

Library and Information Service

COVID-19 PROTOCOL

2020.08.06

1 Background

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we hereby communicate the following procedures to students and staff relating to the gradual responsible reopening of the NWU Library and Information Service. Moves towards the reopening of libraries globally are increasingly on the agenda as countries look to lift broader restrictions (<https://www.ifla.org/covid-19-and-libraries#reopening>).

2 Gradual and responsible re-opening of NWU libraries

The following measures will apply to all our libraries across campuses. We wish to advise that the physical libraries will only be open from 08:00 – 17:00 until further notice. However, the virtual library available at <http://library.nwu.ac.za> will be accessible all the time.

3 LIS environment measures

The following measures will apply to all our libraries across the campuses. Due to the nature of library spaces, restrictive measures are necessary, as safety of users and staff is a priority. Our goal is to lower the numbers and proximity of people in the libraries to reduce the likelihood of transmission.

3.1 Responsible use of physical spaces

Users are encouraged to use the library facilities responsibly.

- Only a limited number of users will be allowed to use specific areas in the library at any one time.
- Use hand sanitizers as provided when entering our spaces.
- No entrance will be allowed without a face mask.
- Maintain a 2m distance between people.
- Wash hands regularly.
- Protective screens have been installed at all service counters.
- All collaborative rooms will be closed to minimize contact.
- To prevent situations where users may gather, the lounge areas will not be accessible.
- Doors will be open with door stoppers where possible to avoid touching of handles.
- Only every second chair in study areas will be available to maintain distance.
- With regards to Computer rooms/Learning and Research Commons, the following shall apply:
 - Hand sanitising will be compulsory when entering the computer facility.
 - The number of users will be monitored in order to ensure equity of access.
 - To adhere to social distancing protocol, only every second computer will be activated.

3.2 Return or issue of books

- Use the self-check machine where possible to issue your books.
- Card scanners will be on the counter for users to scan their cards. This will assist staff to check out books on your behalf.
- The surface of the Circulations desk will be wiped after each transaction.
- Loan periods have been extended automatically and will be reviewed from time to time. At this stage, there is therefore no pressure for users to visit libraries physically. Should you prefer to return your books, please make use of the drop boxes outside the libraries.

3.2.1 Sanitising of material

- Returned books will be quarantined for 3 days before shelving.
- Reserve and Study Collection books will be kept separate and wiped with a damp (not wet) sanitising cloth.

3.2.2 Curbside pickup service

Curbside pickup is a library service that aims at reaching out to NWU staff and students by making library resources (up to three items) available to patrons who are not eligible to access the university campuses due to lockdown restrictions. There are separate Curbside material request forms for each campus library. After completion, please wait for the confirmation from the library that the requested material is ready. A time slot will be provided to confirm the time, date and place of pickup. For more information and instructions, please visit <http://library.nwu.ac.za/curbside-pickup>

3.3 Online support

- Use our WhatsApp number: 066 028 7119 or ASK US to chat with us about your library service needs. You can also make use of LibAnswers available at: <https://nwu.libanswers.com/>
- Contact a Faculty or Branch Librarian for any information support: <http://library.nwu.ac.za/information-services-and-faculty-librarians>
- Alternatively, make use of our social media accounts available at: <http://library.nwu.ac.za> in order to communicate with staff about library support.

3.4 Seating space in main and faculty libraries across campuses

The following number of users will be allowed in the different library spaces. Coloured clothes pegs will be given at the entrance of the library according to the space to be used. Additional staff will regulate the number of users in these areas.

	Mahikeng	Vanderbijlpark	Ferdinand Postma Library (PC)	Theology (PC)	Education (PC)	Natural Sciences (PC)	Music (PC)
Circulation Area – open area in front of Counter	10	19 + 4 in copy shop	20	1	5	2 standing 1 seated	2
Honours Commons	17	36	15	-	-	-	-
Research Commons	32	11	25	-	-	-	-
Learning/ Information Commons	Under construction	25 Split Level 1 (Study & Computer area) 30 (On floor & between shelves)	30	40 (Study and between shelves)	40 (Study and between shelves)	40 (Study and between shelves)	10 (Study and between shelves)
Reference Section	-	48 Split level 2 (Study and Computer area)	-	-	-	-	-
Coffee shops	-	Books and Beans Closed	Ferdi's Closed	-	-	-	-

3.4.1 Seating space in open areas

Ferdinand Postma Library (PC)	50 First floor quiet study area	50 2nd floor quiet study area	50 2nd floor collaborative area	50 2nd floor Law Section
Mahikeng	50 First floor study area	32 1st floor Law Section	20 Ground floor Short Loan Section	
Vanderbijlpark	Mentioned in table above			

3.5 Staffing

3.5.1 Staff support

- Staff will be reintegrated according to the NWU Reintegration Plan (22 May 2020).
- All staff will be equipped with face masks.
- Staff working at counters will also be equipped with gloves and sanitizers.
- Staff working in open offices will be separated to ensure social distancing.
- When enter into public spaces, staff should wear face masks.
- Staff should read the People and Culture framework for guidance regarding working conditions during this period <https://intranet.nwu.ac.za/sites/intranet.nwu.ac.za/files/files/Covid-19-Work%20protocol-forms.pdf>

3.5.2 Loans and Commons staff

Staff members will be distributed as follows:

	Mahikeng	Vanderbijlpark	Ferdinand Postma Library (PC)	Theology (PC)	Education (PC)	Natural Sciences (PC)	Music (PC)
Loan Counter area + back_of counter	1 office (1) 3 at counter 2 Shelves	1 office (1) 1 in Reserve section 1 at counter 1 Shelves	1 office (1) 1 ILL 2 at counter 2 Shelves	1 office (1) 2 at counter	2 offices (2) 2 at counter	1 office (1)	1
Research Commons	1 office (1)	3 offices (3)	2 offices (1) 1 at counter	-	-	-	-
Learning Commons + Information desk	Under construction	Split Level 1 3 offices (3) 1 at Info Desk	1 at LC Info desk 1 at main Info Desk	-	-	-	-

3.5.3 Acquisitions, Cataloguing and ERM

Services will continue as normal.

Staff sharing office spaces will be separated in order to reduce contact.

3.5.4 Administrative Services

Administrative Services will be available during office hours except on weekends and public holidays.

3.5.5 Faculty Librarians

Faculty Librarians provide online services from home. Their availability on campus might be on a rotational basis.

3.5.6 Presence of LIS Management

At least one manager will be available at each campus library all the time. Should it be necessary for some to work from home, this will be done on a rotational base so as to ensure presence of senior staff members on our campuses.

3.5.7 Bindery & Restoration Services

- These services will available during library hours.
- The Bindery will be regularly sanitised and only authorised staff will be allowed in the department.
- Staff will wear protective clothing and will continue with normal work activities.
- Staff will be encouraged to keep social distancing at all times.

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