the building
- Minimum social distance
- Reduction of occupancy density
- Restrictions on research operations
- Restrictions on teaching and examination operations, including internal continuing education and LLL (see also point 6.3.2.)
- Restrictions on in-person appointments
- Regulations for events
- Restrictions on business trips/leaves of absence
- Adaptation of the home office agreement

6.3.2 Regulations for teaching and examination operations

Depending on the situation, in-person examinations and teaching may have to be completely suspended for temporary periods during the semester. In such an event, TU Graz staff, students and lecturers will be informed via e-mail of the currently applicable regulations and any further changes.

As a consequence, courses and exams that will be held in the academic year 2022/23 must be planned such that an alternative method of holding the course or examination is available and can be implemented if necessary. When announcing the assessment criteria for the course, students must also be informed about how the course and its assessment or examination will be held should in-person teaching have to be temporarily suspended during the semester.

If during the semester there are unexpected changes to the form, course/examination dates, methods, or assessment criteria that have been announced for the course or examination before the beginning of the semester, the students have the right to withdraw from the course or examination without this being counted toward the total number of permissible examination attempts (§ 76 (4) Universities Act).

Alternatives to in-person examinations/teaching (such as oral exams held via video conferencing) must be made available particularly to students who have COVID-19, who have symptoms of COVID-19, or who belong to a COVID-19 risk group. This also applies to incoming foreign students as well as students who cannot be physically present due to travel restrictions or quarantine regulations.

⁵ The currently valid regulation are available on the Bluesite: <https://tugraz.at/go/coronavirus>

6.3.3 Evidence of low epidemiological risk when attending in-presence events

If the COVID-19 safety standards provide for evidence of low epidemiological risk⁵, the following applies:

All those who participate in courses and examinations that take place in person must provide evidence of a low epidemiological risk. Such participants include students and all persons involved in the in-presence event (examiners, heads of courses, lecturers, supervisory staff, security staff). All certificates issued by publicly authorised bodies that are recognised by the Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection are accepted as evidence. Furthermore, COVID-19 test certificates issued by the COVID-19 testing service of TU Graz and of the University of Graz are also accepted. The students are personally responsible for making sure that they take the COVID-19 test and receive their results in a timely manner.

The students must have evidence of a low epidemiological risk (e.g. certificate) at hand, which will then remain with the student. This evidence is checked before the student enters the venue of the in-person event or randomly during the stay at the venue. TU Graz does not further process or store any evidence of low epidemiological risk. Failure to submit evidence of a low epidemiological risk has the following legal consequences:

- a) The student is barred from taking part in the examination or course unit.
- b) With regard to lecture examinations, the student is deregistered with the explanation “for good reason” but not barred from taking the examination at a future date.
- c) For continuous assessment courses with mandatory attendance, failure to provide evidence is considered a one-time excuse for absence, provided that the teaching staff responsible for the course has not established any further attendance rules.

6.3.4 Evidence of a low epidemiological risk for employees at TU Graz

If the COVID-19 safety standards provide for evidence of low epidemiological risk⁵, the following applies:

The institute or OU management responsible ensures that the requirements for access to TU Graz are fulfilled by all employees:

- All TU Graz employees are obliged to carry electronic evidence of a low epidemiological risk with them when they are at their workplace. This evidence remains with the employees.
- The head of the institute or OU may ask employees to present their evidence of a low epidemiological risk at any time. The head of the institute or OU may delegate checking of evidence to the responsible department, group, or project manager in writing. The respective Dean's Office or Rectorate are responsible for checking evidence of a low epidemiological risk of the administrative personnel.
- TU Graz does not further process or store any evidence of low epidemiological risk.
- If evidence of a low epidemiological risk cannot or is not provided for verifiable personal reasons, employees may perform their work subject to strict compliance with the applicable hygiene measures (e.g. FFP2 mask, etc.) for a short time.
- If compliance with the applicable hygiene measures is refused, a medical certificate must be submitted as justification and the employee must work from home.

6.4 Entry into force and expiration

This guideline will enter into force on the day of publication in the University Gazette (Mitteilungsblatt) and expires on February 28, 2023.

With the entry into force of this guideline, the previous “Guideline of the Rectorate of Graz University of Technology on university operations in connection with COVID-19 (Corona traffic light classification system)” (German: Richtlinie des Rektorates der Technischen Universität Graz über den Universitätsbetrieb in Zusammenhang mit COVID-19 (Corona-Ampel)), published in the University Gazette on January 07, 2022, issue 7a 64, expires.