

10th December 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians, copied to National Committees,

All Parents and Guardians are aware that UWC Robert Bosch College has stated that students who leave Germany for the Winter Break need to enter quarantine for five days on their return, and then to source a PCR test, returning to campus when they can produce a negative test. These are the current, normal, regulatory requirements for people entering Germany from a country or region listed by the Robert Koch Institut as “high risk”. RBC has asked that students and their parents or guardians arrange this: as previously explained, RBC simply does not have the facilities to be able to look after students who need to be in quarantine.

Students returning to RBC from within Germany are required to return with a negative PCR test, but are not required to enter quarantine.

Especially for students returning to RBC from within Germany, there is a high obligation on these students to be particularly careful in minimizing contact with people from outside their household especially in the few days before they take a PCR test and then until they return back to campus.

Yesterday RBC was made aware that there is an exemption in some circumstances from quarantine requirements for boarding students in Land Baden Württemberg, the Land in which RBC is located. I have consulted the Board Chair, the Shareholder Representatives and the Management Team. **RBC will not follow that potential exemption.** RBC continues to require students returning from countries beyond Germany to undertake quarantine as described in the first paragraph of this letter.

The reasons for maintaining the requirement for quarantine are as follows:

- a. RBC students generally share four to a room. Students are allowed to move from student house to student house. RBC has less opportunity of containing an covid-19 infection should one come to campus than most other non-UWC boarding schools.
- b. Moreover, RBC does not confine its students to campus. An undetected covid infection within RBC has much more chance of being taken into the wider Freiburg society than at most other regional boarding schools where even senior boarding students generally are confined to campus.
- c. RBC’s students are travelling to many different parts of the world, and in some countries where there are high levels of Covid infection the regulations designed to contain the spread of Covid are perceived as less developed than those in Germany. Moreover, the perception from Germany is that in some parts there may be less of a culture of compliance with regulations than in most parts of Germany.
- d. The Management Team is placed in an invidious position if we have to judge each case on its national merits (unless the country is **not** on the RKI list of high-risk countries).
- e. Towards the end of the first wave of the pandemic and as schools were allowed to re-open, a medical doctor at the Gesundheitsamt Freiburg strongly urged quarantine for returning students, knowing the nature of the Student Houses here. Currently

the relevant official in the Gesundheitsamt is unavailable to give RBC an updated recommendation, but there is no reason to think that it would be different from the earlier strong recommendation.

- f. There is at least a medium probability that the German Authorities will strengthen the lockdown and possibly further tighten travel requirements in the coming days. Yesterday the German Minister of Health urged people not to travel at this time. Earlier in the day, Chancellor Merkel made a plea to the Bundestag for stricter regulations. On Tuesday, the leaders of Germany's National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina, which advises the Government, issued an urgent appeal for stronger measures. This appeal also was signed by the Head of the Robert Koch Institut. If you wish to read Germany-based English language basic reporting on this:

<https://www.thelocal.de/20201209/german-health-minister-calls-to-avoid-holiday-travel-amid-push-for-stricter-shutdown>

<https://www.thelocal.de/20201209/merkel-demands-tougher-curbs-as-covid-19-deaths-in-germany-break-record>

<https://www.thelocal.de/20201208/scientists-plead-for-hard-lockdown-in-germany-as-fears-grow-over-covid-19-spike-at-christmas>

The current list of countries considered "high risk" in covid-19 terms by the Robert Koch Institut is available at:

https://www.rki.de/DE/Content/InfAZ/N/Neuartiges_Coronavirus/Risikogebiete_neu.html;jsessionid=03E4E7E30FE87114904527EA6C402997.internet121

(Scroll down until you get to the long list of countries.)

Please be assured that if Germany (or Land Baden Württemberg) enters a hard lock down, RBC has contingency plans in place. Students will continue to be cared for.

Yesterday Helen White and I met with students who are or who may be staying on Campus for the Winter Break. Clearly, these are circumstances forced on all of us by Covid-19. But I am encouraged by the spirit our students, your children, are showing. Of course people will miss being with family, will miss being in a home. But we also will make the most of being here, in Freiburg.

Thank you for your ongoing support and confidence. Thank you to the several parents who have donated to the Winter Break Fund, to help make this as good a time as possible. If you have not yet made a donation, would like to and are in a financial position to do so, the link is: <https://www.uwcrobertboschcollege.de/support/donate/>

With best wishes,



Laurence Nodder

Rektor

cc. National Committees