

Library and Information Service

COVID-19 PROTOCOL

2021-08-21

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.

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 library hours will be adjusted according to the lockdown level, to give students and staff sufficient time to reach their homes before the start of curfew. Contact the library website for the [hours](#) of the different libraries. The [virtual library](#) 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 top priority. Our goal is to lower the numbers and proximity of people in the libraries in order to reduce the likelihood of transmission.

3.1 Responsible use of physical spaces

Protective screens have been installed at all service counters.

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 sanitisers as provided when entering our spaces.
- No entrance will be allowed without a face mask. Keep your mask on at all times in the library.
- Maintain a 2m distance between people.
- Wash hands regularly.
- Some collaborative rooms will be opened up and [room bookings](#) can be done. The number of users will be restricted and indicated on the room bookings web page. The number of users will also be indicated at each room.
- 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.
 - Keyboards and areas around the computer will be sanitised after use.

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.
- No extension of loan periods will be given anymore. Users need to renew their books. For return of books, please make use of the drop boxes at the main entrances of the campuses.

3.3 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 sanitising cloth.

3.4 Curbside pickup service

[Curbside pickup](#) is a library service that aims at reaching out to NWU staff and students by making library resources 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.

3.5 Online support

- Make use of [LibAnswers](#) on the library website.
- Contact a [Faculty or Branch Librarian](#) for any information support.
- Alternatively, make use of our social media accounts on the [library website](#) to communicate with staff about library support.

3.6 Some Loan Services not available

The following services are currently not available due to lockdown restrictions:

- Supply of letters of introduction to make use of other university libraries.
- Registration of external members and users with letters of introduction from other university libraries.
- Interlibrary loans in terms of borrowing of books from / supply of books to other University Libraries.

3.7 Seating space in main and faculty libraries across campuses (50% capacity of the venues)

The following number of users will be allowed in the different library spaces. Coloured clothes pegs will be available at the entrance of the library and will be used according to the space to be utilised. 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	20	-	-	-	-
Research Commons	32	11	35	-	-	-	-
Learning/ Information Commons	55	25 Split Level 1 (Study & Computer area) 30 (On floor & between shelves)	45	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	-	-	-	-

3.8 Seating space in open areas (50% of capacity of venues)

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			

3.9 Staffing

3.9.1 Staff support

- Staff will be reintegrated according to the NWU latest Reintegration Plan
- All staff will be equipped with face masks.
- Staff working at counters will also be equipped with gloves and sanitisers.
- 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>

3.9.2 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	-	-	-	-

3.9.3 Acquisitions, Cataloguing and ERM

Services will continue as normal.

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

3.9.4 Administrative Services

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

3.9.5 Faculty Librarians

Most Faculty Librarians are back on campus. Some staff still work from home in arrangement with their Line Managers or in case of co-morbidity / over 60 years.

3.9.6 Presence of LIS Management

At least one manager will be available at each campus library all the time.

3.9.7 Bindery & Restoration Services

- These services will be 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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