



INNOVÁCIÓS ÉS TECHNOLÓGIAI  
MINISZTERIUM

## **STATE SECRETARIAT FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, INNOVATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING**

### **Sectoral Recommendations for Organizing Higher Education During the State of Health Crisis**

**In force from 1 September 2020**

#### **Introduction**

The aim of the current sectoral recommendations is to provide uniform guidelines for every state recognised higher education institution in Hungary to start and organize the Academic Year 2020/2021 having regard to the state of health crisis declared by the Government Decree 283/2020 introducing a state of epidemiological preparedness, on the basis of authorisation under point b) of section 64 (3) of Act CCIV of 2011 on National Higher Education.

Primary considerations of these recommendations are to protect the safety of life, health, the individual, property and legal security of people involved in higher education, as well as to ensure the continuity of education in higher education and the stability of institutional operation, furthermore to prevent the further spread of the coronavirus pandemic.

Each higher education institution shall elaborate an institutional action plan to handle the epidemiological preparedness, the updating of which – considering the different epidemiological situation within the institution if necessary – is of great importance. The action plan shall be presented to the Ministry for Innovation and Technology (hereinafter sectoral governor). The sectoral governor examines the action plan of the higher education institution and initiates further measures if necessary.

The current sectoral recommendations shall be applied during the state of health crisis declared by the Government as soon as they are available for the higher education institution. The sectoral recommendations shall be applied to all the places of operation and education of the higher education institution including off-site education (e.g. community higher education centres) and all the institutions/facilities maintained and operated by the higher education institution.

## **1. Creating a health-safe environment necessary for the higher education institution to carry out its tasks**

- 1.1. Compliance with measures, legislation, issued instructions and guidelines aimed to preserve health is mandatory for everyone.
- 1.2. Buildings, events and courses of the higher education institution can only be attended by healthy people who show no symptoms of the coronavirus. Typical symptoms of the disease are listed in Annex I.
- 1.3. Personal hygiene is mandatory for all citizens of the higher education institution. This includes frequent hand washing with soap or alcoholic hand disinfection, adherence to cough etiquette, avoiding unnecessary touching of the face and compliance with regulations on the use of something covering the mouth and the nose (hereinafter mask). Within the institution it is mandatory to wear a mask indoors and at outdoor events.
- 1.4. To prevent the further spread of the virus it is of great importance to keep adequate physical distance in the territory of the institution. Taking queuing rules into consideration, a distance of 1.5 meters – clearly marked by painting or warning signs – must be kept between those waiting (at libraries, cafeterias, catering rooms and administration offices, etc.).
- 1.5. It is mandatory to wear a mask in the higher education institution for those arriving for office administration purposes. A distance of 1.5 meters must be kept between the workstations and the reception area.
- 1.6. Special attention must be paid to the cleanness of educational, sports, library, archives and museum facilities and the using of appropriate (virucidal) hand disinfectants and virucidal surface disinfectants and cleaning products. In all cases, virucidal disinfectants must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions in Hungarian, in the appropriate concentration and for the appropriate exposure time. It is necessary to ensure the continuous availability and procurement of the appropriate hand and surface disinfectants. It is the responsibility of the higher education institution to document and control this.
- 1.7. Frequently touched surfaces (door handles, elevator buttons, switches, handles, railings, etc.) must be disinfected regularly, at least every two hours. Regular cleaning and disinfection with virucidal disinfectants of coffee machines, vending machines, dispensers and jugs is required, at least after each maintenance. It is the responsibility of the higher education institution to document and control this.
- 1.8. In closed spaces to reduce the concentration of possible pathogens special attention must be paid to continuous or regular natural ventilation of increased intensity. In the case of artificial ventilation, if the windows can be opened, it is recommended to use natural ventilation at the same time as often as possible. Ventilation devices that are not suitable for fresh air supply and only circulate indoor air (e.g. split air conditioners, fan-coil units and mobile air purifiers) can only be used if there is an intensive supply of air from outside at the same time. In the case of split air conditioners, the appliance must be set so that it does not cause a large air flow in the

lower half of the room. It is recommended that the heat exchanger and dust filter of the appliance should be disinfected frequently with a licensed antiviral agent. Replaceable filters need to be replaced more often than required in the case of increased use. It is the responsibility of the higher education institution to document and control all these.

- 1.9. It is necessary to ensure that those arriving at higher education institutions and facilities are properly informed: about the current policy of the given facility, the measures taken in connection with the new coronavirus pandemic, the specific conditions of use of the institution and the given facility and the restrictions due to the epidemic.
- 1.10. It is required to increase compliance with the internal action plans of the individual institutions and with the provisions of their regulations, as well as to supplement and regularly update these regulations, instructions and action protocols in accordance with the development of the epidemic situation. In doing so, the rector may issue special instructions taking into account the specifics of the institution while complying with the relevant rules and sectoral recommendations.
- 1.11. If any special signs of infection or illness are identified in the higher education institution, immediate notification is required, which must be in accordance with the epidemiological rules.
- 1.12. The maintaining higher education institution is responsible for the creation of a health-safe environment and for the observance of compliance with the health regulations in the public education and vocational training institutions maintained by the higher education institution. Here it is also necessary to take into account the rules and recommendations for public education and vocational training institutions.

## **2. Attending classes that require personal interactions, enrollment**

- 2.1. Attendance of classes should be organized in such a way that the safety of 1.5 meters can be maintained, taking into account the capacity of the classroom. It is mandatory to wear a mask indoors.
- 2.2. Classes involving a large number of students should be held online – preferably live, with appropriate interactivity or in accordance with 2.1., in groups if necessary. It is necessary to provide options for small group or one-to-one consultations on an ongoing basis.
- 2.3. While continuously keeping contact with the students, it is recommended to use electronic correspondence as well as communication through educational systems. Students must have the opportunity to view evaluations of documents to be submitted and in-house test papers with increased attention on security rules.
- 2.4. When enrolling students, it is recommended to ask for a written statement as to whether they have been abroad in the past two weeks. If so, the student must declare that he or she accepts the rules about travel restrictions during the period of the state of epidemiological preparedness in Government Decree 408/2020.
- 2.5. We recommend providing the option of online enrollment, thus avoiding queuing. If online enrollment is not possible, student enrollment must be scheduled.

- 2.6. In the current epidemiological alert situation, primarily in-person attendance is preferred in higher education institutions, but in special cases it may be justified to use and maintain online classes.
- 2.7. Full compliance with the given cleaning procedures is required in all educational and community spaces. This should also be properly documented. It is necessary to insure surface disinfection between changes of groups in the classrooms.

### **3. Implementation of internships, practical trainings**

- 3.1. During the internships, the general hygiene regulations apply to the students and lecturers participating in the internship. Before starting the internship, it is mandatory to wash hands with soap or with alcoholic hand sanitizer, all of which must be provided on site. It is mandatory to use a mask indoors.
- 3.2. Compulsory pre-trainings (fire and safety, data protection and hospital hygiene courses) should be provided online if possible. If this is not possible, it must be organized in accordance with the rules for private events.
- 3.3. It is necessary to prepare the schedule of students in advance, thus reducing the number of students present in a given period. On the first day of the internship, the student must perform pre-triage – filling in a questionnaire, measuring body temperature – the implementation and documentation of which is the task of the internship supervisor. For this purpose, it is recommended to use the questionnaire according to Annex II.
- 3.4. During the internship and practical training, it is the priority of the internship supervisor to continuously monitor the correct use of personal protective equipment. A safety distance of 1.5 meters should be provided as far as possible throughout the practice.
- 3.5. During the practice, the equipment should be cleaned with a virucidal surface disinfectant by the supervisor or a person authorized by him / her, provided that this does not damage the equipment.
- 3.6. On certain sites, especially in medical and health science training, the higher education institution may introduce additional requirements.
- 3.7. The rules for internships and practical training must be followed on both internal and external sites.
- 3.8. Full compliance with the given cleaning procedure is required for all practical training sites. This should also be properly documented. Surface disinfection must be provided between groups of students in the rooms.

### **4. Procedure of evaluation and reporting**

- 4.1. The date of the oral report, the relevant topic and the expected number of participants should be determined in advance, thus ensuring compliance with epidemiological rules.
- 4.2. In the case of an oral report, students should arrive at a pre-arranged, scheduled time.

- 4.3. In the case of a written report, the rules set for offline classes must be followed and the use of personal aids is recommended. Written papers can be safely corrected after a 24-hour wait in line with the general hygiene regulations.
- 4.4. Only healthy, asymptomatic students or instructors may participate in the examinations. It is justified to apply pre-triage – questionnaire (Annex II.), body temperature measurement – for students. It is the examiner’s responsibility to document such data.
- 4.5. It is mandatory to wear a mask during oral and written examinations. Regular disinfection is required on work surfaces and tools.
- 4.6. The rules of cough etiquette must be strictly followed during the examination, to which the candidates’ attention must be drawn by written information before the examination and orally at the beginning of the examination.
- 4.7. An oral report should only be held in a well-ventilated room and a maximum of two students should be inside, beside the person conducting the report/hearing, at the same time. In the case of special examinations, during which the students use the equipment one after the other (e.g. fine arts, music education, sports) it is necessary to treat it with a surface disinfectant with a short duration exposure time, after each use.
- 4.8. It is necessary to ensure frequent, if possible natural ventilation of the area the report is held in. Before and after the report, disinfectant cleaning in classrooms, corridors and other common areas is required in all cases, as part of which frequently touched surfaces (doors, window handles, keypad, monitor, mouse, electrical and other switches, railings, faucets, etc.) must be cleaned with a virucidal disinfectant.

## **5. Rules for the operation of dormitories and colleges for advanced studies**

- 5.1. Only healthy people who do not show symptoms of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus and feel healthy can stay in the dormitories and colleges for advanced studies. Pre-triage and its documentation – questionnaire (Annex II.) and body temperature measurement – are required upon moving in. This should be done daily for each person, the person showing symptoms should be isolated immediately.
- 5.2. The move-in process must be organized spatially and temporally so that a minimum safety distance of 1.5 meters is maintained at all times.
- 5.3. During allocation, students who attend the same classes should be placed in the same dormitory room.
- 5.4. While determining the number of people in each room, it is recommended to take advantage of the available space, in accordance with the appropriate hygiene regulations. In the colleges for advanced studies/dormitories, if an event is being held or there is a gathering indoors, the use of a mask is mandatory. It is recommended to hold only those dormitory events that are the most necessary in connection to the students’ everyday lives. In common areas, such as kitchens, bathrooms and toilets, residents should adhere to the rules of spatial and temporal distance.
- 5.5. 5% of the beds per dormitory should be kept empty for segregation and official quarantine. The number of equipment in rest areas and common areas (both indoors and outdoors) should be reduced as necessary to avoid congestion.

- 5.6. Increased cleaning and disinfection of common areas is recommended. It is also advised to place and regularly refill the virucidal hand sanitizer in community areas.
- 5.7. The care of students placed in student home quarantine must be organized in accordance with the epidemiological regulations in place.
- 5.8. In the event of a suspected infection, an alert protocol must be established to isolate the person concerned as quickly as possible. At the same time, the necessary immediate measures must be taken in accordance with the procedures of the National Center for Public Health (hereinafter NCPH).

## **6. Recommendations for holding school year openings, freshman camps and other events**

- 6.1. It is necessary to organize the opening events of the school year – if possible outdoors – so that the total number of participants does not exceed the number set in the current regulation, but taking local conditions and epidemiological aspects into account, we recommend an even lower number. The recommended safety distance (1.5 meters) and the use of masks, even if the event is held outdoors, must also be taken into account during the implementation.
- 6.2. The use of masks is mandatory at school opening events held indoors.
- 6.3. Taking the number of first-year students and the limit included in point 6.1. into account, several school-opening events can be held per institution, and online coverage of the event can also be recommended. All first-year students must be given the opportunity to take their oath, divided into several groups if necessary in accordance with these guidelines and the applicable regulations.
- 6.4. University freshman camps and other similar events, such as those not directly related to education, can only be held in exceptional cases.
- 6.5. The use of masks is mandatory for indoor events.
- 6.6. Events not directly related to education may be held only in exceptional cases.
- 6.7. Organizing programs that require direct personal contact should be avoided.
- 6.8. The regionally competent epidemiological authority must be notified of freshman camps and the circumstances of the organization must be agreed upon.

## **7. The use of sports facilities, swimming pools and other recreational facilities**

- 7.1. Only healthy students and trainers showing no symptoms and feeling healthy can participate in sports and recreational activities. The pre-triage of the participating students is necessary – questionnaire (Annex I.), body temperature measurement.
- 7.2. To avoid close physical contact, small group activities should be preferred. During the activities and events try to maintain continuous compliance with the 1.5-2-meter clearance zone.

- 7.3. Activities are advised to be spread over the course of the day to minimize the number of people present at the same time in the same place.
- 7.4. Tasks that entail no physical contact should be prioritized if possible, during the activities.
- 7.5. The strictly observed and verified compliance with the regulations on water treatment (e.g. chlorine level) of pools with water circulation system at higher education institutions is required in accordance with the authoritative guidance of the National Public Health Centre.
- 7.6. The hourly ventilation of closed pool and relaxation areas is recommended.
- 7.7. When maintaining the hygienic condition of public spaces, dressing rooms, showers, pools, other surfaces and foot baths, full compliance with the prescribed cleaning guidance (with particular attention to the prescribed concentration of detergents) is required.

## **Annex I.**

It is forbidden to enter and stay in the institution for those showing typical symptoms of the new human coronavirus or experienced the following symptoms in the past three days:

- coughing
- difficulty in breathing, shortness of breath
- fever
- chills
- muscle pain
- sore throat
- newly developed taste disturbance or smell disorder

The list does not specify all possible symptoms, there have been reports on other, less common symptoms of the virus, including gastrointestinal symptoms such as:

- nausea,
- vomiting and/or
- diarrhoea.

In case you experience these symptoms, call your general practitioner immediately and follow his/her instructions.



## **Annex II.**

In case the higher education institution intends to implement the risk filtering questionnaire for entering the higher education institution, the following questions are advised to be included:

1. In the past three days have you experienced newly developed:
  - fever or increased body temperature (37,5 C),
  - headache, malaise, weakness, muscle pain,
  - dry coughing, difficulty in breathing, shortness of breath, rapid breathing,
  - sore throat, loss of smell/taste,
  - nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea?
2. Have you been in contact with anyone in the past 14 days who had been confirmed as infected with the coronavirus?
3. Have you been in contact with anyone in the past 14 days who had been isolated in an official quarantine due to a suspected coronavirus infection?
4. Have you been abroad in the past 14 days or in contact with someone arriving from abroad?
5. Have you been in contact with anyone with a fever, coughing or shortness of breath in the past 14 days?

Performing a coronavirus test (PCR test) is advised if necessary.