

Information to secure basic operation of Otto von Guericke University with minimum contact starting 23 March 2020

Up until 22 March 2020, Otto von Guericke University was in basic operation. This meant that staff presence was restricted or suspended in many areas. The university library is still running with a reduced service, refectories and cafeterias are closed, rules regarding working from home and working outside the university have been largely defined and implemented.

The necessary core functions are being maintained, flexible working time models are being applied in order to carry out all necessary work tasks and secure childcare. The restrictions to minimize contact, which have been in effect since midnight on Monday, 23 March 2020, pose new challenges for both employees and the University of Magdeburg as a whole and call for drastic changes to customary forms of organization.

We are still in basic operation and the university is still up and running!

In order to provide supervisors and staff with a guideline, basic information will be published here which remains valid until further notice.

What do these further restrictions mean for the transfer of work tasks?

We are still in an exceptional situation in which we need to balance the need to maintain operations, to protect staff in the best way possible and to enable them to fulfil their family obligations, e.g. due to school closures.

If the rules which are valid with immediate effect are complied with (keeping a distance of at least 1.5 meters, working from single workplaces whenever possible and no more than two employees working together), all of the work tasks can be carried out at the university. In order to minimize contacts as much as possible, staggered working hours or working from home can be ordered.

Employees who need to be present, for example, to ensure the security of facilities, buildings or otherwise, or who need to process personal data, can only be permitted to work from home to a limited extent.

Which work tasks can be carried out working from home?

Employees can only be instructed to work from home if their work can also be carried out from home.

Under the current conditions, tasks that would normally be carried out 'on the side' at the university workplace may now be transferred if such tasks can be easily carried out working from home with or without IT equipment. In this case, work tasks should be defined together with the employees in question. The right of management has been extended, i.e. employees who do not have enough work to do when working from home may also be assigned other tasks.

Employees who work from home are expected to provide services in this phase as well, and availability must be guaranteed during core working hours.

How is availability ensured?

It must be possible to reach employees by e-mail and telephone. Employees are obligated to check e-mails and the website several times a day. Call forwarding must be set up.

In principle, employees must be available between 8.30 am and 3.00 pm. Employees who have children to care for during core working hours and therefore have to work flexibly must make appropriate arrangements with their supervisors or within the organizational unit. The heads

of the organizational units must ensure that employees can be reached during core working hours.

What legal regulations apply to working from home?

The service agreement for teleworking and working from home is subject to restrictions.

No individual agreements on working from home/working outside the university will be concluded, instead arrangements will be made between superiors and employees. Work tasks will be defined, assigned and checked. Working from home and working outside the university will take place either entirely or to a far greater extent than during normal operations. Due to the temporary nature of the transfer of tasks to working from home, the provisions of the Workplaces Ordinance (ArbStättV, *Arbeitsstättenverordnung*) are not applicable.

Who are private telephone numbers disclosed to?

The call forwarding service can reach its limits if the telecommunications network of the University of Magdeburg fails or other circumstances prevent access to the call forwarding service. It is therefore essential that employees leave their private number with the Secretariat so that they can be reached quickly under certain circumstances and can be informed immediately of new developments and instructions. In the departments, the telephone numbers of all employees must be stored in a protected area.

Telephone numbers, which are required by the department for a standby service, to maintain core processes or a reporting chain to be established in an emergency or disaster situation must be provided to the appropriate offices (offices of the deans, the President, the Chancellor and the head of central services). In addition, the departments will send the private telephone numbers of their heads to the Chancellor (kanzler@ovgu.de). Since it can be expected under the current circumstances that reporting chains will be interrupted, the office of the Chancellor has a justified interest in recording the private numbers of higher-level staff.

Once the situation has passed, numbers that are no longer needed to ensure permanent availability must be deleted.

How are working hours recorded during basic operation?

According to the current rules in place at OVGU, academics have trust-based working hours. For non-academic staff, working hours are laid down in the service agreement on working time regulations within the framework of a 40-hour week and flexitime as well as rules on flexibility within the framework of part-time employment at Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg (without MED). This is based on the assumption that working time is recorded using a time clock. This procedure for recording working time is currently suspended.

Trust-based working hours also apply to this group of persons. This means a high degree of responsibility on the part of employees and greater responsibility on the part of their supervisors. Performance of the work tasks has priority.

Can holiday leave that has already been approved be taken now?

Requested and approved holiday leave should be taken as planned in order to avoid missing the deadline (30 September 2020) for holiday leave from the previous year or for the granting of holiday leave in the current year. Under the current circumstances, it is not possible to transfer any remaining holiday leave beyond 30 September 2020 under collective bargaining law. For this reason, too, approved holiday leave may be withdrawn only in cases of urgent official requirements. In agreement with employees, holiday leave that cannot be granted now must be granted within the next few weeks. During the time when normal operations resume, any taking of holidays due to postponed holiday leave should be avoided at all cost.

If further official restrictions are imposed, the university can be transferred from basic to **emergency operation**.

Specifics of emergency operation

If emergency operation must be maintained, only those employees who are needed to secure the core processes will be granted access to the buildings of OVGU. They will receive a pass if a lock down is ordered.

All others will work from home and the rules of basic operation will apply.

Anyone who cannot work from home will be released from normal work duties, but must also be available to be deployed at short notice or to resume work.

The right of management has been particularly extended and employees can also be assigned other tasks. This applies regardless of any work carried out from home.

An emergency plan must be drawn up by the departments that determines which employees are absolutely necessary to maintain the core processes; as a rule, rotations must be scheduled. The departments have already been informed of this.

Specifics in the event of closure

If the university must close, only those employees who are needed on standby will be granted access to the buildings of OVGU. They will receive a pass if a lock down is ordered.

All others will work from home and the rules of basic operation (with minimum contact) apply.