Guidelines on Holding

Exams, Courses, and Exam Reviews in Summer Semester 2020

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1. **Initial Situation**

   The aim of these guidelines is to outline the regulations for holding written exams, oral exams (individual exams, group exams, supplementary oral exams, oral doctoral exams, etc.), final theses, lab and practical courses, and written exam review sessions in the 2020 summer semester in accordance with the University Ordinance on the Corona Epidemic as well as the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs’ general decree. The current physical distance and hygiene regulations stipulated by the Robert Koch Institute must be adhered to in all the exams and courses held.

2. **Written Exams**

   2.1 **Preparation**

   Written exams may only be carried out in the lecture halls assigned by Department 1 or 11. The seats that students may take in these lecture halls are marked with adhesive tape. Unmarked seats may not be used, as this does not ensure sufficient physical distancing. Alternatively, it is possible to hold the written exam in other suitable venues, as long as there are no more than 25 candidates and all regulations as outlined below are met. In order to ensure that these requirements are met, the Occupational and Radiation Protection staff unit must prepare an individual risk assessment in advance, before the written exam is held. Any measures developed in this context must be strictly implemented and complied with.

   Based on the number of registered candidates, lecture halls with sufficient capacities will be booked for all centrally planned written exams that we know of. For written exams, preparation times will be extended by 15 minutes to meet the additional requirements for entering the lecture hall. Here, you will find a list of all available lecture halls and their capacities, adjusted to the current hygiene and physical distancing requirements. If you consider the booked venues unsuitable, too large, or if you would like to request any changes, please contact the room booking service at Raumvergabe@zhv.rwth-aachen.de. Please also contact the service team if you require venues for exams that are not centrally organized. This is the only way to ensure that you get access to the venues and avoid booking clashes.

   The list of available lecture halls also shows how candidates have to enter the respective exam room. Please inform candidates about the entrances they have to use. The aim is to prevent individuals gathering in larger buildings that have several entrances. In all buildings, the route that students have to take from the entrance to the respective lecture hall are marked. If you have any questions, please contact the responsible facility manager.

   All exam papers to be issued to each candidate, including paper for notes where applicable, must be stapled in advance. The papers must be distributed face down in the exam venue before the start of the exam. Candidates may only turn over the papers once the exam has officially begun. Turning over the exam papers earlier will be considered a cheating attempt. The students themselves must enter their name and student ID number on the exam papers. Please refrain from using pre-filled documents to allow distributed seating as described above.
In order to enable contact tracing if necessary, students are given a form with their written exam and asked to fill in their name, address, and telephone number. Students must leave the form on the desk at the end of the examination together with their exam papers. All other persons involved in conducting the examination on site (research assistants, student assistants, etc.) must also be traceable. The completed forms must be kept secure from unauthorized access and then destroyed after four weeks.

In each exam room, one member of academic staff and two other staff members or student assistants must be present as supervisory staff. When selecting supervisory staff, please observe the RKI’s guidelines on at-risk groups (https://www.rki.de/DE/Content/InfAZ/N/Neuartiges_Coronavirus/Risikogruppen.html). Due to the exceptional situation, individuals belonging to at-risk groups are not to be selected as supervisory staff. In cases of doubt, the University Medical Center will decide whether employees belong to an at-risk group.

If a university institution does not have sufficient staff to carry out the exam, please contact your Dean's Office to resolve the situation.

Disposable gloves (for employees), masks, and disinfectant will be provided in sufficient quantities in the lecture halls.

University departments must inform the candidates about the exam venue and when to arrive on site to ensure the exam can begin as scheduled. The candidates should be instructed to arrive on time (i.e. not too early) in order to avoid unnecessary queues and many students congregating in one place. Please also include the planned entry and exit options in your email.

In addition, students must be sent the "Corona-related Instructions", so that they are actively informed of the measures currently in force at RWTH to protect individuals against infection. Furthermore, students must be informed that individuals with respiratory symptoms (unless they have been cleared by a doctor, e.g. confirmed as a cold) or fever are not allowed in the buildings of RWTH and must be expelled from the premises immediately in case of violation. Should students experience acute symptoms of COVID-19 disease, they must leave the premises immediately. If at the beginning or during an exam, a student is suspected to have symptoms and should, therefore, be excluded from the exam, supervisors must immediately address them and ask them to put on their face mask. The student should be instructed to terminate the exam attempt and to leave the exam room and the university premises as soon as possible while observing the hygiene regulations. If the student follows this advice and terminates the exam, the exam attempt is to be considered “terminated due to illness” and, as a result, will be deemed not taken.

If a student exhibiting symptoms insists on continuing with the exam and staying in the exam room, the University Medical Center is to be contacted at 0241/80 92444 in order to make an authoritative decision on whether the student must terminate the exam or may continue with it. The student can continue with the exam until the doctor arrives, observing the hygiene regulations, in particular wearing the mouth and nose covering and maintaining the prescribed distance to others. When the doctor arrives, the student must leave the exam room in order to be physically examined. The supervisory staff must record the total duration of the physical examination.
If, after the physical examination, the representative from the University Medical Center decides that the student cannot continue with the exam, the attempt at the exam is declared void. If the University Medical Center considers the student able to continue with the exam, the doctor's instructions (e.g., regarding the wearing of mouth and nose covering, physical distance regulations, etc.) must be followed. The time the student has lost due to the physical examination must be made up with additional time after the exam has ended for everyone else. In order to keep the time required for the physical examination to a minimum, a suitable location for the examination should be selected before the doctor arrives, if possible.

In order to encourage a sensible response when students experience acute symptoms of illness, students can withdraw from the exam without specifying a reason for doing so by sending an email to the Central Examination Office right up until the beginning of the exam.

To ensure that the exam can be held in safe conditions at all times, students are obliged to carry at least one mouth and nose covering (face mask) with them and to put it on if requested by the supervisory staff and in any situations where the physical distancing measure may not be guaranteed. Students are permitted to wear a mouth and nose covering and gloves during the exam.

### 2.2 Entering the Exam Room

Department 11 will use adhesive tape to mark the applicable minimum distance between individuals waiting in line in front of the lecture halls. One member of supervisory staff must monitor whether the minimum physical distance is maintained in front of the lecture hall. Since August 10, 2020, it has also been compulsory to wear a mouth and nose cover in all corridors and hallways of RWTH buildings.

An area at the entrance of the lecture halls will be separated with plexiglass. A member of staff will check the identity of students attending the exam from behind the plexiglass shield. Conditional exam participation is currently not permitted. Candidates must pull down their mouth and nose covering for the identity check.

Students may use the hand disinfectant provided at the entrance. Please point this out to the students.

Afterwards, the lecture hall will be filled from back to front (depending on when the candidates enter the room, not on the order of the student ID number). A further member of supervisor staff is responsible for allocating places, so that no contact between the students occurs. Once the students have taken their places, they can remove their mouth-nose cover. Unless students are ordered to wear a mouth-nose cover by the supervisory staff due to special circumstances (in particular if the safety distance is not observed or symptoms of illness occur), there is no obligation to wear the mouth-nose cover permanently during the exam.

### 2.3 During the Exam

If a student has to go to the bathroom during the exam, they must give the supervisors a signal and put on their mouth and nose covering immediately. The students in the entire row of seats leading up to the next possible exit will then also have to put on their mouth and nose covering
and vacate their seats to comply with the distance regulations as the candidate makes their way to the exit. The students will have to proceed in the same way on the candidate’s return. If there is a free, easily accessible seat available, the supervisor will request the candidate to take their examination papers and personal belongings with them in order to prevent unnecessary disturbances for other students upon their return.

Should a candidate be asked to terminate the exam due to a cheating attempt, the student must also immediately put on a mouth and nose covering and, after submitting their exam papers, leave the lecture hall in the same way procedure for going to the bathroom. This procedure is also to be followed if a candidate has to terminate the exam due to illness.

Lecture halls that do not have a ventilation system in place (these have been marked by Department 11) must be ventilated every 20 minutes.

2.4 End of the Exam

When the exam has finished, students turn over their exam papers and leave them there. They must remain seated until given permission to leave their seats.

If the lecture hall has several doors, a different door is to be used for exiting it than for entering it. These doors are marked accordingly. The supervisory staff will organize the departure from the lecture hall starting with the rows nearest to the exit. The staff will explicitly point out that for infection protection reasons, no gatherings of people are permitted outside the building.

Once all the students have left the exam room, the staff collects the exam scripts. The exams will be assessed the next day at the earliest.

If, after the exam, it turns out that a participant (student or supervisory staff) was infected with COVID-19, everyone present in the room during the exam will be informed and identified as category II contact persons, according to the RKI. In these cases, special measures (e.g. quarantine) are not required. The RKI does, however, recommend such individuals minimize all contact with other people in the following 14 days and also check whether they have symptoms of coronavirus every day. RWTH also recommends keeping a diary of all contact with others during that time.

2.5 Special Case: E-Exams in ZuseLab

During the e-exams held in ZuseLab, all the seats will be equipped with fixed partitions. The minimum distance of 1.5 meters between the participants does not have to be adhered to in this instance, as contact tracing is ensured with the assigned seats. Until the beginning of the exams, however, they must wear a cloth mouth and nose cover at their desk and refrain from talking to the other exam candidates.

For all examinations that are held in cooperation with Media for Teaching, a seating plan will be kept on file for four weeks. If, after the exam, it turns out that a participant (student or supervisory staff) was infected with COVID-19, the seating plan can be evaluated immediately and everyone who was present will be informed. In addition, all of the students who were sitting within 1.5 m of this individual will be considered category I contact persons, according to the
RKI. Further, RWTH must report this group of candidates to the public health department and they will have a two-week quarantine order.

3. Oral Exams:

3.1 Legal Possibilities

According to the general decree of the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs, it is possible to conduct oral examinations in person under the following conditions:

- It must be ensured that no crowds, waiting lines, or the like can be formed at the entrance and exit of the exam room.

- A safety distance of at least 1.5 meters between all participants (students, assessors, and examiners) must be ensured by allocating places beforehand. This minimum distance must also be maintained up to the corridor area.

- The current physical distance and hygiene regulations stipulated by the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) must be strictly observed throughout the oral examination.

- Guests, listeners, and other individuals who do not necessarily have to be present during the oral examination must be excluded from the room.

In order to ensure that these requirements are met, the Occupational Safety and Radiation Protection Staff Unit must prepare an individual risk assessment in advance, before the oral examinations are held in person.

To effectively protect university members from infection, we strongly recommend that oral examinations are only held using suitable video conferencing systems.

If one of the individuals involved in the examination procedure would like the oral examination to be held via a video conferencing system, this wish must be complied with in accordance with Section 4 (7), sentence 2 of the Supplementary Provisions to the General Examination Regulations and the Doctoral Regulations of May 8, 2020 (Supplementary Provisions).

3.2 Implementation Recommendations

3.2.1 Oral Exams via a Video Conferencing System

In principle, all participants in an oral exam held via a video conferencing system should be present on the RWTH premises. Since August 10, 2020, it has been compulsory to wear a mouth and nose cover in all corridors and hallways of RWTH buildings. The examiner and the student should communicate via video conference from different rooms of the University. By using RWTH's own rooms, appropriate precautions can be taken to prevent the use of unauthorized aids and other attempts at deception as far as possible.

The data privacy statement must be made available for the students before their exam.
If the student is not able to come to the University, the oral exam can be held from home upon the examiner’s agreement.

If the student takes the oral exam from a room that is not on the University premises, the following points should be particularly noted:

- The student must show a clearly visible and legible photo ID to identify themselves before the start of the exam;
- The student must have the technical infrastructure to hold a video conference;
- The student should be captured on camera as fully as possible during the examination;
- The room in which the student is located should be shown to the examiners via web cam before the start of the exam to ensure that no unauthorized aids are within reach;
- The examiner may ask the student to show the room they are located in via web cam in order to rule out any cheating attempts, even during the course of the exam;
- The examiner may prohibit the student from using a virtual background during the video conference.

If there is a failure in the technology during the examination (e.g. a loss of connection or the image freezes), which significantly disturbs the examination, it must be terminated and rescheduled. If the problems with the audio and/or visual connection are minor and do not significantly disturb the examination, the examination can be continued. In the event of major problems with the audio and/or visual connection which significantly disturb the exam, the exam is to be terminated. The decision on whether a technical problem is to be considered a significant disturbance to the exam lies with the examiner(s).

If the student terminates the video conferencing session and it cannot be established that the loss of connection is due to a technical issue, the examination will be graded “insufficient” (5.0).

A report of the oral examination will be taken, as in the case of in-person oral examinations. This report should explain the technical framework conditions (in particular the type of software used, the quality of transmission, possible malfunctions, procedural instructions) as well as a detailed documentation of the students' answers. Remote oral exams are not recorded by the University.

Finally, it should be noted that the examiners’ grading consultation (if two examiners are involved according to Section 12 (3) of the GER) must take place without the student. The connection to the student must be interrupted during this time (e.g. by placing the student in the virtual waiting room).
3.2.2 In-Person Oral Examinations

3.2.2.1 Preparation

In-person oral examinations must take place in a meeting, seminar, or lecture room of the teaching unit to ensure that sufficient space is available. Places for the participants (examiners, assessors, students) must be clearly marked with adhesive tape in the room beforehand. The seats are to be designated so that there is a distance of at least 1.5 meters between the participants. Hand disinfectant shall be provided at the entrance of the exam room.

Examiners and students may wear a mouth and nose covering and gloves, which they bring along themselves, but are not obligated to do so.

When selecting employees to hold oral exams in person, the RKI’s guidelines on at-risk groups (https://www.rki.de/DE/Content/InfAZ/N/Neuartiges_Coronavirus/Risikogruppen.html) must be observed. Due to the current situation, employees from at-risk groups are not allowed to hold in-person oral examinations. In cases of doubt, the University Medical Center will decide whether employees belong to an at-risk group. If the university institution does not have enough staff to hold the exam, they must resolve the shortage with the relevant Dean’s Office.

Disposable gloves (for employees), a mouth and nose covering, and disinfectant can be ordered from the Central Warehouse.

The institutes must inform the students via the virtual classroom of the time and place of the exam to ensure it begins as scheduled.

In this context, it should be pointed out that students must arrive on time (i.e. not too early), in order to avoid unnecessary waiting lines and many students congregating in one place.

In order to enable contact tracing if necessary, students’ names, addresses, and telephone numbers must be recorded. This can for example mean using a form containing sections where students fill in their name, address, and telephone number. This data must be provided in order to allow oral examinations to be held in person. All other persons involved in the exam (examiners, assessors, etc.) must also be traceable. The data must be kept secure from unauthorized access and then completely destroyed after four weeks.

In addition, students must be sent the "Corona-related Instructions", so that they are actively informed of the measures currently in force at RWTH to protect individuals against infection. In addition, students must be informed that individuals with respiratory symptoms or fever are not allowed in the buildings of RWTH and must be expelled from the premises immediately in case of violation. Should students experience acute symptoms of COVID-19 disease, they must leave the premises immediately. Should a student be excluded from the exam by the examiners because of their symptoms, the exam will be considered not taken. The student is to be offered a new exam attempt via video conferencing.
### 3.2.2.2 Entering the Exam Venue

Entry to the examination room is to be arranged so that contact with other students or staff is avoided. Adhesive tape must be used on the floor of the exam room to ensure that candidates who are waiting keep to the minimum distance of 1.5 meters. A supervisor, e.g. a student assistant, will monitor whether the distancing rules are observed. Since August 10, 2020, it has also been compulsory to wear a mouth and nose cover in all corridors and hallways of RWTH buildings. Students may only enter the exam room one by one. They must prove their identity before the exam starts. They may have to pull down their mouth and nose covering for this. It is sufficient for candidates to show their national ID or BlueCard. Then the examiner will allocate a place for the student.

Students must have the opportunity to use hand disinfectant at the entrance. Please point this out to the students.

### 3.2.2.3 The End of the Examination

Once the exam grade has been announced, students must leave the room one by one. They are to be instructed to keep the minimum distance at all times.

When the students exit the room at the end of the exam or have to leave it due to the consultation between the examiners, they must also observe the distance of 1.5 meters around the entrance area. A supervisor must also be present to monitor this.

If, after the oral exam, it turns out that a participant (students, examiners, or supervisory staff) was infected with COVID-19, everyone present in the room during the exam will be informed and identified as category II contact persons, according to the RKI. In these cases, special measures (e.g. quarantine) are not required. The RKI does, however, recommend such individuals minimize all contact with other people in the following 14 days and also check whether they have symptoms of coronavirus every day. RWTH also recommends keeping a diary of all contact with others during that time.

### 3.3 Procedural Information for Students

#### 3.3.1 Oral Exams via a Video Conferencing System

Before the start of the exam, students are to be provided with information on the remote exam procedure. In particular, the following details should be mentioned:

- If the exam takes place in a room at RWTH, everyone involved will be required to wear a mouth and nose covering in the corridors in RWTH from August 10 onward.

- Remote oral examinations are not recorded by the University. However, as usual, examiners must take a written report of the examination.

- It is not permitted for students or third parties to record the examination.

- During the examination, the candidate must be fully visible, as far as possible.
- If the candidate is located outside the University premises, they will be asked to show their environment via webcam upon commencement of the oral exam to ensure that everything is in order.

- The examiner can prohibit the use of a virtual background during the entire video transmission.

- If the candidate is located outside the University premises, examiners may ask the candidate to show their environment again via webcam to make sure that there is no attempt at cheating.

- If the student cuts the connection during the examination and it cannot be established that this loss of connection is due to a technical issue, the examination will be graded “insufficient” (5.0).

- If there is a failure in the technology during the examination (e.g. a loss of connection or the image freezes), which significantly disturbs the examination, the examination must be terminated and rescheduled.

- In the event of minor problems with the audio and/or visual connection which do not significantly disturb the examination, the examination can be continued.

- In the event of major problems with the audio and/or visual connection which significantly disturb the examination, the examination is to be terminated.

- The decision on whether a technical problem is considered a significant disturbance to the examination lies with the examiner(s).

3.3.2 In-Person Oral Examinations

Before the start of the exam, students are to be provided with information on the exam procedure. In particular, the following details should be mentioned:

- Mouth and nose coverings must be worn in the entrance area and corridors in front of the room where the exam is to be held.

- The Instructions/Information on the measures currently in force to protect individuals against infection with SARS-CoV-2 must be read and adhered to.

- Individuals with respiratory symptoms (unless they have been cleared by a doctor, e.g. identified as a cold) or fever are not allowed in the buildings of RWTH and will be expelled from the premises immediately in case of violation. Should students experience acute symptoms of COVID-19 disease, they must leave the premises immediately. If at the beginning or during an exam, a candidate is suspected of having symptoms and should, therefore, be excluded from the exam, they will subsequently be given a new examination date for an oral examination via video conferencing system. We therefore urge you not to come to the exam if you think that you might be infected or ill so as not to expose the supervisory staff or your fellow students to any unnecessary risk.
- You must spend as little time as possible in the entrance areas and corridors of the buildings, so please arrive on time (i.e. not early) for the exam.

- The distance to be maintained in front of the exam halls is marked with adhesive tape. This distance must be strictly maintained at all times.

- Your identity will be checked as you enter the exam room. You must pull down your mouth and nose covering for this.

- You are obligated to carry a mouth and nose covering with you and wear it in the entrance areas and corridors of the buildings. In addition, you will have to put it on during the exam when requested by the supervisory staff and in any situations where the minimum distance may not be guaranteed.

- You may use the hand disinfectant provided at the entrance and are strongly encouraged to do so.

- The seats you may use are indicated with adhesive tape in all exam rooms. You may not use any unmarked seats. You must strictly follow the instructions from the supervisory staff. Any violations and disturbances can result in your exclusion from the exam. In this case, the exam in question is assessed as "insufficient" (5.0).

- At the end of the exam, a supervisor will organize the students' departure from the exam hall. Please then leave the building as soon as possible, while keeping the minimum distance from others.

4. Final Theses

4.1 Preparatory Work

Preparatory work within the scope of the final thesis, which must be carried out in person (e.g. research or laboratory work), may be conducted once an individual protection concept has been agreed upon with the Occupational Safety and Radiation Protection Staff Unit.

After consulting the students, the institutes specify time slots in which the respective work can be carried out.

No more than 20 students may be present in the room where the preparatory work is carried out at any one time. If possible, students should be assigned a fixed workplace with respective floor markings (e.g. adhesive tape) indicating the radius within which students can move while still keeping the minimum distance. The applicable minimum distance must be observed throughout the preparatory work, therefore participants are not obligated to wear gloves nor a mouth and nose covering. Students are allowed to wear a mouth and nose covering and gloves during the preparatory work, which they bring along themselves, but are not obligated to wear them. If the safety distance cannot be maintained continuously due to the room conditions, all persons present are obligated to wear a mouth and nose covering.

If several different groups use the premises on the same day, the arrival and departure should be organized in specified groups in order to minimize contact.
The preparatory work is supervised by institute staff and at least one research assistant must be present on site. When participants talk to each other during the preparatory work, they must always make sure that they keep the minimum distance. Disposable gloves (for employees), a mouth and nose covering, and disinfectant can be ordered from the Central Warehouse.

In order to ensure contact tracing if necessary, students are required to bring a completed form to each appointment, which specifies their name, address, and telephone number. All other persons involved must also be traceable. The data must be kept secure from unauthorized access and then completely destroyed after four weeks (from the event in question.) Students must be sent the Corona-Related Instructions, so that they are actively informed of the measures currently in force to protect individuals against infection. Furthermore, students must be informed that individuals with respiratory symptoms (unless they have been cleared by a doctor, e.g. confirmed as a cold) or fever are not allowed in the buildings of RWTH and must be expelled from the premises immediately in case of violation. Should students experience acute symptoms of COVID-19 disease, they must leave the premises immediately. In this case, students can apply to the examination board for an extension of the write-up period.

4.2 Submitting the Final Thesis

As already regulated in Section 11 of the Supplementary Provisions to the General Examination Regulations, the deadline for the submission of final theses, which partly cover the period up to April 19, 2020, was extended by one month. This extension is registered by the Central Examination Office, therefore students do not need to submit a request for this. Please note that this regulation does not apply to courses of study at the Faculty of Architecture.

Institutes must take account of any adverse effects the corona pandemic may have on working conditions in assignments for theses that fall in the period from April 20, 2020. In addition, students may apply for an extension of the write-up period according to Section 17 (7) ÜPO/GER and Section 20 (7) ÜPO/GER LAB/ÜPO/GER M. Ed at any time. As usual, the respective examination board will decide on the case.

As a rule, the study-specific examination regulations stipulate that the final thesis must be submitted at the Central Examination Office. If this is not the case, the instructors must independently organize a submission option in accordance with the physical distance and hygiene regulations. They must inform students of this procedure by email ahead of time. It may be helpful to arrange submission deadlines with students to keep the possibility of contact as low as possible.

4.3 Free Attempt Regulation

Final theses are not covered by the free attempt regulation, as there is no change to the form of assessment. Any impairments are taken into account with a respective extension to the write-up period (see above.)

5. Lab Courses and Practical Training

5.1 Legal Possibilities
In observance of the general decree of the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs, it is possible to conduct lab courses and practicals in person under the following conditions:

- It must be absolutely necessary to hold the course as an in-person event, as it requires special facilities, equipment, or other special conditions (e.g. laboratories).
- No more than 20 people are allowed to participate in the course.
- The current hygiene and physical distance requirements as defined by the RKI must be observed.
- If the currently valid hygiene and physical distance requirements cannot be met at all times, all individuals present (students, instructors, supervisory staff) must wear a mouth-and-nose covering.

The aim of these guidelines is to make it easier for instructors to develop the above mentioned safety concept. The following information takes into account the provisions of the “SARS-CoV-2 Occupational Safety and Health Standard” of the German Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs dated April 16, 2020, and the General Decree of the NRW Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs. In order to provide the best possible protection for all those involved, the occupational safety measures are to be implemented based on the hierarchy of measures according to the so-called T-O-P principle (ranking from technical to organizational to personal safety measures). When organizing the course, a minimum distance of 1.5 m between all persons involved must be maintained wherever possible.

5.2 Procedure Before In-Person Lab Courses Can Be Carried Out

- The person responsible for holding the lab course must first contact the Occupational and Radiation Protection staff unit via email (arbeitssicherheit@zhv.rwth-aachen.de). A tailored safety concept, which also includes a risk assessment, must be jointly developed (clearance of the rooms and facilities by Occupational Safety, meeting hygiene and physical distancing requirements, appropriate seating and workplace arrangements, procedures for entering and leaving the room.)

- The responsible instructor must submit a substantiated request for permission to hold the course as in person to the Crisis Management Team at krisenstab@zhv.rwth-aachen.de via their Faculty’s Dean’s Office. This request email must include

  1. The course ID of the lab course (RWTHonline course ID)
  2. The safety concept including the risk assessment
  3. The reasons why the lab course must be held in person

- The Rectorate will decide whether it is absolutely necessary to hold the lab course in person. For lab courses carried out by the Faculty of Medicine, the Faculty Dean is responsible for making this decision. The request and the accompanying documents are forwarded internally by the Crisis Management Team
- The approval or refusal is communicated by the Crisis Management Team. It is not permitted to carry out an in-person lab course before approval is given.

5.3 Before the Start of the Lab Course

Before the start of the course, all participants must receive a safety briefing, preferably online. This briefing must provide information on the hygiene regulations currently in place, the at-risk groups as defined by the RKI (individuals with chronic respiratory conditions, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, etc.), and broach the topic of pregnancy. Should individuals from at-risk groups or pregnant women want to participate in the excursion, appropriate measures are to be taken in coordination with the University Medical Center.

Furthermore, all those involved must be informed that individuals with respiratory symptoms (unless a doctor has documented these to be symptoms of a regular cold, for example), fever, or other COVID-19 symptoms are not allowed to participate in the course. All those affected will be given the opportunity to participate in a session at a later date.

In order to ensure contact tracing if necessary, students are required to bring a completed form to each appointment, which specifies their name, address, and telephone number. The institute can give students the chance to enter the required data once in a list (on paper or online, in compliance with data protection regulations), which also serves to record attendance per appointment and is included with the examination papers. The provision of data (once in a list or with the completed form each appointment) is a prerequisite for participating in the lab course. All other persons involved in the lab course must also be traceable. The data must be kept secure from unauthorized access and then completely destroyed after four weeks (from the event in question.) If the data are recorded in an attendance list, the retention periods for examination documents apply.

5.4 Entering the Lab Course Venue

Entry to the course facilities is to be arranged so that participants are able to keep the minimum distance from others at all times. In order to prevent individuals gathering in front of or inside the building, overlapping of different course sessions must be avoided; furthermore, participant groups are to be prevented from arriving and leaving at the same time and using the same routes to access the venue. Signs and floor markings can also be used to draw participants’ attention to the minimum distance requirements. Since August 10, 2020, it has also been compulsory to wear a mouth and nose cover in all corridors and hallways of RWTH buildings.

In order to meet the minimum distance requirements, changing rooms should only be entered individually or in small groups. Participants must bring their own laboratory coats and protective goggles, as such equipment may not be issued by the host institution on safety grounds. Laboratory coats should not be stored together. This also applies to cloakroom areas, typically located in the entrance areas of laboratories. Laboratory coats should be cleaned regularly.

5.5 Holding the Lab Course

Lab facilities typically have a large number of work stations and routes close to the busy areas; for this reason, the number of participants should be kept to the absolute minimum. When
allocating work stations, a minimum distance of 1.5 m between participants must be ensured. When establishing the work stations, other aspects of occupational safety (e.g. width of escape routes, risk of tripping, quick access to, and inspection of, fume hoods, etc.) must be observed. One-way routes may be established to observe the minimum distance requirements. Situations where participants gather in front of devices/equipment or at specific workplaces (e.g. scales, centrifuges, drying cabinets, etc.) must be avoided.

Any activities to be carried out during the lab course should be limited to the necessary minimum. Pre-assessments and colloquia are not to be held on site during the lab course if they can be carried out remotely via electronic media or learning platforms.

Personal protective equipment (e.g. safety goggles, visor, etc.), work equipment, and laboratory coats must be used and stored for designated personal use. If this is not possible, using disposable materials is preferable. If disposables are unavailable, the work equipment must be cleaned after each use. For lab courses, individual workstations could be equipped with science kits, in which the materials necessary for the experiment, such as work equipment (e.g. glassware, tongs, small devices), disposable materials, and consumables are provided to be used exclusively by the student at that station.

In the event that technical and/or organizational measures are not feasible or appropriate and the required minimum distance falls below 1.5 meters, mouth and nose coverings must be worn. If participants voluntarily wish to wear a mouth-nose-covering, this is to be permitted, provided that this does not increase the risk to personal safety (e.g. when working with naked flames). If necessary, compensatory measures (e.g. wearing a protective face shield) can be taken in those cases.

5.6 After the Lab Class

All work equipment and surfaces must be cleaned thoroughly. As a rule, the use of a simple aqueous soap solution is sufficient. If the activity itself involves disinfecting the surfaces used (e.g. in biology work areas), this must be in accordance with the applicable instructions.

Once the lab class has finished, it must be ensured that participants do not linger and congregate in groups. This applies in particular to exits, corridors, bathrooms, and changing rooms.

If, after the lab course, it turns out that a participant (students, examiners, or supervisory staff) was infected with COVID-19, everyone present in the room during of the lab will be informed and identified as category II contact persons, according to the RKI. In these cases, special measures (e.g. quarantine) are not required. The RKI does, however, recommend such individuals minimize all contact with other people in the following 14 days and also check whether they have symptoms of coronavirus every day. RWTH also recommends keeping a diary of all contact with others during that time.

6. Exam Reviews

6.1 Preparing for Exam Reviews In Person
In-person exam reviews may only be carried out in the lecture halls assigned by Department 11. University institutions are asked to coordinate time slots for exam review sessions with Department 11 (raumvergabe@zhv.rwth-aachen.de). Alternatively, it is possible to hold the exam review session in other suitable venues, as long as no more than five candidates will attend and all the regulations outlined below are met. In order to ensure that these requirements are met, the Occupational and Radiation Protection staff unit must prepare an individual risk assessment in advance, before the exam review is held. Any measures developed in this context must be strictly implemented and complied with.

Department 11 will mark the seats that students may take in these lecture halls with adhesive tape, so as to comply with the physical distancing regulation. Unmarked seats may not be used, as this does not ensure sufficient physical distancing.

At present, only the individual who wrote the exam may review the exam script. If they cannot attend the review, the institute has to arrange for an online exam review for the student.

The teaching units organize the appointment slots for the exam review. The group size may not be larger than the number of places available. Arrival and departure should be organized in groups in order to minimize contact.

The teaching unit requires at least one research assistant and two other staff members or student assistants to be present per lecture hall. Disposable gloves and masks are available on request. However, the applicable physical distancing measures must be observed throughout the exam review, therefore participants are not obligated to wear gloves nor a mouth and nose covering.

When selecting the employees for the exam review, the RKI's guidelines on at-risk groups (https://www.rki.de/DE/Content/InfAZ/N/Neuartiges_Coronavirus/Risikogruppen.html) must be observed. Due to the special situation, no employees in at-risk groups are currently available for exam reviews. In cases of doubt, the University Medical Center will decide whether employees belong to an at-risk group. If the institution does not have enough staff to be able to carry out an exam review, the shortage shall be resolved with the respective Dean’s Office.

Disposable gloves (for employees), mouth and nose coverings, and disinfectant will be provided in sufficient quantities in the lecture halls.

The institutes must inform the students of the time and place of the exam review to ensure it begins as scheduled. In this context, it should be pointed out that students should arrive on time (i.e. not too early), in order to avoid unnecessary waiting lines and many students congregating in one place. We recommend using appointment scheduling tools to avoid waiting lines.

In addition, students must be sent the “Corona-related Instructions” so that they are actively informed of the measures currently in force to protect individuals against infection. Furthermore, students must be informed that individuals with respiratory symptoms (unless they have been cleared by a doctor, e.g. confirmed as a cold) or fever are not allowed in the buildings of RWTH and must be expelled from the premises immediately in case of violation. Should stu-
Students experience acute symptoms of COVID-19 disease, they must leave the premises immediately. If a student is refused entry, the institute must provide them with an electronic copy of the exam (see Online Exam Review.)

In order to ensure contact tracing if necessary, students are required to bring a completed form to each review session, which specifies their name, address, and telephone number. This data must be provided in order to allow exam review sessions to be held in person. All other persons involved in the on-site exam review (research assistants, student assistants, etc.) must also be traceable. The data must be kept secure from unauthorized access and then completely destroyed after four weeks.

In order to ensure that the operating procedure is maintained at all times during the exam review, students are obligated to carry at least one mouth and nose covering with them and wear it when requested by the supervisory staff and in any situations where the physical distancing measure may not be guaranteed.

### 6.2 Entering the Exam Review Room

Department 11 will use adhesive tape to mark the applicable minimum distance between individuals waiting in line in front of the lecture halls, to ensure that the safety distance is adhered to. One member of supervisory staff will monitor whether a physical distance is maintained in front of the lecture hall. Since August 10, 2020, it has also been compulsory to wear a mouth and nose cover in all corridors and hallways of RWTH buildings.

An area at the entrance of the lecture halls will be separated with plexiglass. A member of staff will check the identity of the students attending the exam review from behind the plexiglass shield. Students must pull down their mouth and nose covering for the identity check. Students must hand in the completed contact tracing form. Then the exam will be handed out.

Students may use the hand disinfectant provided at the entrance. Please point this out to the students.

Afterwards, the lecture hall will be filled from back to front. A further member of supervisor staff is responsible for allocating places, so that no contact between the students occurs.

### 6.3 Carrying Out the Exam Review

Students can take notes or make copies with their smartphone.

Students may wear a mouth and nose covering and gloves, which they bring along themselves, but they are not obligated to do so.

A personal discussion of evaluations between students and examiners is possible in compliance with the following conditions:

- Separate places will be set up for this purpose, with students and examiners isolated by an acrylic/plexiglass shield. The places must be arranged so that a distance of at least 1.5 meters between the participants can be maintained in all directions.
- When moving around the room, candidates must wear the mouth-nose covering, which they can then remove once they are back in their seat.
- The students' places and all contact areas (such as the surface of the desk and, if necessary, the acrylic/plexiglass shield) are cleaned daily.

6.4 End of the Exam Review

At the end of the exam review, a supervisor will organize the students' departure from the lecture hall, starting with the rows nearest the exit. Before leaving the lecture hall, students will hand in their exam scripts, together with any objections they may have to the evaluation, into a container situated at the exit. Any objections can also be submitted by email to the deadline specified by the institute. The decision on the objections will also be communicated by email, unless the student explicitly insists on having a written decision.

If, after the exam review, it turns out that a participant (students, examiners, or supervisory staff) was infected with COVID-19, everyone present in the room during the review will be informed and identified as category II contact persons, according to the RKI. In these cases, special measures (e.g. quarantine) are not required. The RKI does, however, recommend such individuals minimize all contact with other people in the following 14 days and also check whether they have symptoms of coronavirus every day. RWTH also recommends keeping a diary of all contact with others during that time.

6.5 Online Exam Review

There are no restrictions to online exam reviews apart from the data protection regulations that must still be adhered to. The teaching units may set an appointment and a time period for the online review to take place. Students can view their exams during this time. It should be noted that access to your own exam script may only be granted via a password-protected room, e.g. via the course classroom. Objections to the assessment can be submitted by email to the deadline specified by the institute. The decision will also be communicated by email unless the student explicitly insists on having a written decision.

Information on online exam reviews via the RWTHmoodle classroom