

## WUR Corona plan

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### 1. Introduction

After the outbreak of the Corona virus in 2020, the Dutch government decided when and which measures were necessary to deal with the impact of the Corona virus. Now we have been dealing with the Corona pandemic for two and a half years, the government decided to take a new approach. The aim of this new approach is to increase the predictability of and societal support for future Corona measures.

The government made a sector plan for vocational and higher education (14 June 2022), which contains guidelines for four different phases of the pandemic, in case these would occur. It is up to each institution to translate these measures into its own situation. In this document, WUR explains which measures apply per scenario. This document will be updated if required. The measures proposed should be considered a starting point for final actions but will in specific situations be adapted given the circumstances and actions of linked sectors

### 2. Sector plan

#### Four scenarios

In the sector plan for vocational and higher education, the government distinguished four scenarios and outlined the following measures per scenario:

	Scenario	
Prevention	<b>1 – Dark green</b> Basic measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure good ventilation;</li> <li>- Communication about vaccination to (teaching) staff and students;</li> <li>- Basic recommendations on hygiene and health as they apply to society as a whole.</li> </ul>
	<b>2 – Green</b> Basic + preventive measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encourage the use of self-tests in case of symptoms;</li> <li>- Additional attention for vulnerable groups.</li> </ul>
Intervention	<b>3 – Orange</b> Basic + preventive + contact limiting measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Preventive self-testing twice a week;</li> <li>- Social distance where possible;</li> <li>- Walking routes;</li> <li>- Mouth-nose masks when moving;</li> <li>- More intensive use of distance learning</li> <li>- Activities outdoors where possible;</li> <li>- All non-primary educational activities without external participants;</li> <li>- Spreading educational activities over the entire day;</li> <li>- Advice staff to work from home (in line with national guidelines).</li> </ul>
	<b>4 – Red</b> Far-reaching contact limiting measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maximum 50% presence of students and teaching staff in rooms and on location; within this framework, tailor-made solutions are possible;</li> <li>- Additional attention to the social function of education and keeping an eye on vulnerable groups of students;</li> <li>- Limiting contact moments: maximum spread of educational activities in time and space.</li> </ul>

Table 1: Sector plan

The government determines which scenario applies. The four scenarios are the same for all sectors, but the measures per sector per scenario may differ. After the announcement of a new scenario, WUR is obliged to implement the new scenario within one working week. If the pandemic requires stricter measures than described in the red scenario, the government takes over (= black scenario).

#### Participation bodies

In the translation of the what (sector plan) to the how (protocol WUR), the relevant participation bodies must be involved. In the case of changes in existing regulations, the usual rights of advice and consent apply. (*Sector plan, p. 12/13*)

### **Vulnerable students and staff**

'Vulnerable' students, meaning students who are *medically* vulnerable, have a right to education. If students do not feel safe to participate physically, the university and the student must discuss whether an unsafe situation exists and whether tailor-made solutions can offer a solution. Where necessary and possible, the institution will provide an alternative form of education and assessment (obligation of effort). (*Sector plan, p. 14*)

'Vulnerable' staff consult with the institution to offer them a safe working environment. Where necessary, the institution takes appropriate measures to adjust the working environment. (*Sector plan, p. 14*).

### 3. Coordination Corona measures within WUR

When the universities had to close in March 2020, WUR established a crisis team to decide about necessary measures and activities. After a few weeks, when the first phase of the crisis was handled, two teams were set up to further manage the effects of the Corona measures:

- The Corona Team focused on WUR-wide issues and processes;
- The Taskforce education focused on degree education.

Both teams were complementary and were connected by a linking pin. In the future, WUR will continue to work with both teams:

	<b>Corona Team</b>	<b>Taskforce education</b>
<b>Scope</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (Communication about the) organisation of all WUR activities that are not directly related to education, such as research, working from home, catering, events, sport regulations, routing in buildings, (monitoring) occupancy rate in buildings etc.</li> <li>- Consultation public transport, municipality, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (Communication about the) organisation of degree education: education, examination, student travel, and preventive safety measures.</li> <li>- Consultation UNL, OCW, and GGD.</li> </ul>
<b>Composition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Broad coverage of the organisation (Central Staff, Facilities and Services, Director Operations, Chair group holder, Programme director, Human Resources, and Communication).</li> <li>- Programme director is linking pin Corona Team – Taskforce education.</li> </ul>	<p>The Taskforce education consists of a primary and secondary shell:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Primary shell: policy advisor scheduling, three programme directors, policy advisor education, safety expert, communication officer, secretary (student-assistant).</li> <li>- Secondary shell: product owner Digital Examination, product owner BYOD, location manager education buildings, manager practical support (PFO), head Student Service Centre, head Education Support Centre.</li> </ul>
<b>Accountability</b>	Member Executive Board, responsible for the portfolio Finance, Business, and Services	Rector and Dean of education
<b>Consultation with (participation) bodies</b>	Informal consultation WUR Council	Informal consultation Student Council, Student Staff Council, Examining Boards, and Board of Education

<b>Legal rights participation bodies</b>	Deviation from approved regulations on working conditions	Deviation from approved Education and Examination Regulations
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Table 2: Corona Coordination

#### 4. Principles translation of sector plan to Corona protocol WUR

The government's scenarios for education are leading. Within these scenarios, WUR strives to find the right balance between the following factors:

- Safety of students, teaching staff, researchers and other staff;
- Well-being of students, teaching staff, researchers and other staff;
- 'Normal' continuation of (curricular and extra-curricular) education, research and social activities;
- Autonomy for teachers and researchers;
- Clarity and predictability for both education and research activities and all the people that are involved.

The abovementioned factors can obviously be at odds with each other. For instance, the aim to continue education in a 'normal' way can conflict with the wish of an individual teacher to provide an entire course online. Or the decision to provide students in quarantine with an alternative exam, conflicts with the autonomy as well as well-being of teachers.

Given the fact that WUR is a hybrid organisation (WU & WR), the Corona protocol will be the same for WU and WR (including the non-Wageningen locations of WUR).

Measures indicated are based on previous experiences and temporary of nature. If any measures become more structural of nature, the normal/formal procedures will apply. Taken measures in the scenarios Orange and Red will also depend on measures in other relevant sectors.

#### 5. Ventilation

Good ventilation remains important both for a healthy work/study environment and for limiting the spread of the coronavirus. All WUR buildings and areas meet ventilation standards in accordance with the respective Building Decree (Bouwbesluit) applicable to that building. In addition, WUR also meets the requirements of the 'Frisse Scholen level B-good' for teaching spaces.

With the currently defined occupancy (number of seats), not all offices and meeting rooms meet the above-mentioned ventilation standard 'Building Decree New Construction' for offices. This means that in certain offices the occupancy must be reduced during Corona restrictions. For labs, the ventilation rate is more than sufficient to meet the Building Decree standard.

#### 6. Corona measures at WUR

The measures are derived from the sector plan. However, it is possible that Dutch government policy for higher education is more strict or more flexible at a certain moment.

Subject	Basic measures	Basic + preventive measures	Basic + preventive + contact limiting measures	Far-reaching contact limiting measures
<b>Communication</b>	Limited visibility information about Corona on the	Information is well updated.	<< + Good visibility information about	<< + Every other week a Corona

	intranet/internet, and in buildings.	Students and staff are actively informed when a new scenario is activated.	Corona (measures). Students and teaching staff receive an email at the beginning of each education period.	update on the intranet/internet.
<b>Room capacity</b>	Normal capacity (Fresh school standard 'good').	<<	<< + Education is spread over the day. Activities with many external participants are cancelled.  Advice to work from home and to keep distance where possible.	<< + Capacity classrooms/offices/labs 50% compared to normal capacity or social distancing.  Urgent advice to work from home.
<b>Education</b>	Teachers and students are encouraged to provide/follow education on campus.	<< + 'Vulnerable' students are allowed to follow education online (permission by student dean). Students are advised to self-test before an excursion/field work. Medical mouth-nose-masks are available for lab practicals and must be used if the teacher requests the students to do so.	<< + Mouth-nose-masks are required when moving. Teachers are encouraged to offer hybrid education if feasible. Lectures may be offered online as long as all students can also follow education on campus. Students are strongly advised to self-test before an excursion/field work. Medical mouth-nose-masks must be used during lab practicals.	<< + Group size is based on 50% room capacity. No excursions at external locations. Outdoor excursions can continue.
<b>Extra-curricular activities</b>	See 'Education'	<<	Small-scale activities may continue in accordance with the rules for degree education. Large-scale activities are moved online or cancelled.	Extra-curricular activities are moved online or cancelled.
<b>Examination</b>	Students who cannot attend on-campus exams, are referred to the resit possibility.	<< + Medical mouth-nose-masks are available for exams and must be used if the examiner/ invigilator requests the students to do so.	<< + Examiner offers an alternative for students in isolation/quarantine: 1) Remote proctored exam at the same moment. 2) Extra resit within 2-3 weeks. 3) Oral exam.	<<
<b>Learning outcomes</b>	The learning outcomes as described in the study guide are achieved.	<< + Learning activities may be adjusted for 'vulnerable' students, but the learning outcomes must be achieved.	<< + Lectures + PC practicals + tutorials may be offered online, if the Programme Director is	<< + Teacher decides on the set-up of the course. If the programme learning outcomes cannot be achieved, the

			informed (before or after). If the orange situation applies >6 months: The Board of Education and Examining Boards monitor whether the programme learning outcomes are achieved.	programme develops a 'repair' plan and informs the students within 1.5 months.
<b>Preventive measures</b>	Mouth-nose-masks, self-tests, and disinfection are clearly available at the receptions of WUR buildings. WUR supports the GGD in vaccination campaigns if requested ('prikbus' on campus).	<< + Mouth-nose-masks must be used during practicals and exams if staff requests the students to do so. The use of self-tests in case of symptoms is strongly encouraged.	<< + Mouth-nose-masks must be used indoors when not seated. Students are strongly advised to self-test before an excursion/field work. Also, for all people going to WUR buildings preventive self-testing is advised twice a week.	<<
<b>WUR buildings</b>	No restrictions.	<<	Access education buildings for students and employees only, and deployment of stewards for enforcement of Corona measures. Study places at social distance.  One-way walking routes in hallways and staircases of all education buildings.  Signing on entrees of all buildings.	<<
<b>Canteens</b>	No restrictions.	<<	Number of seats is limited to make social distancing possible. Canteens in education Buildings are meant for students and teaching staff only; take-away for other staff.	<< + In education buildings capacity 50% compared to normal capacity or social distancing.
<b>Well-being students</b>	No additional measures. Student associations must comply with the rules of the Municipality and (if available) sector plan 'Horeca'. Sport Centre 'De Bongerd' must comply with the <a href="#">rules of NOC-NSF</a> .	<<	The rules for education also apply to activities of study/student associations in education buildings. Conversations between students and their study advisor, student dean, and psychologist may be held on campus at social distance.	<< + Additional restrictions for social activities depending on measures in related sectors (theatres, cinemas, restaurants, etc.)

<b>Well-being employees</b>	See explanation 'Well-being employees' below			
<b>Graduation ceremonies</b>	No restrictions.	<<	No or limited externals allowed.	<< + Room capacity 50% compared to normal capacity
<b>Inauguration ceremonies / PhD defences</b>	No restrictions.	<<	Advice to keep social distance. No or limited externals allowed.	<< + Seating only possible at social distance.
<b>Student recruitment</b>	No restrictions.	<<	Capacity BSc/MSc open days 50% per classroom. BSc open days 1 parent per student, MSc open days no parents. Walk-along-days: the rules for education apply; no visits to students housing and drinks allowed.	No recruitment activities on campus.
<b>Travel</b>	Regular WUR policy for students and staff. Any additional restrictions for international travel depend on measures Dutch government or country to be visited.	<<	<<	<<
<b>Other institutions</b>	Contact with Municipality, GGD, Safety network UNL, and public transport if necessary. The frequency of the meetings follows the development of the virus.			

Table 3: Proposed WUR Corona measures

### Additional explanation of the subjects

#### Communication

Communication about (new) Corona measures will be provided as soon as possible after the announcement of a new scenario. If the situation requires so, for instance if the situation suddenly worsens, additional activities can be organised to inform students and employees. Examples are Q&A sessions, video of the rector/president of the Executive Board, etc.

The rector and dean of education always inform teachers about what was communicated to students. ABCDE and (if relevant) Examining Boards receive the information that was sent to teachers and students, so they can inform their staff at all WUR locations.

Room capacity – See table 3

#### Education

Starting point of WUR's protocol is to allow as much education as possible on campus and to encourage students to come to campus. As from the scenario Light Green, the regular 'student dean routing' applies to vulnerable students. For these students an (online) alternative is possible. Since many students will be

in isolation or quarantine as from scenario Orange, teachers are encouraged to provide hybrid education if possible.

If the total capacity on campus has to be reduced, education that cannot be provided online (e.g. practicals) and exams have priority. However, all students are 'entitled' to on campus education, so we strive to offer all students from all study programmes possibilities to follow education on campus.

Study advice is a primary educational activity and therefore in all scenarios allowed on campus, provided that the total capacity rules are met. Online study advice is optional, and the study advisor determines whether/when it is possible to meet on campus.

Education for professionals is provided online only from the scenario Orange onwards, because externals are no longer welcome in the scenarios Orange and Red.

Extra-curricular activities – See table 3

### Examination

There are three standard alternatives for students who cannot participate in an on-campus written exam:

- 1) Remote proctored exam at the same moment;
- 2) Extra resit within 2-3 weeks;
- 3) Oral exam.

The examiner decides which alternative is offered. Any other solutions must be discussed with the Examining Board.

Learning outcomes – See table 3

Preventive measures – See table 3

### WUR buildings

Education buildings are first and second floor Atlas, Leeuwenborch, Forum, Orion, Aurora.

WUR supports the government in the implementation of laws and regulations that are needed for safe food and healthy animals, and to guarantee a sustainable environment (set out in the 'WOT statute') in all scenarios continuation of these support tasks are priority.

Canteens – See table 3

### Well-being students

The socializing function of education is essential as this contributes to the well-being of students. That is why all courses are on campus as much as possible and students are encouraged to come to campus. To keep social activities for students going, the education buildings remain available for (social) activities of study and student associations as much as possible (in line with the sector plan 'Horeca'). Student deans, student psychologists, study advisors, etc. can continue their consults on campus.

### Well-being employees

WUR always attaches great importance to monitor the social psychological wellbeing of employees and can adjust the availability and accessibility of the company social workers. In addition, employees and management will be (appropriate to the degree of impact of the measures) invited and encouraged to be extra alert to signs of stress, loneliness and feelings of insecurity of themselves and colleagues. Tools that support this are made available and will be actively shared within the ABCDE management group and online employee platforms. During all scenarios we aim to continue the possibilities for off-line selection interviews and R&O interviews. To support the personal health of employees the chair massages on location will, if necessary, be replaced by the possibility to book a massage by a sports masseur close to home.

### Graduation, inauguration ceremonies, PhD defences

The Sector plan states in the scenario Orange: "*All non-primary educational activities <can continue> without external participants*". Therefore, no externals are allowed in the audience of graduation ceremonies, PhD defences and inaugural speeches.

We are fully aware of the importance of having friends and family at ceremonies. Therefore in the scenarios Orange and Red, we will check the measures of other relevant sectors (e.g., theatres, cinemas, restaurants) to decide whether the measure 'no externals allowed' is proportional. At the time of writing this protocol, these Sector plans are not available yet. Therefore, we have written in the table above: "No or limited externals allowed"

### Student recruitment

Considering the age of prospective students and the role of parents in their study selection process, in the Orange scenario BSc student recruitment activities are allowed with one parent.

### Travel for work and study

WUR travel policy is leading. Corona is no longer part of the travel advice by Ministry of Foreign Affairs. If an adjustment of the travel policy is necessary due to major outbreaks abroad, the Executive Board will decide on this. Students and staff have the responsibility to meet the entry requirements (e.g., vaccination) of the country they want to visit.

### Other institutions – Table 3

## **Closing**

In this plan the lessons learned and the experiences of the Corona Team and the Taskforce education are combined. During the pandemic WUR adopted a great number of measures/changes that allowed us to continue in the best way our important processes. These adaptations and experiences can help us to act also on other future crises.