

I. General information

According to UDE regulations for the implementation of the Corona Epidemic University Ordinance (CEHVO) effective from 15 April 2020, the options listed below are available for conducting oral examinations:

1. Face-to-face examinations in a room at UDE
2. Examinations in the form of a video conference on the premises of UDE
Participants can be located in different rooms at UDE. This will allow both the technological equipment and technology support at UDE to be employed.
3. Examinations as described in items 1 and 2 for which one participant connects from the premises of a third-party institution (by way of administrative assistance).
This option enables access to using third-party premises including the technological equipment. Moreover, assistance by local staff is ensured with this option, thus preventing additional effort or stress for an individual caused by having to ensure technical functionality.
4. Examinations as described in items 1 and 2 for which the candidate connects from their home in accordance with the prerequisites defined in the applicable implementation regulations
5. Examinations as described in items 1 and 2 for which one examiner connects from their home in accordance with the prerequisites defined in the applicable implementation regulations

The responsible authority designated in the applicable regulations is to decide whether a face-to-face examination with all persons involved present or an examination using a video conferencing system as defined in items 2 to 5 is permissible and define how exactly the examination is to be conducted.

Whether and how oral examinations can be conducted is subject to current higher-level legislation and potential restrictions resulting from it at all times.

At present, the general directive issued by the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs of NRW on 10 May 2020 must be considered in particular.

Pursuant to this directive, it must be ensured that the minimum distance is kept during face-to-face examinations, for example. Silent observers may currently not be admitted.

In the case of examinations involving video conferencing as described in items 2 to 5 that fall within the responsibility of UDE, internal systems provided by the ZIM should be used. Moreover, such examinations are subject to data protection regulations.

Examinations must not be recorded.

II. Oral examinations via video conferencing within the premises of UDE and with the assistance of third parties (administrative assistance)

If an oral examination is held within the premises of UDE or with the help of third parties by way of administrative assistance, the faculties of UDE, if required with the assistance of the ZIM, or, if applicable, the institution from which assistance has been requested will provide the required technology.

1. Procedure

- The candidate may not be alone in the room at UDE or the assisting institution. An invigilator must be in the room with him or her. The invigilator is to ensure a proper examination process (check the candidate's identity, monitor that the candidate does not use any unauthorised aids) and provide technical support if required.
- Before the start of the examination, all persons involved should take some time to adapt to the new circumstances and the different examination situation (this is of particular importance for each student). The process and organisational aspects of the examination are to be explained and potential questions from the candidate are to be answered briefly.
- Any source of disruption must be shut off or eliminated before the examination.
- In the case of a video examination using the assistance of a third party, the invigilator must confirm the proper examination process in writing once the video examination has been completed and send this confirmation to the authority responsible for the examination (e.g. the doctoral examination committee).
- In addition, a written record of the course of the examination is to be compiled as usual. The overall technical conditions (in particular the type of software used, the transmission quality, potential malfunctions, explanatory information), noteworthy incidents and the candidates' answers in detail are to be documented in this record of the examination.
- The mark is to be determined without the involvement of the candidate. During the time required for this, the connection is to be muted and the examiners are to disable their video transmission.

2. Noteworthy incidents

- If the examination is interrupted due to a failure of the Internet connection, a reconnection to the video conference is to be established as quickly as possible. Questions that had been asked or topics that were being discussed when the interruption occurred, are to be re-approached or replaced with new questions as is deemed appropriate.
- If the transmission fails to an extent that impacts the examination to a significant degree, the examination must be terminated and rescheduled for a later date.

- If a candidate can be proven to intentionally interrupt the video conference during the examination, the mark to be assigned for the examination is 'insufficient' or 'failed'.
- In all other respects, the rules and principles applicable to face-to-face examinations, especially with regard to proving examination offences and disturbances, continue to apply in this scenario.

3. Additional organisational requirements for oral examinations conducted with the assistance of third parties (administrative assistance)

The institutions below may serve as locations where examinations via video conferencing can be conducted:

- Other universities in Germany
- Goethe-Institutes
- German schools in other countries
- German consulates
- German embassies
- Universities in other countries

The persons that are eligible as invigilators for such examinations include, but are not limited to:

- Full-time employees of the relevant institution
- German-speaking professors or other academic staff of the universities in other countries

III. Examinations for which a candidate connects from their home

In cases where a student has convincing reasons that he or she is unable to attend an oral examination on the premises of UDE or a third-party institution due to official requirements or legal restrictions relating to the coronavirus, he or she can request a permission to participate in the examination via a video conference from their home. Candidates may then connect to the video conference if the conditions below are met:

1. Technological and location-related requirements

- The student must have access to a PC/notebook/tablet computer equipped with a camera and microphone. Only screen content provided via software may be used during the examination.
- The device used must meet the system requirements for the video conferencing system employed.
- A stable Internet connection must be available.

It must be ensured that the location and the technological equipment are suitable, and the candidate must be provided with instructions regarding the software to be used (e.g. via video chat) prior to the examination.

2. Preparing and conducting an online video examination

- Before the start of the examination, all persons involved should take some time to adapt to the new circumstances and the different examination situation (this is of particular importance for each student). The process and organisational aspects of the examination are to be explained and potential questions from the candidate are to be answered briefly.
- Any source of disruption must be shut off or eliminated before the examination (e.g. noise due to calls, doorbells, radio, TV, other electronic devices and digital media, open windows; other people (children, partners, visitors, etc.)).
- The candidate is to prove his or her identity by means of an official photo identification document. The candidate is to make information that is not required for identification purposes illegible beforehand, e.g. by applying non-transparent adhesive labels. The following information is sufficient for verifying the candidate's identity: first name, last name, date of birth and photograph. Any further information is not required and may therefore not be requested. This applies in particular to the disclosure of the identification number, the date of issue and the address.
- Before the start of the examination, the entire room must be checked via the camera. It must be ensured that no other persons or unauthorised aids are within reach.
- During the examination, the candidate must be alone in a closed room. Examiners have the right to ask the candidate to use the camera to show their location once more in order to rule out examination offences.
- The candidate may not leave the room for the duration of the examination.
- The candidate may not wear headphones during the examination in order to prevent examination offences.
- During the examination, the camera must show at least the candidate's head and shoulders and the candidate must look into the screen.
- The candidate's microphone and camera and their screen-sharing function must be activated during the entire duration of the examination.
- The candidate must submit a declaration that they took the examination entirely on their own.
- The mark is to be determined without the involvement of the candidate. During the time required for this, the connection is to be muted and the examiners are to disable their video transmission.
- A written record of the course of the examination is to be compiled as usual. The overall technical conditions (in particular the type of software used, the transmission quality, potential malfunctions, explanatory information), noteworthy incidents and the candidates' answers in detail are to be documented in this record of the examination.

3. Noteworthy incidents

- If the examination is interrupted due to a failure of the Internet connection, a reconnection to the video conference is to be established as quickly as possible. Questions that had been asked or topics that were being discussed when the interruption occurred, are to be re-approached or replaced with new questions as is deemed appropriate.
- If the transmission fails to an extent that impacts the examination to a significant degree, the examination must be terminated and rescheduled for a later date.
- If a candidate can be proven to intentionally interrupt the video conference during the examination, the mark to be assigned for the examination is 'insufficient' or 'failed'.
- In all other respects, the rules and principles applicable to face-to-face examinations, especially with regard to proving examination offences and disturbances, continue to apply in this scenario.

IV. Examinations for which a member of the examination board connects from their home

If a member of the examination board cannot attend an oral examination in person for personal reasons, regulations corresponding to the stipulations in Section III apply.