PRESS RELEASE 22nd April 2021

**Joint press release by the Senate Chancellery for Higher Education and Research and the State Conference of the Rectors and Presidents of the Higher Education Institutions in Berlin (LKRP)**

Existing restrictions to university and college operations will continue until 31st May

The pandemic-related restrictions to university and college operations agreed by the Senate Chancellery for Higher Education and Research and the State Conference of the Rectors and Presidents of the Higher Education Institutions in Berlin (LKRP) on 30th March 2021 are being extended until 31st May 2021 in view of the ongoing high number of infections. Any effects of the changes to the Infection Protection Act passed by the Bundestag and Bundesrat (the so-called “federal emergency brake”) on university and college operations will be communicated separately if necessary.

The following thus continue to apply to state, private and denominational universities and colleges, including their institutions:

* There will be no in-person events at the universities and colleges until 31st May 2021. Courses and examinations will be conducted using digital formats.
* Exceptions may only be permitted for already planned in-person examinations, including entrance examinations, and for absolutely essential practical formats that cannot be conducted in digital form. In these exceptional cases, the number of participants is to be limited to a maximum of 25 people in an examination room. Participation is voluntary for students. They will not suffer any disadvantages if they do not participate.
* Practical medical formats at Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin that cannot be postponed may still take place.
* Academic libraries are only allowed to offer online services and loan facilities up until 31st May 2021. If the course of the pandemic permits, the services may be expanded.
* The universities and colleges are extending the time allowed for theses and term papers to until 31st May 2021, in accordance with their respective framework regulations, or are making comparable provisions.
* Employees of the universities and colleges whose work does not absolutely have to be carried out in person on campus for organisational or technical reasons will continue to work from home as far as possible, in agreement with their supervisors.
* The universities and colleges will remain closed to the external public until 31st May 2021.

Deployment of testing concepts

Within the framework of the in-person teaching, examination and research formats that have already been planned for the 2021 summer semester and which are absolutely essential and cannot be carried out in digital form, procedures are being put in place for the deployment of coronavirus tests. The test concepts that have been developed should also enable further offers to be added in future, taking into account the occurrence of infection and in accordance with the agreed principles for the implementation of the 2021 summer semester.

Principles for the 2021 summer semester

As stated in the principles for the implementation of the summer semester on 24th February 2021, the lecture period at the Berlin universities and colleges will begin as planned between 1st and 12th April and will initially be carried out in digital mode. Absolutely essential practical formats and examinations that cannot be conducted digitally may still be carried out in person provided the applicable measures for protecting against infection are observed. The agreed principles furthermore provide for the possibility of opening up for more in-person events if and to the extent that the course of the pandemic allows for this over the coming months. In the event of a possible switch to in-person teaching, courses for new students are to be taken into particular account. In addition, a digital or hybrid teaching offering is also to be arranged in order to provide students who cannot take part in in-person events with the best possible support for their studies. The Berlin phased plan for college and university operations under pandemic conditions will provide the joint framework for action and decision making for the universities and colleges and the Senate Chancellery for Higher Education and Research, so that they can react reliably and, at the same time, flexibly to a dynamic occurrence of infection in the 2021 summer semester as well. Further information on the principles for the 2021 summer semester can be found at:

<https://www.lkrp-berlin.de/aktuelles/210224-sommersemester2021/index.html>

**Further information:**
<https://www.berlin.de/sen/wissenschaft/>

<https://www.lkrp-berlin.de/>

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