

Written Exams Take Place at KIT again

Cooperation with Messe Karlsruhe Enables Large Groups of Students Resume Postponed on-campus Examinations



The Schwarzwaldhalle of Messe Karlsruhe offers space for up to 249 examinees at the same time with distancing rules being observed. (Photo: Markus Breig, KIT)

Normally, the Schwarzwaldhalle, a public exhibition and concert hall of Messe Karlsruhe, is crowded by many visitors. From May 18 to July 4, 2020, however, students of Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) meet there to pass their written exams. After academic education operations at universities in Baden-Württemberg had been suspended by the 1st Corona Ordinance, postponed written examinations can now take place again. For this, KIT worked out a comprehensive concept to ensure observation of hygiene and distancing rules.

Today at 10 o'clock, time had finally come for the 209 registered students of the Chair of Network Economics: By participating in the written examination on the lecture "Wettbewerb in Netzen" (competition in networks), examinees were enabled to prove their knowledge acquired during the past winter semester. Originally, the examination had been planned to take place on March 18, but had to be postponed due to the Corona pandemic. The plan of KIT for gradual resumption of academic education operations now is the basis for catching up with postponed examinations. "We are very happy that our students

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can now proceed with their studies thanks to our comprehensive room and hygiene concept and excellent collaboration of all parties involved,” says Professor Alexander Wanner, KIT Vice-President for Higher Education and Academic Affairs. “Protection of our students and teachers against an infection with the virus continues to be of highest priority,” Wanner emphasizes.

Among others, the concept defines hygiene measures to be taken and distances to be observed during written examinations. As a result of distancing, for instance, places in the largest lecture hall of KIT, the Audimax, decreased from 750 to 36 only. Hence, some examinations have to take place in parallel at several lecture halls. To extend spatial capacities, KIT rented additional rooms of Messe Karlsruhe. The Schwarzwaldhalle, part of the Karlsruhe Convention Center, offers space for around 250 desks with sufficient distance. In the neighboring Gartenhalle, about 360 students can write their exams simultaneously. At the entrances, hand disinfectants are provided for the examinees and supervisors. In addition, a plan defines how to ensure sufficient ventilation and regular cleaning of the halls and sanitary facilities. For direct contact with the students, the supervisors are given protection masks and sit behind a plexiglass shield when handing out or collecting the exams. The students are asked to wear masks that can be taken off during the exams, however.

Perspectives for Academic Education Operations in Corona Times

Between May 18 and July 4, 2020, KIT organizes about 170 written examinations of this kind for all departments. “We are happy to support KIT in organizing studies as normally as possible in spite of the special situation. This also includes a perspective for examinations and appropriate rooms,” says Britta Wirtz, Managing Director of Karlsruhe Messe- und Kongress GmbH. “Only cooperation and the willingness to develop individual solutions will help us cope with this situation,” Wirtz says. Oral examinations in the presence of a maximum of five persons or by video conferencing started on April 20 already. Depending on the Corona situation, KIT will also prepare a concept for the examination phase following the already started summer semester. Then, the number of written examinations will presumably be even higher.

Being “The Research University in the Helmholtz Association,” KIT creates and imparts knowledge for the society and the environment. It is the objective to make significant contributions to the global challenges in the fields of energy, mobility and information.

For this, about 9,300 employees cooperate in a broad range of disciplines in natural sciences, engineering sciences, economics, and the humanities and social sciences. KIT prepares its 24,400 students for responsible tasks in society, industry, and science by offering research-based study programs. Innovation efforts at KIT build a bridge between important scientific findings and their application for the benefit of society, economic prosperity, and the preservation of our natural basis of life. KIT is one of the German universities of excellence.

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