

Learning from COVID-19

The Institute for Research and Planning in Higher Education (IRPHE) was established in 1969 to help improve and enhance quality and contents of scientific and educational programmes in all educational levels in Iran. IRPHE is a dynamic, responsive and leading organisation in theorising, modelling and designing the advanced system proportional to Iranian society and culture in the field of planning of higher education in regional level.

Research departments of the Institute are:

- Economics of Higher Education and Manpower
- Planning in Higher Education
- Statistical Research and Information Technology
- Comparative Studies in Higher Education
- Higher Education Management Studies
- Studies in Educational Innovations and Training

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, IRPHE reorganised its activities to coordinate its decisions with National Committee on Combating Coronavirus. The main activities carried out by IRPHE during the COVID-19 crisis are:

- Carrying out and following up the research and execute activities from home, as much as possible;
- Publication of reports regarding COVID-19 pandemic and social responsibility of universities;
- Holding virtual workshops and lectures;
- Preparation measures and guidelines for the prevention of COVID-19.

Also, the main activities carried out by IRPHE faculty members during the COVID-19 crisis are:

- Writing papers and specialised reports on higher education and COVID-19;
- Defining research projects with a forward-looking approach;
- Conducting online lectures on topics related to COVID-19;

- Practising social responsibility towards society during the COVID-19.

The most important measures adopted by IRPHE to minimise the spread of infection are:

- Work from home if you do not have to go to the office.
- Do not go to work if you are ill, even if the symptoms are mild.

The heads of the departments are responsible for adapting their own department's premises to prevent the spread of infection, for example by:

- Providing information to colleagues, staff, and visitors.
- Holding meetings digitally.
- Avoiding large gatherings, especially in confined spaces.

Cautions for visits, meetings, and travels are:

- The restriction was established on visits, meetings, and conferences involving external participants in the office.
- Digital meetings are preferred and should remain the first option.
- Scheduled meetings and conferences must be conducted in a safe manner, where participants can keep their distance.
- Prior to conferences, meetings, and visits, a risk analysis must be carried out.
- To avoid the spread of COVID-19, managers should ensure that staff whose work must be carried out in the office, can, as far as possible, adjust their working hours to avoid public transport during rush hour.

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