

Corona-Update: March 9th

I should inform you that a school in Freiburg, the Deutsch-Französische Gymnasium (the German-French Gymnasium), has been closed by the Health Authorities for two weeks starting today. The reason given is that many teachers and students commute to the school from Mulhouse, across the border in France, and Mulhouse has become one of the concentrated centres for coronavirus infection in France.

Our approach at UWC Robert Bosch College remains not to put our students and staff at undue risk: we remain in at least daily contact with the Health and Education Authorities and as needs be will adapt our programmes and arrangements. We continue to emphasize good hygiene and keeping healthy including through adequate sleep. We are mindful that with the spread of the coronavirus almost worldwide, there are likely to be few completely “safe” places. Moreover, travel on crowded public transport, in airports and in airplanes also carries risk of infection and transmission.

We may need to review students’ travel plans for the “Easter” break, but at this stage this has not been suggested by the Authorities. As usual, the plan is for Student Houses to remain open for this break.

To repeat:

- UWC Robert Bosch College does not plan to close at this time, unless instructed to do so by the Authorities. If so instructed, the College will confirm whether this applies also to the boarding section of the school.
- If a situation arises where UWC Robert Bosch College is required to close both the school and the boarding section, the College will work closely with you, staff, the families of German students, Host Families and the German National Committee to ensure that every student who cannot return home is accommodated. The teachers also will make plans for learning to continue. Under these circumstances, the College will fund the travel costs for all students who receive travel assistance as part of their scholarship provision, and if needs be those where the family / national committee is genuinely unable to bear the costs. But let us hope – and continue to plan as sensibly as we can – that we can remain open and with generally-healthy students and staff.
- The responsibility remains yours for deciding whether you wish your child to remain at UWC Robert Bosch College with the precautions described above, or whether they should return home. Should you take the view that you wish your child to return home now, I will respect your decision and your child – RBC’s student – will remain in good standing at the College. Should your child – RBC student – leave RBC at this stage, there is a possibility (in my non-expert estimation small but not negligible) that the Authorities subsequently may introduce travel restrictions and quarantine periods for travelers, which might disrupt their planned return to RBC later this

Semester (this already is happening in some countries). Again, RBC will follow instructions in this regard from the Authorities.

The International Baccalaureate makes it clear that the May examinations session will continue. From the IB's update on the 2nd March:

Is the IB going to change the May 2020 examination schedule?

The IB is unable to change the May 2020 exam schedule. The IB examination schedule is a global schedule and therefore it would be unreasonable to change it for students who are not affected. Schools can opt to defer to a future session, transfer to an alternative school or organize an alternative venue where appropriate. The IB is continuing to review deadlines and support options it can provide for schools.

Good news: the "mock" examinations for 2nd year students and the Group 4 project for 1st year students proceed uninterrupted.

Laurence Nodder, Rektor