|  |
| --- |
| Date: 31 March 2022  |
|  **Bielefeld University Hygiene Concept****for Teaching and Studying** |
| **1. Background and Purpose**Following the expiration and/or modification on 19 March 2022 to some of the legal requirements for the Coronavirus pandemic (especially the Infection Protection Act, *IfSchG*) and on 2 April 2022 (especially in the Coronavirus Protection Ordinance and the Coronavirus Pandemic Regulations for Institutions of Higher Learning of the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia), greater focus will be placed more on the university’s hygiene concept, which has already been in force and was coordinated with university committees as part of previous Organizational Decrees.The following hygiene concept for teaching and studying at Bielefeld University is based on the results of a completed risk assessment and contains the ‘basic protective measures for infection control’ in a concise, summarized form. |
| **2. Scope**These regulations are in effect for the entire campus, including all university buildings, for all students and instructors of Bielefeld University. |
| **3. Guiding Principle**All students and instructors present on the university campus are required to behave in such a way so as not to expose themselves or others to an unreasonable risk of infection. In this regard, the regulations outlined here must be observed. |
| **4. Presence on Campus and in University Buildings**Individuals with respiratory symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath), fever, or loss of sense of smell or taste are not allowed on the university campus, unless their illness has been medically cleared as having a cause other than SARS-CoV2.Likewise, individuals who must isolate (due to COVID-19 infection) or quarantine (contact persons) in compliance with applicable legal requirements or on the order of public health authorities are not allowed on campus. |
| **5. Mask Requirement**Teaching and studying are to take place primarily in-person. In order to make this possible, and to avoid having large numbers of instructors or students out sick or unable to participate in class, a medical-grade mask must be worn indoors. This mask requirement is a crucial measure, because in addition to helping ensure in-person teaching operations, it is also designed to help protect the health of staff members and students while also addressing the concerns of some members of the university community over the current situation. Due to the physical layout of the university, with its large central hall, and frequently changing groups of people, the large amount of internal contact indoors must be taken into account.A medical-grade mask (a surgical mask at a minimum) is therefore still required to be worn in certain indoor areas for the time being, including:* In all areas of public traffic at the university (hallways, stairways, elevators, the Main University Hall, foyers, etc.).
* In the library and stores.
* During academic courses, examinations, and at student workstations (e.g. in lecture halls, seminar rooms, and in the library).

Exceptions continue to exist for courses in which wearing a mask is not possible due to the nature of the course or activity, or would otherwise be disadvantageous (e.g. for instructors giving a lecture, or for students while playing sports, playing wind instruments, or handling hazardous chemicals in laboratories).The mask can be removed to eat or drink; if possible, social distancing should be maintained during this time. Specific rules for mask wearing may apply e.g. for catering facilities (such as the Association for Student Affairs, *Studierendenwerk*). These rules are determined separately under the authority of their respective operators and must also be observed. |
| **6. Hygiene Measures and Ventilation** Regular hand-washing is still recommended: the restrooms have sinks, liquid soap, and paper towels as well as disinfectant dispensers for this. Additional disinfectant dispensers are located in main entrance areas of the Main University Building and Building X, as well as in front of lecture halls and seminar rooms.Some areas are equipped with mechanised ventilation (e.g. library, lecture halls, and some seminar rooms). In other centrally managed seminar rooms, which can only be ventilated by opening the windows, there are air purification units with HEPA filters that are operated by timer during customary course times. Please report defective or non-functioning air purifying devices to the university’s Central Control Room (Tel. 0521-106-7777).Regular window ventilation is also necessary in seminar rooms with air purification devices to ensure good air quality.When using office and meeting rooms, sufficient air exchange must be ensured with regular window ventilation (at least every 20 minutes, intermittent airing out of room by opening windows and doors). The more people who use the room, the shorter the time between ventilation intervals should be (if no central ventilation exists). |
| **7. Protection of Individuals with Special Health Considerations**Students who have increased likelihood of severe COVID-19 infection due to their individual risk factors are advised to seek medical advice prior to attending in-person courses.For pregnant students, an individual risk assessment must be performed prior to attending mandatory in-person classes (see <https://uni-bielefeld.de/einrichtungen/agus/studierende/2021-09-09_Erganzende-GBU_Schwangere_v07.pdf>). In general, pregnant students may attend in-person courses and events provided that the risk assessment concludes there is no unjustifiable risk as defined in the Maternity Protection Act.These regulations also apply to required in-person examinations: examiners are obligated to minimize the risk to pregnant students as far as possible by taking appropriate and feasible measures (e.g. having the pregnant student complete the exam in a separate room).  |