

10th August 2022

Dear Parents and Guardians,

This letter outlines and explains UWC Robert Bosch College's approach to Covid-19 as students travel to the College (RBC), and during the Student Orientation.

Introduction:

There is a gap between what is desirable (in Covid-19 terms: no infections!) and what is possible to plan for given the location of RBC in Europe, optimal teaching circumstances, the natural inclinations of young people, and the imperative for our students to be able to engage in the longer term with the society around RBC – from simple things like shopping and other forms of recreation to the College's off-campus service programme.

Almost no-one wants to catch Covid-19! Yet different people and different societies are willing to consider very different precautions against infection, and the trade-offs implied in different precautions. Young people and especially vaccinated young people are considered a low-risk group for serious illness or death if they contract Covid-19. However, the longer-term effects of Covid-19 infection are not fully known or understood.

In its approach, RBC always attempts at least to apply the relevant Government Regulations which are designed to mitigate against Covid-19 infection and transmission in society and in schools to a level acceptable to this society. By the end of the most recent Semester in German schools, the Authorities no longer required students or staff to wear masks, or to test on a regular basis.

In addition to applying the Regulations for schools as these evolve, RBC plans to take some additional measures. Importantly, if students have not been able to receive a full course of Covid-19 vaccinations before they arrive, this will be organized for them once they have arrived at RBC. RBC will provide FFP 2 and medical masks for students and staff who wish to protect themselves (and others) through mask wearing - there is evidence that wearing an FFP 2 mask provides a level of personal protection, see for instance <https://www.mpg.de/17916867/coronavirus-masks-risk-protection>. At this stage, RBC will continue the practice of each student and member of staff testing twice a week, using self-administered antigen tests (provided through RBC). RBC also will continue to ask those students and members of staff who experience what might be Covid-19 symptoms, to test.

RBC does not have a sick bay. This year there isn't an empty student house in which to isolate any student who becomes infected with Covid-19. During Orientation, a large classroom with access to bathrooms and shower facilities and a small kitchen will be furnished as an isolation facility for any Covid-19-infected students. Thereafter, an unoccupied on-campus Staff Apartment may be used for these purposes. Additionally, each student house has one double room with an attached bathroom, and some of these will be kept unassigned to be available for isolation purposes. If there is a widespread outbreak of Covid-19 infection on campus (which I hope will not be the case), it might be that infected students with minor symptoms

need to remain in their shared Rooms, with good ventilation and with them and their Roommates also masked.

#### Specific Student Responsibilities in Travelling to RBC:

It is the responsibility of each student to check and meet the Covid-19 requirements of any transportation that they will use to travel to RBC. This is particularly important if a student is travelling by airplane. Please contact RBC as soon as possible if the cost of these requirements is beyond your financial capacity.

Currently, there are no Covid-19 entry requirements into Germany. Normally there are special requirements for people entering Germany from “areas of variant of concern” / “high risk” areas. Currently, no country is designated as an area of concern/high risk country.

[https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/coronavirus/2317268#content\\_0](https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/coronavirus/2317268#content_0)

It is possible that things might change, in which case RBC will inform all Students, Parents and Guardians by electronic letter.

#### In preparation for travel:

RBC asks that in the days before travelling to RBC, students live (and say farewell to family and friends!) in a manner which reduces risk of them catching Covid-19.

The basic ways of keeping Covid-19 “safer” have not changed. In Japan these were summarized as:

- Wash your hands
- Wear your mask properly
- Avoid the three Cs: close-contact settings, crowded places and closed spaces

If a student develops symptoms that potentially could be a sign of Covid-19 infection, RBC asks that the student tests and that they only travel if their test is negative. The test could be an antigen or PCR test, or another test regularly used in their current country.

#### In the Airport, Airplane, Bus or Train:

RBC asks students to wear FFP2 or medical masks while travelling to RBC, only removing these to drink or to eat.

#### On arrival in Germany:

Currently, German Authorities require that all people using public transport must wear a suitable mask (eg. FFP2, or a medical mask). Clearly this is required if the student is travelling to Freiburg by train or by bus.

RBC will be meeting many students at Frankfurt International Airport. For the students it meets, RBC will provide FFP2 masks for onwards travel to RBC.

On arrival on Campus:

Each student will test on arrival on campus, before entering their student house. Thereafter, RBC will provide for twice-weekly testing of all students and members of staff, until further notice.

Parents and Guardians bringing their children, RBC's students, to Campus on the 25th August

Some Parents and Guardians will bring their children to Campus. There will be a possibility of meeting some members of staff, and refreshments will be available. Parents and Guardians who wish to enter (briefly) school buildings need to be masked and tested. Antigen tests will be available together with the refreshments.

Masks:

Masks will be available for students and members of staff who wish to take further precautions to keep themselves and others safer.

Staying Outdoors:

Weather permitting, as many as possible of the Orientation events are planned to take place outdoors, where infection risks are lower.

Remaining on Campus:

Students will be required to stay on Campus (or, with permission, the Forest behind RBC) until at least Saturday 3rd September (except for the Camp for 2nd year students). The reason is to stabilize as a RBC Community, and to be sure that the RBC community is not perceived as the source for new Covid-19 infections in Freiburg.

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I look forward to meeting the students, and at least some Parents and Guardians, on the 25th August 2022.

With best wishes,

Laurence Nodder

Rektor

UWC Robert Bosch College