

University of Vaasa guidelines for remotely invigilated exams

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NB! This is a translation from Finnish. In case of controversial interpretations, the original Finnish document "Vaasan yliopiston ohjeet etävalvottuun tenttiin" rules.

Guidelines for remotely invigilated exams complement University of Vaasa's general guidelines concerning assessment of study attainments and exam arrangements, as well as other rules and guidelines. The guidelines contain key principles for remotely invigilated exams, as well as guidelines for teachers, organisers and students.

Remotely invigilated exams at the University of Vaasa

A remotely invigilated exam means taking an exam in such a way that the student taking the exam is invigilated via a real-time remote connection. Guidelines for a remotely invigilated exam also concern other methods of assessment executed via remote invigilation than exams.

Remotely invigilated exams should be used after careful consideration; in situations in which it is the most appropriate method for assessing study attainments, taking into account the quality of teaching. If assessment of a course cannot for a very valid reason be executed in another appropriate method, an exam can be arranged using remote invigilation in accordance with these guidelines. The teacher makes a decision about using a remotely invigilated exam during a course but before arranging a remotely invigilated exam, discusses its appropriateness and necessity with the head of the degree programme (if the course belongs to several degree programmes, with the head of the key degree programme).

As regards a remotely invigilated exam, it must be taken into consideration that under remote invigilation, it is not possible to fully exclude the possibility of cheating or attempting to cheat.

Numerous legal requirements and premises are associated with arranging exams via remote invigilation. When planning decision-making and execution methods, the following must be considered, among other things:

- execution of teaching in a high quality and appropriate manner
- protection of personal data (GDPR)
- protection of privacy and domestic peace
- tasks based on the Universities Act
- requirements of good governance and equal treatment, as well as students' legal protection
- requirements of the principle of openness and confidentiality, and
- issues relating to copyright.

The University includes in its data protection notification the possibility for (remote) exam invigilation. Organisation of the procedures relating to taking exams (remotely) is the University's responsibility. The organising operates according to the existing order and relies on existing decision-making guidelines and bodies. It is the University's task to identify the decision-making process and to inform about it. In practice, the tasks include for example clarifying who can make a decision about organising a remote exam. The University arranges the conditions required for possible remote invigilation and the related support arrangements, which include for example systems approved for invigilation and their user guidance and support, data security and protection, support for exam procedures, as well as special arrangements.

An alternative that treats students equally must always be provided for remote invigilation. The University is responsible for presenting alternative methods and facilitating their use. The teacher plans the alternative. In the University of Vaasa, the alternative for students is the opportunity to participate in a remotely invigilated exam in the university facilities, if this is possible. Safety guidelines are followed at the university. To prevent cheating, an applied

exam or another applied method of taking the exam can be prepared. In addition to the remote exam invigilation and the use of alternative university facilities, it is also possible for the teacher to assess competence in other ways.

A remotely invigilated exam, including possible applications that the person taking the exam must download on his or her computer, can only be implemented using tools approved by University of Vaasa's IT services.

Accessibility is taken into account in remotely invigilated exams: If a person taking an exam is not able, because of a handicap or a health-related reason, to take part in a remotely invigilated exam without personal exam arrangements, the person taking the exam must make contact with the organiser of the exam by the latest 5 days before the exam. Efforts are made to arrange taking the exam in a way that is convenient for the person taking the exam.

Guidelines for the organiser of an exam

- Check in the study guide what has been decided about the assessment method. Consider whether arranging a remotely invigilated exam is necessary. Can the achievement of learning goals and competence be ensured or measured in other ways and without real-time remote invigilation, such as using a material exam that requires application ability? It is also worth considering organising the exam using other electronic exam systems (such as remote exam, electronic Exam service). It is a good idea to have a discussion about the assessment also with the students. If there are grounds for organising a remotely invigilated exam, discuss its use also with the person responsible for the most central study programme of the course.
- If it is necessary to use remote invigilation, select the method that least endangers privacy protection and personal data (proportionality between the goal and the means). For example, the appearance of face, sound and home environment in a monitor collects more personal data than, for example, only the appearance of desktop without sound, or private information may be visible when a computer screen is shared.
- Only use the services and systems provided by the University that are suitable for remote invigilation in executing the invigilation. It is the responsibility of every organiser, on a case by case basis, to evaluate how processing of personal data and privacy protection are limited only to the necessary - these guidelines may provide premises for the consideration. The starting point is that students do not see each other's video feed.
- An alternative method that treats students equally must be provided for a remotely invigilated exam. Plan in advance how the alternative method is executed. In the University of Vaasa, the alternative for students is the opportunity to take a remotely invigilated exam in the university facilities, if this is possible (in this case, reserve a space/spaces for the people taking the exam or instruct the student to use the University's facilities allocated for self-study). Remote invigilation taking place at home or in another private place of the student's choice cannot be mandatory for a student. The alternative method must also treat students equally, that is, the students must be able to complete it reasonably simultaneously.
- Provide the exam participants with comprehensive instructions for the remotely invigilated exam. Provide clear and timely information about the evaluation of the study period and inform at least the following matters:
 - Tell the student that he or she has the right to complete the course using an alternative method for the course.
 - Tell the students about the right to interrupt remote invigilation, for example switch off the camera (but take into account that in this event, it may be necessary to fail the exam).
 - Describe in as clearly as possible and in writing whether for example a video connection, an audio connection or a telephone connection will be used or whether the remote invigilation will be performed using activity information/log data.
 - Advise the students to select the place for taking the exam in such a way that there are as few personal elements as possible in the space.

- In the event that for example due to the method of executing the exam (for example in a group exam) the student must share his or her video feed with other students, also inform this clearly.
 - Inform what kinds of equipment, software and materials or other tools and supporting equipment the student is allowed to use during the exam.
- Only record the invigilation in exceptional situations. The student is also not requested to record the exam situation. There must be a well-founded reason for making a recording. Data protection regulations apply to the handling and storing, data security and storing times of recordings, because the recording includes student's personal data (image, sound, action). Take into account that exam performances are subject to secrecy. Access to recordings must be restricted to those whose work tasks include handling this activity. The collection of personal data is based on the principle that personal data must be collected only in the amount necessary for the purpose for which the personal data are processed. See all data protection principles: <https://tietosuoja.fi/en/data-protection-principles>.
- Ensure that invigilation is only performed by persons tasked to take care of this activity. Access to remote invigilation information must be limited. This can be implemented for example with a password or similar security settings to ensure that access is only available to those that have a right to the information.
- Verification of identity in connection with an exam is allowed with remote connection. However, the necessity for identification and the method of execution must be considered on a case-by-case basis. As a rule, verification of identity must not be recorded, because recordings concerning identification increase the risk of identity theft.
 - If it is necessary to verify the person's identity, you can do this using a secure connection and after ensuring limitation of access, for example by
 - requiring that the student logs in to the remote invigilation using his or her own credentials.
 - using a method for identification other than the person's social security number (for example the student number or student card).
 - ensuring the student's identity with a phone call during a remote video connection.
 - requesting the student to show his or her ID card to the camera during a remote connection, but note that a person cannot be asked to show his or her ID card when the whole group is present but for example using the breakout rooms function in person and individually.
 - Identity should not be verified using whichever methods. Do not, for example, ask students to send copies of their passports by email to yourself. Treat students equally as regards to verification of identity.
- Suspected cheating and other exceptional situations during a remotely invigilated exam are handled by applying the normal procedures.
 - University of Vaasa has [procedures in case of academic fraud](#), apply those.
 - Checking log data or another way of investigating cases of cheating afterwards with the help of data connected with remote invigilation is performed in accordance with the University's guidelines and by the named persons responsible (via the person mentioned as the handler of education services in the procedures in cases of academic fraud), in compliance with the procedures required by good governance.
 - In exceptional situations occurring during a remote invigilation situation in the middle of an exam (for example a general disruption in telecommunications, exam invigilator's connection disruption), the invigilator decides whether the remotely invigilated exam can be continued after the end of the exceptional situation, as in the case of other exams. In the investigation of an exceptional situation, user activity data and log data can also be handled in accordance with the University's practices.
 - In an acute case of suspected exam breach, the invigilator may take a recording of the situation, such as a screen capture, for the purpose of investigating the matter. A recording made for the purpose of invigilating an exam may only be handled by those whose work tasks include exam invigilation or investigation of a related suspected breach or another exceptional situation. There are also regulations regarding storing such recordings (for example, see <https://tietosuoja.fi/en/storage-limitation>).

- It is also a good idea to make a note of a suspected case of exam breach during the exam.
- A student's right to interrupt invigilation must be ensured (for example by switching off the camera), however, it may be necessary to fail the exam for this reason. In cases of failing, the matter is handled in accordance with the guidelines governing university exams.

Guidelines for the student

- The University invigilates the taking of exams to ensure that students are treated equally. In remote invigilation, the University may primarily use live image or login, activity or log data collected by information systems. In some well-founded cases or in cases of suspected cheating, also video and audio recordings may be used secondarily.
- The University may verify a student's identity for the exam.
- Participating in remote invigilation in a location selected by the student is voluntary. By participating in remote invigilation, the student agrees to the terms of invigilation, such as keeping the camera switched on. The student has the right to interrupt invigilation during the exam for example because of an unanticipated situation, but the interruption of invigilation may lead to failing the exam.
- If you do not wish to use voluntary invigilation for example because of privacy protection or lack of equipment, you can use an alternative method, which in the University of Vaasa is taking the exam in the University's facilities (for example, a reserved space or self-study facilities). (If necessary, see [personal arrangements](#))
- In the processing of personal data, the University's data security and data protection guidelines are followed.
- Before the exam
 - Read these guidelines of the University of Vaasa concerning remotely invigilated exams and the more detailed guidelines of the teacher/organiser of the exam concerning remotely invigilated exams.
 - Ensure that the computer and equipment meet the requirements and are operational and that you have access to the possible remotely invigilated exam's workspace/systems.
 - Reserve a space that is as peaceful and free from disruptions as possible for taking the exam.
- Use of materials or software other than those allowed by the teacher may be grounds for failing the exam.
- It is your obligation to ensure that your exam answer in its entirety has been saved on time in accordance with the teacher's/exam organiser's instructions.
- More detailed information concerning the exam will be provided by your teacher/organiser of the exam.

Key regulations for remotely invigilated exam

According to the Universities Act, education, teaching and granting of degrees are among the statutory tasks of the university. Universities must organise their activities in such a way that, for example, education and teaching are of a high international standard in accordance with ethical principles and good scientific practice. (Universities Act 2,6 and 7 §)

Students' competence can be assessed by an exam or other assessment method. Regulations and instructions for teaching and studies: in English [Guidelines and regulations](#) and in Finnish [Opetusta ja opintoja koskevat määräykset ja ohjeet](#).

The basis for examination invigilation and the related processing of personal data is the performance of a statutory task (Data Protection Regulation, article 6 parts 1 c and e).

The invigilator is under an obligation of confidentiality if he or she learns something of the exam participant's personal circumstances when performing tasks related to the processing of personal data (Data Protection Act 1050/2018 35§). The exam performances are confidential documents (Act on the Openness of Government Activities 24.1§ part 30).

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