

Organization and action plan of ESMT Berlin in a pandemic situation

On the bases of the „Berliner Stufenplan für den Hochschulbetrieb unter Pandemiebedingungen“ / *Berlin phase plan for university operations in a pandemic situation*
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0. Preface

A pandemic means that a pathogen (e.g., an infection transmitted via air) spreads across the globe, incorporating the following properties:

- The pathogen has illness-causing characteristics.
- It is easily transmittable from one person to another.
- The population has not yet developed an effective immune response to it.

Even if the pathogen causes rather mild symptoms, many people can fall ill simultaneously or be occupied and unavailable due to their taking care of a sick family member. ESMT Berlin has to be prepared for such a case to be able to react flexibly.

1. Goal of the pandemic plan

ESMT's pandemic plan has the following objective:

- the safety of all members of the university community (ESMT community), namely students, participants of executive education programs, faculty, staff, doctorates, freelancers, and guests: Reducing morbidity and outbreak risk, disrupting the chain of infection, and
- maintaining teaching, research, and event operations as well as administrative activities.

2. Organizational and personnel planning

At ESMT, a coordination group was implemented to plan and coordinate suitable measures in case of a pandemic: the "Coronavirus Taskforce (CTF)". In a crisis situation, the CTF takes responsibility to enforce necessary measures.

The president, the CFO, or a person appointed by them will be the chairperson of the CTF.

The Coronavirus Task Force consists of:

- the president (or a representative)
- the CFO (or a representative)
- the Dean of Programs
- the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs
- the Associate Dean, Degree Programs
- the Dean of Faculty and Research
- the heads of the departments "Human Resources", "Communications", "Facility Management", "IT", "Event Management"

If appropriate, the circle of CTF members may be extended.

The coordination group meets regularly on a weekly or a bi-weekly basis or on demand (via video or audio conference).

To ensure CTF's capacity to work, also in case of a pandemic, contact lists are created of the members as well as their representatives.

3. Procedures and action plan in case of infections

Scenario A: Occurrence of a case and unprotected contact to other members of the ESMT community

Initial situation:

The university is informed about a positive case of a member of the ESMT community by the (responsible) health department or directly by the affected person. The health department requests the corresponding contact log, e.g. participants of specific events.

Upon entrusting internal documentation of attendance records to the health department, contact tracing will be conducted by them as well as ESMT's human resources department, in cooperation with the affected person, to identify category I contacts and inform them immediately.

Measures within ESMT:

- Upon receiving notification from the health department OR the affected person, the responsible dean (for students) or the head of HR (for employees) will inform the CTF about the positive case (without mentioning names of those affected / positively tested).
- The CTF meets to consult and agree on necessary measures.
- The Head of HR is the designated main contact person for the health department.

- Simultaneously, the internal tracing of direct contacts takes place.
 - > *primarily contacts of category I (according to RKI) with close contact ("higher" risk of infection):*
 - = *people that were in continuous face-to-face contact with an infected person for at least 15 minutes, e.g., having a conversation (this includes people living in the same household for example).*
 - > **Responsible parties:** the respective head of the department + HR (for employees) or the respective dean (for students) in cooperation with HR
- ESMT supports the positively tested person via email or telephone in tracing their contacts according to RKI's category I, using a standardized questionnaire.
- Additionally, the affected person will receive an email with instructions on what to do.
- The head / lead / dean will fill in a list of contacts, including the following data:
 - Name, class, department / area of the positively tested person
 - Date of onset of first symptoms (if available)
 - Date of the positive test
 - Last date of presence on the ESMT campus / at a lecture / event / seminar
- Students will receive the preliminary written information by the respective dean or lead via email, notifying those determined to have been in contact (category I) with the positively tested person about the possible risk of infection.
 - > The procedure depends on whether or not the affected person (positive COVID 19 test) has given their consent to reveal their name (according to annex "ESMT procedures")
- Concerning ESMT staff, ALL employees will be informed promptly via email by HR about the occurred case, STATING the area / department the affected person works at. The name will not be mentioned.
- For events / seminars, the Schlossplatz reception will provide the respective contact forms / documentation of attendance to the person responsible at ESMT or to the health department after having been contacted by them through the official channels.
- The corresponding health department will not be notified by ESMT about the positive test but rather by the physician / institution that performed the test.

- Identified contacts (category I) will be requested to go home immediately to self-isolate. Even without communication from the health department, self-isolation is mandatory for 14 days upon the last time of contact to a positively tested person.
- If contacted by the health department, their instructions are to be followed.
- For students, on-site teaching will be stopped for the entire class immediately and the students will be sent home.
- The respective dean / lead determines day „T“.
„T“ is the date the COVID- 19-patient was last present on the ESMT campus and on which they were infectious (2 days PRIOR to the onset of first symptoms).
- The CTF evaluates the risk of teaching further lectures, decides how long the on-site teaching has to be suspended for the affected class, and how long the teaching has to switch into “digital mode” (at least “T” + 14 days).
- The health department may determine further measures (e.g., voluntary and personal diary of symptoms, contact log).
- There are no special measures for category II contacts (> 1.5m, < 15 minutes). There is no need for self-isolation.
> Self-monitoring of possible symptoms for 14 days is recommended, however.
- For areas the affected person works at, the facility management will promptly initiate a preliminary cleansing and disinfection.

You can find detailed steps of action for these different groups of people

- ESMT staff
- Students
- Participants of executive education programs

following the (internal) link:

[ESMT measures for different groups of people](#)

Scenario B: An outbreak has occurred, meaning that several members of the ESMT community contract COVID-19 in a temporal and spatial context

Initial situation:

The (responsible) health department will determine measures and assume responsibility for them. As supporting measure, the universities shall follow an action plan at their own discretion, such as described in scenario A.

The university will examine an individual switch between phase 1 and phase 2 (in accordance with the “Berliner Stufenplan” / *Berlin phase plan*).

Measures within ESMT – extensions on the basis of SCENARIO A:

- Upon receiving notification from the health department, the CTF meets to consult and agree on necessary measures.
- In case of available recommendations or guidelines from the respective health department, they will be taken as basis for deciding whether or not the scope of the outbreak demands a closing of entire areas / departments / classes affected.
- Decision by the CTF or the corresponding dean whether teaching of the groups of students that were in direct contact with the COVID-19 patient will switch to “digital mode”.
- Regarding staff, the CTF will determine whether and for how long the affected department will be directed to work remotely.
- Regarding university operations, restrictions will be examined and determined according to „STUFE 2 des Betriebs unter Pandemiebedingungen“ / *PHASE 2 of operations in case of a pandemic situation*.
- The health department may determine further measures.
- For areas the affected person(s) work(s) at, the facility management will promptly initiate a preliminary cleansing and disinfection.

Furthermore, the following options shall be examined:

- Transitional agreements regarding examination and research
- Possible business travel ban
- Dealing with staff abroad or guests from abroad

The CTF will consider suggestions by government authorities, especially the Foreign Office as well as the Robert Koch Institute (RKI), when determining and implementing necessary measures and inform the ESMT community accordingly.

Scenario C: Many members of the ESMT community contract the virus at the university (so-called environment), devoid of spatial and temporal context. This means that the endemic level at the university exceeds that of the federal state of Berlin.

Initial situation:

The university defines criteria upon which it individually switches to phase 2. It will examine the listed options and implement the described measures in accordance with the pandemic plan (e.g., mandatory wearing of mouth and nose protection also in the classroom, distancing rules, limitation of on-site events). Depending on the situation and the morbidity rate, the university has to suspend on-site operations.

The university will examine an individual switch from phase 2 to phase 3.

Measures within ESMT – extensions on the basis of SCENARIO A + B

- Upon receiving notification from the health department, the CTF meets to consult and agree on necessary measures.
- In case of available recommendations or guidelines from the respective health department, they will be taken as basis for deciding whether or not the scope of the outbreak demands a closing of entire areas / departments / classes affected.
- Decision by the CTF whether teaching will switch to “digital mode” universally and entirely for a limited time.
- Regarding staff, the CTF will determine whether and for how long the affected department will be directed to work remotely or whether general temporary “home office” will be mandated for all administration areas.
- Regarding university operations, restricting or suspending on-site teaching will be examined and determined according to “STUFE 2 bzw. STUFE 3 des Betriebs unter Pandemiebedingungen“ /*PHASE 2 or PHASE 3 of operations in case of a pandemic situation.*
- The health department may determine further measures.
- For all areas, the facility management will promptly initiate a preliminary cleansing and disinfection.

Furthermore, the following options shall be examined by the CTF:

- Securing the general running of ESMT and the premises
- Staffing the mailroom
- Securing transactions
- Locking and securing the buildings
- Air conditioning / heating / building services
- Maintaining power and heating supply
- Maintaining IT-operations and infrastructure
- Student support tasks

4. Post-pandemic phase

Measures within ESMT:

- The CFT meets regularly (via video / audio conference) and consults on further measures after evaluating the overall situation.
- In case of available recommendations or guidelines from the respective health department, they will be taken as basis for deciding whether or not the scope of the outbreak allows for a reopening of the campus and or the admin operations.
- Returning to regular operations and corresponding communication.
- Restore operational functions to the normal state (disinfection where appropriate)
- All ESMT employees will be informed promptly by HR via email about returning back to regular operations.
- Afterwards, the ramifications of the pandemic on business operations will be evaluated.
- Evaluation of the pandemic plan and optimization.

University operations in a pandemic situation – The different phases (according to the „Berliner Stufenplan“ / *Berlin phase plan*):

Area	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
University	Universities may open for lectures, administration, and research operations, including public access.	Universities may open for lectures, administration; and research operations. > They consider possible public access restrictions.	State, private, and clerical universities as well as their institutions may not open for on-site academic operations and public access. In justified cases, universities may grant limited access to certain groups of people in accordance with their house rules.
Lectures / on-site teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lectures are taught digitally and on-site. - The organization of on-site teaching depends on the number of participants and the available respective room sizes. - The maximum number of people per room is determined based on the respective circulation area and the minimum distance of 1.5 meters. - The maximum amount of people per room may not be exceeded. - The minimum distance of 1.5 meters may be breached in lectures (given that it is in agreement with the Senatsverwaltung für Gesundheit, Pflege und Gleichstellung) if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > the group consists of a maximum of 25 people > the composition of the group remains constant (stable cohort) and > the students only participate in on-site lectures with said group. - it is strongly advised to wear a mouth and nose protection during lectures. In special situations the university may stipulate wearing mouth and nose protection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lectures are taught digitally and on-site. - In case of increasing infection rates, the universities examine a reduction of on-site teaching offers. - On-site teaching should be of a practice-based nature that is generally not feasible digitally. - The organization of on-site teaching depends on the maximum number of people per room. - The maximum amount of people per room may not be exceeded. - In case the Senatsverwaltung für Gesundheit, Pflege und Gleichstellung agrees to a breaching of the 1.5 meter distance rule (see Nr. 3 of the guidelines), the university assesses whether that exception may be maintained. - Wearing mouth and nose protection during lectures is mandatory. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lectures may generally not be taught on-site. - practice-based courses that are generally not feasible digitally, may still be taught on-site. - It is mandatory to wear mouth and nose protection at on-site courses.

Area	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Exams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exams may be taken digitally and on-site. - The maximum number of people per room has to be taken into consideration when organizing on-site exams. - The minimum distance of 1.5 meters has to be maintained. - It is strongly advised to wear mouth and nose protection. - Charité's concept for hygiene measures for exams applies when taking on-site exams. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exams may be taken digitally and on-site. - The maximum number of people per room has to be taken into consideration when organizing on-site exams. - The minimum distance of 1.5 meters has to be maintained. - It is mandatory to wear mouth and nose protection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exams may generally not be taken on-site. - Universities may take admission tests and final exams on-site should they not be possible digitally and as long as they do not oppose the current version of the SARS-CoV-2-Infektionsschutzverordnung / <i>Sars-CoV-2- infection protection directive.</i>
Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The library / Information Center may be opened. - It is necessary to regulate the number of present users, taking into consideration the maximum number of people per room. - The minimum distance of 1.5 meters has to be maintained and may not be breached. - It is mandatory for visitors to wear mouth and nose protection as long as they are not seated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The library / Information Center may be opened. - Limitations of on-site operations are being assessed. - It is necessary to regulate the number of present users, taking into consideration the maximum number of people per room. - The minimum distance of 1.5 meters has to be maintained and may not be breached. - It is mandatory for visitors to wear mouth and nose protection as long as they are not seated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The library may not be opened to the public. - Online services may be offered.

Area	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Restaurant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The restaurant may be opened. - Food and drinks may be consumed at the tables or may be offered as takeout. - The seating in enclosed spaces has to be organized in a way that there are 1.5 meters of distance between the tables. - Groups of up to six people may breach the 1.5 meters distance rule and sit together at one table. - Staff that is in contact with guests and guests that are not seated are obliged to wear mouth and nose protection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The restaurant may be opened. - It will be assessed whether the consumption of food and drinks at the tables has to be restricted. - Food and drinks may be offered as takeout. - The seating in enclosed spaces has to be organized in a way that there are 1.5 meters of distance between the tables. - Groups of up to six people may breach the 1.5 meters distance rule and sit together at one table. - Staff that is in contact with guests and guests that are not seated are obliged to wear mouth and nose protection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The restaurant may not be opened.
Hochschulsport / university sports and recreation	For the Hochschulsport / <i>university sports and recreation</i> , the respective current version of the SARS-CoV-2-Infektionsschutzverordnung <i>Sars-CoV-2- infection protection directive</i> applies.	For the Hochschulsport / <i>university sports and recreation</i> , the respective current version of the SARS-CoV-2-Infektionsschutzverordnung <i>Sars-CoV-2- infection protection directive</i> applies.	For the Hochschulsport <i>university sports and recreation</i> , the respective current version of the SARS-CoV-2-Infektionsschutzverordnung <i>Sars-CoV-2- infection protection directive</i> applies.