



HÁSKÓLI ÍSLANDS

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Dear partner,

We are looking forward to welcoming your students to our campus in the next couple of weeks and will be organising the orientation events online for the most part.

We wanted to give our partners an update about the COVID-19 situation in Iceland and the University's response.

As Icelandic authorities had successfully managed to control the spread of the virus in June the University of Iceland had hoped to be able to offer on-campus learning this autumn semester. A recent increase in infections in Iceland and around Europe has caused authorities to introduce stricter social distancing rules.

This has led to the University moving to online teaching with the possibility of some on-campus learning. We will do our best to offer on-campus learning to exchange students.

Please find a message from our Rector concerning teaching in the coming semester below.

Dear students and colleagues,

Teaching for the new semester is about to begin, along with other operations across all UI schools. It is a challenge to organise work at the University in these uncertain times when the situation can change at short notice.

Our goal is to plan the semester so that operations continue uninterrupted despite the potential for sudden changes and so that everything is as close to normal as possible. This means that teaching at the University of Iceland for the 2020 autumn semester will be planned as online teaching – and may become fully online at short notice if the situation changes. At the same time, we will seek to use classrooms for on-campus learning as far as circumstances allow.

The University is open to students and staff, but public health restrictions apply. The authorities have given universities additional leeway to use classrooms for on-campus learning, allowing people to keep one metre apart in this context rather than following the two-metre rule which generally applies. It remains the case that face masks must be used where it is not possible to keep this distance and that no more than 100 people may be in any one space.

When planning the use of classrooms for on-campus learning, the University will be guided by the following principles:

- *The needs of new students will be prioritised when organising on-campus learning.*
- *We will seek to ensure that all students at the University of Iceland are able to access some on-campus learning this autumn semester (e.g. discussion periods, practical and clinical teaching), where circumstances permit and when needed.*
- *Lectures taking place in UI classrooms will, as far as possible, either be live-streamed or recorded and uploaded to Canvas. Teachers are also encouraged to prerecord their lectures if possible.*
- *Faculties/departments and schools are responsible for organising on-campus learning.*
- *Faculties and teaching staff will spend this week and the next preparing teaching plans in accordance with these restrictions and determining to what extent it will be possible to use rooms for on-campus learning. Students are therefore asked to keep up to date with announcements from their faculties and course instructors.*

The University of Iceland places the utmost priority on the wellbeing of our communities, both on campus and in wider society. We also aim to guarantee the quality of study programmes as far as we possibly can. We find ourselves in a difficult position, but with a united effort we will weather this storm as we have all others.

Jón Atli Benediktsson,

Best regards
Brynjar Elvarsson