



Vice-Chancellor's Decision

No 131/20

2020-10-26

Ref. no C2020/309

Matter: Examination and teaching following the Government's recommendation to enable on-campus teaching

Officer: Helena Pallin

Background:

The current spread of the coronavirus and COVID-19 creates a situation where the university needs to contribute to reduced risk of spreading the infection and at the same time conduct activities of high quality, accessibility and legal certainty, as well as fulfilling the working environment responsibility for staff and students. A directional decision, RB 49/20, was made to address the situations regarding examinations and the structure of teaching with the intention that this would take place remotely.

Following new recommendations from the Government that enabled teaching and examinations on campus from 15 June 2020, as long as the Public Health Agency's recommendations are followed, RB 49/20 was reversed and a new decision was made on the transition to mixed forms of teaching, RB 76/20. This decision was supplemented to apply to the entire autumn term 2020 (93/20).

To enable planning for courses and programmes in the coming terms, the following decision was proposed (RB 131/20). Previous planning for study period 5 will remain.

Co-determination act information/ negotiation:

Information 2020-10-23

Decision

The vice-chancellor decided that decision 76/20 to partly open the university for on-campus teaching will remain.

1. New students enrolled in campus-based first- and second-cycle programmes, as well as activities involving international students, are given priority. Each programme coordinator should, preferably in consultation with course coordinators and directors of studies, identify courses where teaching and examination on campus is possible in relation to the recommendations of the Public Health Agency and notify the head of department for a decision. The decision also needs to consider limitations in terms of premises.

Decision:	131/20	Ref. no:	C2020/309	Replaces:	76/20 & 93/20	Ref. no:	C2020/309
Applies from:	2020-10-26	until:	Until further notice	Officer:	Helena Pallin		

2. Components that are crucial for the students' progression and that need to be completed on campus, as well as examinations that cannot be replaced by a take-home examination will be prioritised next, regardless of when they are planned to take place. Each course/programme coordinator should, preferably in consultation with course coordinators and directors of studies, identify such components and notify the head of department for a decision. The decision also needs to consider limitations in terms of premises.

Course components that are not covered by point 1 and 2 above will take place remotely. The vice-chancellor therefore decided that deviations from course and programme syllabi would continue to be permitted during the spring term 2021 with regard to teaching and examination forms in order to enable distance learning. Deviations shall be documented and the head of department is responsible for ensuring that this is done. The head of department also needs to ensure that there are clear routines for informing students of any changes in good time.

For application and guidance regarding the decision, please see the appendix "FAQs on the Return to Teaching and Working on Campus". The appendix was compiled following discussions with medical officers for infectious disease control in Värmland. Please note that the appendix may be revised in the event of new recommendations or if other considerations need to be made. As part of this decision, Helena Pallin is authorised to make any necessary revisions.

Furthermore, the vice-chancellor decided that:

- the decision will come into force on 26 October 2020.
- the university needs to be prepared to adapt quickly to any new recommendations from the Government and the Public Health Agency.
- Karlstad University shall in all parts of its activities make use of positive experiences of digital elements in teaching and work.

Johan Sterte decided in this matter and Helena Pallin prepared the case. Thomas Blom, pro-vice-chancellor, Margareta Friman, pro-vice-chancellor, Anne-Christine Larsson Ljung, university director, and Sebastian Hardin, students' union chair, were part of the concluding process without contributing to the final decision.

Johan Sterte

Helena Pallin

A copy of the decision was sent to:

- The registry
- The faculties
- Departments of university administration and central services
- Karlstad Student Union

APPENDIX - FAQs on the Return to Teaching and Working on Campus

General

Physical and social distancing shall be applied by everyone who is present on Karlstad University's premises. Applicable guidelines specify that no more than half of the available area of a room may be used and that approximately two metres should be maintained between people in the room. Try to reduce the risk of connecting contact groups. Try to ensure that people are given access to the premises in such a way that as few people as possible meet on the way to and from the premises.

Groups with more people than the recommendation of the Public Health Agency may not gather. At the time of this decision, the limit is 50 people for public gathering and events. As a main rule, meetings, events with overnight stays, conferences, seminars, trade fairs, and other events that gather more people than the limit must therefore be cancelled, postponed or held remotely using digital means. Lectures or other course components that are expected to gather more than 50 students may, for example, be held with digital support in order not to exceed the recommended limit.

In case of doubt regarding what approach to take, always consult your immediate head or manager. If necessary, contact the head of security for a risk assessment of individual cases.

Information

It is important that information that students should wash their hands regularly and stay at home if they have symptoms be posted on a regular basis by the entrances to the university in Karlstad and Ingesund, on Kau's web pages, signs, digital screens and in social media. This information should be further emphasised in connection with written examinations. There will be reminders to maintain physical distance and, if necessary, there should be markings on the floor where queues may occur.

Teaching

Scheduled teaching

All teaching must be held digitally for groups with more than 50 people, and when teaching is conducted digitally, Karlstad University recommends that Zoom be used.

Physical and social distancing must be applied by everyone who is present on Karlstad University's premises. Applicable guidelines specify that no more than half of the available area of a room may be used and that approximately two metres should be maintained between people in the room. For groups of 50 or less, teaching premises shall be booked for at least double as many as the total number of participants. The total number of participants shall be specified in the schedule booking and it is the person in charge of the schedule who is responsible for ensuring that the room is spacious enough. In the event that there are no available teaching premises with the right number of seats, components that are subject to examination shall be prioritised first.

Campus meetings for distance students

Campus meetings for distance students will be held digitally.

Laboratory experiments and practical course components

Laboratory experiments and practical course components, such as ensemble play, that need to be completed on campus shall be conducted in accordance with the guidelines and recommendations of the Public Health Agency. Physical and social distancing must be

applied by everyone who is present on Karlstad University's premises. Applicable guidelines specify that no more than half of the available area of a room may be used and that approximately two metres should be maintained between people in the room. Aim to have small groups when conducting laboratory experiments and that the experiments are done in such a way that as few people as possible meet when entering and exiting the premises, and that there is large enough space to unpack and pack any equipment.

Group work

Physical and social distancing must be applied by everyone who is present on Karlstad University's premises. Applicable guidelines specify that no more than half of the available area of a room may be used and that approximately two metres should be maintained between people in the room. When group work is conducted on Karlstad University's premises, teacher needs to consider and convey the recommendations of the Public Health Agency, and try to have as few people as possible in each group.

Examinations

Examinations on campus

Examination halls shall be furnished to maintain the recommended distance between seats, the equivalent of approximately two metres.

Timetabling shall allow for a break of approximately 30 minutes between examinations.

Floor markings will help reduce the risk of crowding when entering and exiting the hall.

The examination hall will open as early as possible to avoid crowding as the students are checked when entering.

Examinations in large groups

Groups larger than the recommendation of the Public Health Agency may not gather. At the time of this decision, the limit is 50 people for public gathering and events. As a main rule, examinations and retakes with more than 50 participants shall therefore be conducted remotely or postponed. In cases where the examination cannot be replaced by a take-home examination, examinations with more than 50 participants may be held on campus, given that the participants are divided into smaller groups and placed in separate rooms.

How to prioritise when there are many examinations at the same time

Examinations that are required to enrol in an upcoming course in the autumn term and examinations required to be able to do an upcoming placement shall be prioritised first.

Examinations that are required in order to begin the spring term are prioritised next, as well as examinations that cannot be replaced by a take-home examination. If an examination cannot be held on campus due to premises issues, the Head of Department will decide which examinations should be prioritised.

Already completed examination planning for study period 4 will be prioritised. If there are requests for further written examinations during study period 4, these shall be held on campus if possible with regard to available examination halls.

Distance examinations – deviations from the course syllabus

Examinations and course components that need to be completed remotely might mean that you deviate from the course syllabus. This is allowed according to the Vice-Chancellor's decision but must be documented. The Head of Department is responsible for ensuring that this is done.

Study centres

Students who have been admitted to a study centre will receive distance education if the centre is closed during the autumn 2020. Lectures will be held digitally and it will be possible to do take-home examinations until the study centre opens again. Students shall be notified as soon as possible when a study centre opens again for teaching on site.

Welcoming students this autumn

The university's welcoming of students this autumn will be organised in line with the Public Health Agency's current recommendations on public gatherings and events. Instead of the traditional welcome in the assembly hall, there will be a welcome video, an interview studio in the assembly hall foyer that will also be live online, and a temporary chat service open for questions from students. There will be no traditional fair.

Students belonging to a risk group

In accordance with the recommendations of the Public Health Agency, students who belong to a risk group shall consult a doctor on what they can do to reduce the risk of contracting Covid-19. These students should, in consultation with their teachers, be offered the alternative of participating via distance learning, where possible. These students should also be allowed approved leave from studies with guaranteed admission.

Students who are to complete externally placed training and/or examination such as a degree project, placement, internship or similar, shall follow the guidelines and recommendations of the host organisation. To the extent that guidelines or recommendations were to result in students not being able to fulfil planned components, the university shall try to solve the situation in each individual case.

Contact with students

Outside of teaching hours, university employees should try to communicate with the students via phone, e-mail or Zoom. When receiving visits at the office, caution shall be exercised and it should be possible to maintain approximately two metres distance. In exceptional cases, physical meetings may be offered to students, for example by the Students Health Services. In such cases, the room where the meeting takes place must meet the requirement of keeping a safe distance.

Work

Decision

The decision on staff returning to the workplace shall be made by the immediate head/manager. The general recommendation from the Public Health Agency that staff should work from home if possible, applies as a starting point. However, when teaching takes place on campus, operations and functions need to be maintained and more staff needs to return to work on site. When deciding that an employee should work on site, the immediate head needs to ensure that he/she is familiar with the recommendations regarding hygiene, distance and other matters that are included in the guidelines and general recommendations of the Public Health Agency and in this document.

Returning to the workplace

In order to ensure a safe return to work from the perspective of infection prevention and control, a system of partial staffing may be introduced. Partial staffing is a way of organising work so that employees take turns working from home and at the workplace. Another way is that employees who have a well-functioning working environment at home or who belong to a risk group are the ones who primarily work from home. Regardless of

model, it is the university's requirements to have certain functions up and running on campus that should be met.

Premises

In order to avoid too many people gathering at the same time, common areas should be adapted so that there is an appropriate number of people in the room at the same time. The head of campus is responsible for the common areas at Karlstad University and Ingesund being adapted in the form of spacious furnishing, markings on the floor to maintain distance and regular cleaning of the premises. The immediate head is responsible for creating time slots for coffee breaks and lunch to ensure that there are not too many people in the lunchroom at the same time. Preferably, you should choose your "own" lunchroom to prevent that too many people gather in one place.

Meetings

Digital alternatives should be considered. Physical and social distancing shall be applied by everyone who is present on Karlstad University's premises. Applicable guidelines specify that no more than half of the available area of a room may be used and that approximately two metres should be maintained between people in the room. Groups with more people than the recommendation of the Public Health Agency may not gather. At the time of this decision, the limit is 50 people for public gathering and events.

Business travel

The Public Health Agency's restrictions on travel shall be followed and if a business trip is considered necessary it has to be approved by the immediate head in advance.

Employees belonging to a risk group

The immediate head should have an individual dialogue with the employees concerned. Measures that may be relevant are working fully or in part from home, adapted working hours, temporary redistribution of certain tasks, extra protective measures at the workplace and adjustments of premises. The measures shall not lead to a worse working environment for colleagues, but the measures may result in employees working from home to varying degrees based on their prerequisites and the university's requirements. For some employees, work cannot be done from home and this means that the employee must work on site.

Employees have the opportunity to apply for vacation, compensation leave or other type of leave. Such leave can be granted by the immediate head and is handled generously with regard to employees belonging to a risk group.

Working environment

When returning to work, high demands are placed on the working environment being organised in such a way that the risk of infection is minimised. The employer has the main responsibility for ensuring that the working environment is safe and secure. All employees also have a responsibility to contribute to a good working environment, among other things by following given instructions and using the protective devices and exercising the caution required to prevent ill health and accidents in general. In the current situation, this means that all employees need to make sure that the guidelines of the Public Health Agency and Karlstad University are being followed. Employees may also need to alert their immediate head of shortcomings but also remind colleagues and students who do not comply with the rules. In addition, more than one person in the same office should be avoided.

Further information

Premises

Gläntan and other common areas

Students are advised to eat lunch at home or outdoors with approximately two metres distance, or use available cafés and restaurants. Student kitchen facilities with microwaves, etc., will have floor markings and information signs.

The furniture in the canteen and Gläntan will be placed so that a safe distance can be kept between seats.

As far as possible, breaks will be scheduled to avoid all students having a break at the same time.

In order to reduce queues, cafés and restaurants should if possible have a high number of staff. Gläntan and other cafés should enable easy payments and try to find ways to avoid queues.

There should be clear information that there is available seating outside as well as elsewhere on campus where students and staff can enjoy their lunch or coffee.

Cleaning

Daily cleaning of toilets, including emptying of waste-paper baskets. Door handles and other grip surfaces are wiped with alkaline detergent.

There is good access to soap, water and paper towels on campus.

Booking meetings rooms

Employees will no longer be able to book so-called “allmänbokade lokaler” via the service “Boka lokal för möten”. It will still be possible to book “faculty-owned” rooms and rooms on floor 4 in building 1 via the service. If you are unable to find a suitable meeting room, you are welcome to contact schema@kau.se.

The option of booking meeting rooms and group rooms online will also be unavailable to students. Students who belong to a student association can leave a request to book a room via the students’ union. If the students’ union approve the request, they will in turn contact schema@kau.se who will make the booking.

IT Reception

The IT Department’s reception is open Monday to Friday between 08.00 and 16.00. However, everyone is encouraged to contact the IT Department primarily via e-mail 2525@kau.se or phone 054-700 2525 to reduce the risk of crowding and spread of infection.

Student support will be open via Zoom as of August.

Open lectures

What lectures are considered open to the public?

Defence of a doctoral thesis must be open to the public; an alternative is to keep using Zoom for a while longer or to use spacious facilities where the participants can maintain physical distance. Note that the defence of doctoral thesis should be held without the risk of crowding during breaks, when entering and existing the premises and so on. The maximum number of people allowed to gather is 50, any further participants beyond this limit must join via Zoom. The Head of Department decides whether the defence takes place online or on campus and what measures that need to be taken.

Other lectures include those that we choose to keep open to the public, for example, lectures by alumni, visiting research fellows, etc. These will be cancelled until further notice or be held digitally.

Other open lectures

Will take place in the same way as a thesis defence (see section above).

Other open events, such as conferences

How conferences and other events should be conducted will be decided by the organiser in charge in consultation with the head of security.

Lectures that are not open to the public

Lectures that are only open to students do not belong to the category public or open lectures. These are not subject to the ban on public events with more than 50 people, but the university chooses not to gather groups larger than 50 people for these lectures either.

Freshers' Week

The students' union and student associations are currently being informed on how to conduct Freshers' Week in a safe way. Freshers' Week is the responsibility of the students' union. If the students' union fears that Freshers' Week or separate activities of Freshers' Week cannot be held in accordance with the recommendations from the Public Health Agency, Karlstad University urges that the activities in questions not be held or are held in an alternative way.

The students' union and student associations must consider the following

Maximum of 50 people in the same group, and avoid gatherings with large groups as far as possible.

Remember that students need to keep a safe distance to each other, and that there is a distance between seats and chairs as well.

Avoid activities that include close contact.

Make sure there is good access to soap, water and paper towels.

The library Opening

hours

The library's opening hours as of the start of the autumn term: 10.00-18.00 (Mon-Thu) and 10.00-15.00 (Fri-Sun). The study hall is open in the evenings but requires a Kau-card.

Staffing and service

Both information desks on floor two and three are staffed. Permanent staff work 10.00-15.00 and library hosts work 15.00-18.00, as well as weekends.

In order to reduce the risk of infection, Plexiglas has been placed in front of the information desks.

The library staff is still available via digital channels such as chat and Zoom.

Study seats

There are fewer places where students can sit and study. Half of the chairs have been removed and some seats have been closed off. Group study rooms that can be locked will

remain closed. Smaller group study rooms that cannot be locked will have clear instructions on the maximum number of people allowed in the room.

There will be regular inspection of the premises to ensure that furniture has not been moved around during the day.

Training sessions

The majority of the library's sessions in information search, etc., will take place via Zoom/Canvas.

The number of students taught in a group on site at the library will be reduced from approximately 30 people to 15 people.

Tutoring in academic writing

More or less all tutoring in academic writing will take place via Zoom, including drop-in.

Other measures

Floor markings to prevent visitors from standing too closely in queues.

A new solution for counting visitors will be installed, showing how many people are in the library in real time.

More frequent cleaning and sanitisation of keyboards, self-service kiosks, etc. Hand sanitiser and wet wipes will be available.

Staff

Staff will be divided into two teams that will alternate between working from home and on site at the library.

The library at Ingesund

Applies the same starting points as the library in Karlstad.

Open for visitors primarily in the afternoons. In the evenings and on the weekends, students can enter the library with an access card. There are certain limitations when it comes to borrowing instruments, for example, it will not be possible to borrow mouthpieces for wind instruments.

Staff alternates between working from home and working on site.