

**International students at UCLouvain  
FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)**

**March 24, 2020 (this cancels the document of March 18, 2020)**

The coronavirus poses unprecedented global public health challenges. It is through individual and collective action that we can find the best ways to protect ourselves and others. The actions of governments and universities are causing great upheaval and, if you are currently far from your loved ones, the situation can be particularly stressful. We've put together a series of points here to help you find answers to your questions.

**1. I am taking classes at UCLouvain, do I have to go back to my country or stay in Belgium?**  
**[amended March 24, 2020]**

All UCLouvain courses switched to distance learning on Monday 16 March until the end of the quadrimester, i.e. Saturday 16 May inclusive. Special arrangements could be made for specific practical work that cannot be adapted to a distance learning mode. Relevant information on this subject will be communicated to you by your course holders.

The distance learning parts of the course are an integral part of the course programme and you can follow them at a distance from your home country or in Belgium.

It is now premature to make decisions on the organization of the exams. However, we must anticipate the possibility that some mobility and grouping restrictions may still be in place between now and the June examination session as well as during the June examination session. The University has therefore taken the decision to prepare, as of now, for all possible scenarios in order to offer the most appropriate pedagogical, technological and logistical solutions for the health situation we will experience in Belgium after April. Our wish is to avoid prolonging the academic year and to avoid postponing pedagogical activities to the next academic year.

If you decide to return to your country, you should be aware that a later return to Belgium could be difficult because some countries impose restrictions on departures from and access to their territory and transport companies drastically reduce their services in order to limit the spread of the coronavirus.

→ In the event that certain exams can only be taken in person during the June examination session, **and for international students on an exchange program (such as Erasmus) who decide to return home and who are unable to return to Belgium**, we will adapt our evaluation systems as much as possible to enable them to validate their course.

→ **For international students enrolled in a regular program** (as well as for Belgian students enrolled in a regular program), the modalities of the exams for the June session are still under discussion. They will be communicated as soon as possible.

## **2. I am doing an internship at UCLouvain, do I have to go back to my country or stay in Belgium?**

Measures are being taken throughout UCLouvain to encourage telework and/or suspend certain activities. It is therefore important to contact your supervisor at UCLouvain to see what measures apply to you.

## **3. I want to go back to my country, but I don't know how to do it?**

Several countries have established mobility restrictions to limit the spread of the virus. This includes restrictions on access to the territory from Belgium or a reduction in the frequency of certain means of public transport. Please check the arrangements made by your country, for example by consulting your consulate or embassy in Belgium, as well as the arrangements made by transport companies. The possibilities of mobility around the world are changing rapidly.

## **4. I wish to return to my country, can I give up my accommodation in Belgium?**

If you occupy UCLouvain accommodation, you simply need to notify the housing services (LOGE) that you wish to cancel your contract. The need for a notice period will be waived in exceptional circumstances. If you terminate your contract, and later return to Belgium, however, we cannot guarantee that you will have access to the same accommodation.

If you occupy an accommodation that does not depend on the UCLouvain, you must contact the owner to find out how to terminate the contract.

## **5. I have lost my student job because of the containment measures and I'm not doing well financially, what should I do?**

For any social request, please contact the Help Desk via the general address: [aide-sante@uclouvain.be](mailto:aide-sante@uclouvain.be). The team will listen to you and try to seek the best solution.

## **6. I have symptoms or have been in contact with an infected person, what should I do?**

The first good reflex is to keep your distance from other people and call a doctor. These measures are recalled on the following UCLouvain page: <https://uclouvain.be/news-coronavirus>

You can also call your doctor in Belgium. If you do not have a doctor in Belgium, send your phone number to the following address and you will be called back for medical advice by phone: [aide-sante@uclouvain.be](mailto:aide-sante@uclouvain.be)

## **7. What are the containment measures currently applied in Belgium?**

From midday on 18 March until 5 April inclusive, the Belgian government introduced strict containment measures:

➔ Restaurants, cafes, bars, discos, cinemas, party and theatre halls are closed during the week and at weekends. This implies that the university restaurants are closed. However, take-aways, snack bars, chip shops and home delivery service remain open.

→ All non-essential stores are closed during the week and on weekends. On the other hand, the grocery stores are open during the week and at the weekend but cannot accommodate more than one person per 10m<sup>2</sup> and each person can only stay in the store for 30 minutes. Pharmacies are also open.

→ Any gathering of people other than those living under the same you, whether indoors or outdoors, is forbidden. Outdoor outings are allowed but can only be done in the company of one and only one other person.

→ Elementary and secondary schools have suspended classes but provide child care for parents who work in a critical sector. On the other hand, day-care centres remain open.

→ Hotels, B&B and guesthouses remain open (without providing access to the bar).

For more information : <https://www.info-coronavirus.be/en/>

#### **8. What is the impact of containment measures on the university? [amended March 24, 2020]**

Since 16 March, UCLouvain has switched to distance learning and teleworking mode. The distance learning mode will continue to apply until 16 May 2020 inclusive. Teleworking will continue to apply until at least 19 April inclusive. From 18 March 2020 at midday and until at least 5 April, access to all UCLouvain buildings will be closed, including access to the libraries, computer rooms and study rooms. These measures are described on the portal: <https://uclouvain.be/news-coronavirus>

#### **9. I am lost and I do not know what to do ...**

→ The most important thing is to take good care of yourself and others. You have been given multiple hygiene instructions to follow. They are recalled on the page: <https://uclouvain.be/news-coronavirus>

→ If you have questions related to your training, contact your faculty in Belgium and if you are on an Erasmus-type exchange, also contact the person who manages your mobility in your home institution.

→ For any health or social questions, please contact the following address: [aide-sante@uclouvain.be](mailto:aide-sante@uclouvain.be)

Thank you all for your collaboration and we hope to find together as serenely as possible the best arrangements for you in this unprecedented situation. Take good care of yourself and others!

Vincent Blondel, Rector

Dana Samson, Pro-Rector for international affairs