Decision in light of the ongoing coronavirus outbreak

Background
There is currently a coronavirus outbreak in most countries around the world. In light of this, Lund University has set up a central Crisis Management Group that is continuously monitoring the situation and following information and recommendations mainly from the Swedish Public Health Agency and Sweden’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs (UD) regarding the coronavirus. These public authorities’ recommendations are continuously updated when the situation changes and students and staff are therefore urged to keep themselves informed via the Swedish Public Health Agency and UD websites. The Crisis Management Group is also in contact with other higher education institutions and relevant public authorities.

Lund University is an international higher education institution, which involves extensive travel and numerous visits to and from countries around the world. At present there is an increased risk of undertaking trips both regarding the risk of infection and uncertainty linked to cancelled transport, fast changing local rules on entry, quarantine etc.

On 17 March 2020, the Government recommended that universities and other higher education institutions should switch to distance teaching as of 18 March due to the new coronavirus. Since then, teaching at the University has mainly been conducted remotely. On 29 May, the Government announced that universities and other higher education institutions could plan to return to more regular educational activities as of 15 June 2020. The Swedish Public Health Agency’s rules, general guidelines and recommendations to reduce the spread of infection are still to be observed.

The following decisions and recommendations still apply.

On 14 March 2020, UD decided to advise against non-essential travel to all countries. The University takes this into consideration in its decisions.

On 27 March 2020, the Government decided to restrict public gatherings and public events with more than 50 participants. The University chooses to also observe this in its own activities for as long as the restriction lasts.

On 1 April 2020, the Swedish Public Health Agency decided on rules and general guidelines concerning everyone’s responsibility to prevent the spread of Covid-19. This includes general guidelines for workplaces to ensure that, where possible, staff avoid unnecessary work-related travel. This advice was changed on 4 June 2020 in that symptom-free people may travel within Sweden as of 13 June 2020. Measures concerning physical distancing continue to apply.
In order to ensure a safe work and study environment for employees and students, and to help to reduce the spread of infection in society, the University has made the following decision.

**Decision**
In light of the above, the University has decided

*for education:*

- that teaching and assessment of students’ performance may be conducted on the University’s premises as of 15 June 2020. In such activities, this decision and the Swedish Public Health Agency’s rules, general guidelines and recommendations to reduce the spread of Covid-19 are to be observed. Priority is to be given to teaching and assessment that is impossible, or possible only with great difficulty, to conduct remotely. Such activities are to be preceded by a risk assessment concerning the risk of spreading infection. No gatherings are to be of more than 50 people. The vice-chancellor tasks the dean of each faculty to decide in detail on how this is to be carried out. This decision cannot be delegated further

- that the vice-chancellor’s decision dated 2 April 2020 on General advice on application of the decision in light of the ongoing coronavirus outbreak, STYR 2020/251 is hereby rescinded. Instead, support for activities is provided by Guidance on the implementation of the decision on education during the ongoing coronavirus outbreak.

- to permit changes in approved course and programme syllabi regarding the autumn semester of 2020 concerning the forms of assessment of the students’ performance and for teaching to be conducted using digital solutions to the extent that is necessary for compliance with this decision. The decision on changes is made by the officer who made the decision on the course or programme syllabus in question. The decision is to be documented and the reason for the change is to be stated. There is to be consultation with the student union concerned.

- to carry out education components abroad, to the extent that it is deemed to be able to be conducted safely based on any travel restrictions and if it is possible taking into consideration the receiving county’s and the higher education institution’s rules, regulations and recommendations.

- to receive students from other countries for education at Lund University to the extent that it is possible taking into consideration any travel restrictions as well as the rules, regulations and recommendations from the students’ home countries.

*for employees:*

- until further notice to only authorise domestic business travel which, after consultation with the line manager, is deemed to be necessary. The
Swedish Public Health Agency’s recommendations are to be observed for such trips.

- until further notice only to grant permission for business trips abroad which in consultation with the line manager are deemed to be necessary and able to be conducted in a safe way taking into consideration any travel restrictions. This applies for as long as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (UD) advises against non-essential travel to all countries.

- to receive international visits to the extent that it is possible taking into consideration any travel restrictions well as the rules, regulations and recommendations from the visitors’ home countries.

- that as far as possible meetings, conferences or other gatherings are to be conducted using digital tools. In cases where physical meetings are conducted, the rules and recommendations of the Swedish Public Health Agency to reduce the spread of infection are to be observed. Physical meetings, conferences or other gatherings are never to be organised with more than 50 participants. This applies to all activities at the University, i.e. education, research, external engagement and administration. It applies to gatherings of the University’s employees and students as well as invited guests.

- that staff should work from home to the extent that the line manager deems is possible when taking activities and the work environment into account.

Current information is available on the Staff Pages.

In cases where studies or work are affected by the decision above, you are to contact your line manager or programme director so that work and studies can be conducted in the best possible way.

This decision applies as of 15 June 2020 and replaces the previous decision made on 2 April 2020 (reg. no STYR 2020/251).

The decision on this matter was taken by the undersigned vice-chancellor in the presence of university director Susanne Kristensson following a consultation with a representative of the Lund University Students’ Unions and a presentation by general counsel Annette Nilsson, Legal Division.

Torbjörn von Schantz

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