



UPPSALA
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Guidance for remote examinations

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Introduction

This document is intended for Uppsala University staff who work with student examinations. This guidance is a complement to Uppsala University's [Guidelines for conducting remote written examinations](#) (UFV 2020/2118). The guidelines are the governing framework, while this guidance is intended to provide practical advice and guidance in both designing and conducting different forms of remote examination, such as remote oral and written examinations as well as take-home examinations.

The term “remote written examinations” refers to written examinations that would otherwise be given in an examination room, i.e. with a limited amount of time for completion during a single day, but which are instead conducted remotely using information technology (IT). In this context “take-home examination” is used as a collective term for various summative written assignments that students may write over a longer period of time and regardless of location.

In addition to the guidelines for conducting remote written examinations, support can be found in the [guidelines for student working conditions for first-cycle and second-cycle studies at Uppsala University](#), as well as the Swedish Higher Education Authority's guidance [Fair examination \(4th edition\)](#). Further support is available from the Unit for Academic Teaching and Learning at the Division for Quality Enhancement, which regularly organises courses and seminars on teaching and learning in higher education, with a focus on areas such as examination issues. Information about [current courses and seminars](#) is available on the Staff Portal.

[Contact the unit for consultative support to groups of teachers and departments regarding such issues.](#)

Examination planning

The foundation of all examinations is the course syllabus, which specifies the content, learning objectives and examination forms for the course. The course syllabus forms the basis for planning the examination's structure and implementation. Before designing an examination, the following should be considered: What ability and knowledge are measured with this question? Does the question contain a clear and delimited task for the examinee to perform? Is the question asked in such a way that it is clear to the examinee what is expected? Is the exercise reasonable in relation to the knowledge objectives and the allotted time?

This section contains guidance for those planning a remote examination, based on which knowledge is intended to be examined.

Written examination of factual knowledge – multiple choice and short answer questions

Examination of factual knowledge and learning objectives of the type “describe, name, list, identify, quote, choose” can be carried out through e.g. a quiz. The Inpera and Studium systems have support for these question types through, among other things, multiple choice, pair together, and fill in the blank questions. For examinations with multiple choice questions, the questions must be formulated in such a way that the examinee cannot conclude which answer is correct without having subject knowledge.

When using a quiz, the examination time can be limited to prevent cheating, but it is important that it is the examinees' knowledge level that is examined, not their tolerance to stress or anything else. Questions in a quiz can also be randomised so that not all examinees get the same questions. In such case, the questions are entered into a question bank. Keep in mind that the questions must be equivalent so that the degree of difficulty remains the same, regardless of how they are randomised. Whether the examinees are given the same questions or not, the order of the questions can be randomised to hinder unauthorised collaboration.

Test and check the quiz in the student view before it is published.

Written examination of theoretical knowledge other than factual knowledge – take-home examination

Written examination of theoretical knowledge other than factual knowledge is more difficult to handle through quizzes. For learning objectives that deal with understanding and ability, such as “explain, develop, summarise, relate, combine, differentiate, critique and justify”, examination types where the examinee can expand on their answers are more suitable. Examples of examination forms for this are take-home examinations, reflection assignments, reviews and summaries, different types of essay questions, calculations, writing different types of scientific texts, independent work, as well as oral examinations and remote written examinations.

In a take-home examination, questions and exercises are designed in such a way that the examination session itself invites knowledge development and in-depth study. Take-home examination is best suited for more complex and problematised questions that require analysis and/or synthesis in order to answer them. This is suitable, in particular, where the course objectives include skills such as an ability to analyse, synthesise and/or make assessment.

Take-home examination should generally be regarded as an open book examination, i.e. an examination where the examinee generally has access to all types of aids during the examination

session. If only certain specific sources may be used as reference, this should be made clear in the instructions.

During a take-home examination, it is impossible to check whether examinees are collaborating. It is therefore a good idea to refrain from including this type of limitation in the instructions. In-depth learning is also promoted by collaboration through collective learning. It is important, however, that the answers are individually formulated and individually submitted so the examiner can assess each individual on their own merits.

Design of exercises

In a take-home examination, the examinees have access to course literature as well as all information on the internet, which means that some questions are better suited to this examination form than others. It is important to word the question so that the answer shows the examinee's actual knowledge rather than their ability to look up the right answer in a book or online. Pure factual questions are therefore not suitable for take-home examinations.

The questions can, for example, be based on applications where the examinee must have correct factual knowledge as a foundation, or the exercise can be supplemented with a pure factual knowledge examination (written or oral) if the course syllabus allows such.

Some design tips

To be able to assess the examinees' understanding, the question must be placed in a context or situation, or relate to a problem that needs to be solved. It is a good idea to use verbs that illustrate what the examinee is expected to do, such as "analyse, compare, explain, apply, organise, provide examples, structure, assess" and the like.

It is a good idea to vary what form the questions take. With remote examinations as well, it is important to provide a mix of question types so that both detailed knowledge and a holistic understanding are tested. An alternative is to create well-thought-out MCQs (multiple choice questions).

To reduce the risk of unauthorised collaboration during the examination, a random function for both questions and answer alternatives can be used for MCQs. When using MEQs (modified essay questions), which means that the examinee cannot go back to previous questions and adjust their answers afterwards, it is important that the questions come in the right order.

To test deeper understanding with MCQs, distractors can be used in the answer alternatives to make guessing more difficult. Another way is to design the answers so that all alternatives seem reasonable at first glance, and factual knowledge is required to be able to pick out the correct alternative.

It is not permitted to raise the requirement to obtain a passing grade on the grounds that examinees have access to aids.

Oral examination

Oral examination can be used to test both factual knowledge and understanding as well as judgement and approach. It can also be used as a complement or part of a practical examination. This can mean, for example, allowing the examinee to describe what they are doing, explain the purpose of what is being done, or reporting the expected outcome.

The course syllabus states whether oral examination shall be used in the course. Oral examination can be performed online via Zoom. If there is a large number of examinees being

tested during the same session, these can be divided into smaller groups using “breakout rooms” (virtual group rooms). The division can be done randomly, manually by the teacher, or by asking examinees to go to a specified room. Division into groups can also take place in advance so that the examinees can be scheduled and join the specified Zoom room via a link they are sent. Zoom rooms should be created with the “waiting room” feature to avoid different examinee groups clashing with each other. For all of these features to work, the examinees must log in to Uppsala University’s Zoom with their student accounts before joining the meeting.

Text written in the chat can be saved by the teacher when the session is over. It is also possible to record the discussion in Zoom in order to perform the assessment later. However, the examinees must be informed of this in good time before the examination session. The recording is saved locally on the computer. Note that a recording that is used for grading constitutes a public record that must be archived and released upon request. Otherwise, the recording shall be considered of little and temporary importance and thus deleted as soon as possible. An alternative to recording can be two teachers participating in the oral examination at the same time to increase legal compliance.

Oral examination can be carried out in different ways. Each examinee can receive a number of questions to answer individually. Another alternative is for the examinees to be given one or more questions that they are tasked with answering together in a discussion.

If examinees work in groups and are expected to provide both an oral and written presentation, breakout rooms can be used, where the group documents the results of their discussion, e.g. in Padlet (digital bulletin board) or in another way that can then be shared with everyone in connection with the presentations.

Example of oral examination via Zoom

A remote oral examination can, for example, be conducted in three steps. An example of such an examination with points of contact with both problem-based teaching and take-home examination is the following:

Step 1: The examinees are given a number of questions or are presented a problem. These can be presented during the examination session or in advance (via e.g. email or in the Zoom room) depending on factors such as scope and degree of qualification. In turn, the problem or questions must be of such a nature that it/they cannot be solved or answered easily through an internet search.

Step 2: The examinees leave the Zoom room to seek out the knowledge required to solve the problem or answer the questions. They choose themselves whether they want to do this alone or in a group.

Step 3: The examinees reassemble in group-based Zoom meetings with the teacher. With a problem-based variant (PBL), each examinee presents their own solution, and this is followed by an in-depth discussion under the guidance of the teacher. With a question-based variant, each examinee answers one or more of the questions. The teacher follows each answer with follow-up questions and, if relevant, a joint discussion. To avoid tactical studying, the examinee should not have any prior knowledge about which question(s) they are to answer. The teacher can also choose to target follow-up questions to a person other than the one who answered the initial question. To prevent different groups from sharing the solution with each other, it may be a good idea for the teacher to give the groups different problems or questions.

Choosing a technical solution

This section describes the system tools commonly used for remote examination: Inspera Assessment (Inspira), Studium, the Student Portal and Zoom. Training is offered in all of the systems. Attend training in the system you intend to use to design the examination in the best way and avoid problems during the examination. The descriptions below provide support regarding which system is best suited for the type of examination the course requires.

Inspira – for written examinations where examinees sit the examination at the same time during a single day

Inspira is Uppsala University's main system for synchronous digital examination, i.e. e-examination where the students sit the examination at the same time. It is primarily intended for on-campus examinations, but can also be used for remote written examinations. To be able to use Inspira, the examination must be set up as a written examination or test in Ladok (this is referred to as "activity session" in Ladok).

Inspira supports different question types, including open-ended questions. It is also possible for examinees to upload files as well as for exercises to be submitted on paper or be performed orally.

In Inspira, it is possible to assess and provide feedback on the texts. Inspira is also connected to Urkund for plagiarism checks.

[Read more about Inspira.](#)

Some tips for using Inspira

Written examinations in Inspira should be scheduled during the day on weekdays, as the department can receive support from the University-wide support organisation at that time.

It is best to make assessments and provide comments in Inspira. Printing out examination scripts on paper for commenting should be avoided, as this leads to double work when results and comments must be added back into Inspira after assessment outside the system.

Inspira is not suitable for take-home examinations, where examinees have several days to complete the examination, and the answers may consist of one or more documents which must then be uploaded.

Inspira is best suited for examinations that do not require more than one file upload per exercise. If the exercise requires the upload of multiple files for the answer, then Studium should be selected.

The assignment type Essay in Inspira is a good alternative for submissions in the form of Word documents, as this reduces the load on the systems and facilitates assessment.

Support for Inspira

It is the department that is responsible for providing support to examinees during an ongoing examination. The department, in turn, can contact the University-wide support, servicedesk@uu.se, for help.

Studium – for examinations in which examinees have more time at their disposal

Studium is suitable for examinations that do not take place in the form of a synchronous written examination, i.e. an e-examination in which the examinees have more time at their disposal. Examples of these include assignments, quizzes, graded discussions, and the like. In Studium, the term “task” is used for the elements being assessed. The examinees can submit their answers to the exercises in different ways, such as text submission or as various types of files (including media files). Text files should be sent via Urkund for a plagiarism check. Studium is well suited for uploading large files.

[Read more about Studium.](#)

Some tips for using Studium

Under Settings in the course menu, “sections” can be created. Sections make it possible to assign exercises and messages to a specific selection of users so that only registered examinees are given access to an examination.

Within a single exercise, it is possible to have different start and end times for the examinees. If necessary, examinees can be assigned an extended submission deadline.

Examinees can make submissions via the Studium app. There may be a delay before the submitted exercise becomes visible in a computer web browser.

Studium is particularly suitable for examination of essays where text and images are used in the same document.

If there is a large number of examinees submitting large files, the files should not be downloaded to the computer. Studium instead has the option of assessing and commenting on the submissions online. If it nonetheless necessary to download the examination scripts, it is a good idea to divide the download into smaller batches to prevent the risk of the system locking up.

Support for Studium

If necessary, examinees and teachers can contact Support during the examination. Support can check whether the exercise/quiz is available to the examinees allowed to access it, and extend the submission deadline if necessary. Neither Support nor the teacher can upload files for the examinees.

[Opening hours and contact details for Support for Studium.](#)

Student Portal – for examinations in which examinees have more time at their disposal

The Student Portal offers a submission feature that examinees can use to upload files for assessment. The teacher chooses whether submitted files should be sent to Urkund for a plagiarism check and whether submission should be anonymous. When choosing between Studium and the Student Portal, you must choose the learning management platform used at the department.

[Read more about the Student Portal.](#)

Some tips for using the Student Portal

The load on the Student Portal is reduced if deadlines are set to time points other than the top of the hour.

For submissions requiring the upload of multiple files, examinees should be encouraged to upload one file at a time.

For courses with a large number of examinees, it is a good idea to have at least two versions of take-home examination with different start and end times to prevent system overload.

Support for the Student Portal

For examinations conducted in the Student Portal, examinees and teachers can contact Support during the examination. Support can check that submission is available to all examinees. If necessary, both Support and teachers can upload files for examinees. Support can also extend the submission deadline if necessary.

[Opening hours and contact details for Support for the Student Portal.](#)

Zoom – for oral examination

In the e-meeting service Zoom, you can conduct, for example, seminars, practical examinations and oral examinations remotely. It is important for both employees and students to get a Zoom account via the University in order for Zoom to work well. Students are given the same licence and options as employees.

[Read more about Zoom.](#)

Support for Zoom

The department can contact the University-wide support, servicedesk@uu.se, for help.

Before the examination

This section sets out the information that examinees should be given before the examination. Examples of information that is essential to communicate include how the examination will be conducted and in which system. Some tips for how this information can be structured are found below.

Information to examinees

Examinees must be given information in good time about how and when to register for an examination. For remote examination, the examinees must be informed about how identity will be checked, which system the examination will be conducted in, and which technical equipment (with associated system requirements) is needed. Examinees must be informed that they are responsible for having access to a computer with a stable internet connection, or other technical equipment. There must also be information about who to contact if they have technical problems. The information should clearly indicate which aids are permitted, as well as whether collaboration is permitted. Examinees should also be informed of the procedures in the event that an attempt at deceptive conduct in an examination is suspected. The instructions to examinees should also be clear and comprehensive so that even someone who is not used to taking examinations understands what is expected and required.

Some tips for the examination

It may be good to state the maximum size of answers, e.g. “max. 500 words per question, together with other general information. If there are different limitations for different questions, the limitation can be stated together with the question.

A special text format can be specified in order to make the text easily accessible for correction. A suitable format is Times New Roman font, 12 point, and line spacing of 1.5 lines.

For take-home examinations, the submission deadline should be stated with date and time, and there should be information about what applies in the event of late submission.

It should be clear whether – and according to which reference system – references should be given. It can also be a good idea to give a reminder about the special requirements that apply to academic writing.

Indicate which teacher that examinees can direct questions about the take-home examination to, as well as how and when examinees can contact that teacher.

Students entitled to targeted study support

Adapted examination can be offered to a student with a permanent disability, provided that a decision on targeted study support has been made. [An application for targeted study support is made in the Nais coordination system](#). After submitting the application and having an interview with the coordinator, the student will receive a decision about support. [The decision also includes recommendations on adaptation during examinations](#). Each department has a contact person for students with disability that students can contact to find out what procedures apply to adaptations and other support.

Information to Examination Coordination for examinations in Inspira

Just like with on-campus examinations, Examination Coordination requires certain information. A template for the information sheet is found in the system. The template contains fields with

necessary information about contact routes to the department, permitted aids, any other distributed material, and more.

Conducting the examination

Make sure that a teacher is available at a specific time at the beginning of the examination to be able to provide clarification if needed, just like with an on-campus examination.

Use a plagiarism check (Urkund) to prevent and detect deceptive conduct in an examination. If the course syllabus allows such, a take-home examination can be supplemented with another written or oral examination to prevent and detect any deceptive conduct (cheating).

Anonymity

Examinees shall be anonymous during written examinations. In all systems, it is possible to make a submission anonymously, i.e. that the teacher does not see the names of examinees during assessment. There are, however, some limitations. Examinees upload or submit their answers from IP and email addresses that are in principle identifiable, and uploaded files contain metadata that may include the author's name. It is therefore important to inform examinees that uploaded documents should not contain name and personal identity number, but should instead use the examinee's anonymity code. Some word processing programs add information about the author to the document. Examinees should therefore be encouraged to remove any personal information from a document before uploading it.

Anonymous examination in Inspira

In the e-examination system Inspira, it is easy to create an anonymous submission. An examination session is created in the Student Portal, and then examinees who registered via Ladok are linked to this examination session. In this way, the correcting teacher does not receive information about the identity of the examinees sitting the examination.

Anonymous examination in Studium

In Studium, it is possible to make a submission anonymously, so that the teacher does not see the examinees' names in the gradebook, the Speedgrader correction tool, or Urkund. After assessment, the teacher publishes the results, at which time anonymity is removed from the submission.

How to create an anonymous submission in Studium:

- ☐ Create a new exercise.
- ☐ Select "Anonymous assessment".
- ☐ After assessment, select "Publish results". The names of all examinees then become visible, including those who were not graded.

In the list of examinees in Speedgrader, the examinees are assigned a number, e.g. "student 1", "student 2", etc. These numbers should not be used as an anonymity code. Anonymous submissions in Studium are best assessed immediately in Speedgrader. For each examinee's submission, there is an assessment revision that logs all changes/events in the system.

Note that it is not indicated to the examinees that the assignment is assessed anonymously until the time of submission. It is therefore important to inform the examinees of this. They should also receive instructions on how attached files should be labelled without stating their own

name. When anonymity is removed from an assignment, the examinees receive notice that the assignment has been “unmuted”.

Studium is not suitable for printouts of anonymous submissions, as anonymity is removed from the printout.

Anonymous examination in the Student Portal

How to create an anonymous submission in the Student Portal:

- ☐ Click on “Add new function” in the left-hand column.
- ☐ Select “Submission”.
- ☐ Tick “Individual submission”.
- ☐ Tick “Anonymous submission”.
- ☐ Click on the “Save” box at the bottom.

Once a submission has been saved, it will no longer be possible to change its status from open to anonymous, or vice versa. When copying an anonymous submission, the copy is also marked as anonymous. For each new submission that is created, new anonymity codes are generated. Thus, an examinee cannot have the same anonymity code for different submissions. If the submissions undergo a plagiarism check (which is recommended), only the examinee’s anonymity code is shown in the Urkund plagiarism detection system.

Anonymity in Zoom

Zoom is used for oral examinations. When creating a Zoom room, a “waiting room” can be created where each examinee waits until they are admitted to the Zoom room. The teacher can then admit one examinee at a time, once the previous examinee has completed the examination and left the Zoom room. This way, each examinee has no knowledge of who else is taking the examination. [Read more about the waiting room feature in Zoom.](#)

In cases where identity must be established before the examination begins, an ID check should be carried out in breakout rooms. ID checks must not take place in groups.

Information to examinees in connection with the examination

Information is best given to examinees in an information document that works the same way as a cover sheet in an on-campus written examination. This information is positioned first in the examination. The intention is to give examinees the information required to conduct the examination.

For the examination, there must be information on how the student can get in touch with the department if the student discovers ambiguities or errors in the examination, or encounters technical problems. This information should be positioned in such a way that the examinee can return to it if necessary.

The information shall include:

- ☐ Time to complete the examination
- ☐ Routes for contacting the examining teacher and/or administrative staff
- ☐ Permitted aids
- ☐ A clear statement indicating whether collaboration with other students is permitted or not permitted

The information may also include:

- ☐ Score limits for grades
- ☐ Special instructions for how answers are to be given
- ☐ Date for re-examination

After the examination

It is possible to extract information from different systems regarding the examinees' activities during the examination, for example how much time an examinee used for each question. Contact Support for the respective system for information on what options are available.

Late submission

Examinations received after the set deadline should be handled uniformly and in a pre-determined manner, and examinees should be informed about how this will be handled. It is normal for late submissions to not be accepted, with examinees instead referred to the re-examination session. In the Student Portal and Inspira, late submissions are not possible. In Studium, it must be specified whether it should be possible or not.

Assessment of the examination

Criteria for assessing the questions should be defined when an examination is designed. When defining assessment criteria, it is a good idea to think about what significance language has for the answer. For example, how should deficient sentence structure, lack of logic, and lack of punctuation be assessed? It is a good idea to collaborate with colleagues and define criteria together. The discussion itself often facilitates assessment work. Some departments create assessment matrices, which can be discussed with the students in the course before the examination session. Naturally, a discussion of this type can also be conducted without an assessment matrix. If the students know what the assessment criteria are and how they will be applied, it is often beneficial to learning.

It is a good idea to think through the assessment process ahead of time. Is it possible to distribute the examinations, or even different questions, between different colleagues when it is time for assessment? Most of the time, the criteria have been defined collegially, but do not forget that you can also discuss the actual assessments with each other. A short reconciliation meeting in which you discuss borderline cases with colleagues is often time well spent. Not least, it is a way of working to ensure a fair, legally-compliant examination.

Archiving

A submitted examination is a public record, and must therefore be archived for two years, regardless of format. The examinees' answers and the examination exercises are public records, and shall be available to those who wish to access them. Consult the archivist in case of uncertainty.

Deceptive conduct in an examination

Uppsala University has a special [procedure for dealing with suspected deceptive conduct in an examination](#). The University's website also contains [information for students regarding cheating and plagiarism](#). In addition, a number of departments at the University have developed their own information material. There are also examples from departments of [forms where students must confirm that they have read the information about how to avoid plagiarism and cheating](#).

Some general advice on measures to prevent deceptive conduct in an examination based on various aspects is found below.

Information

It is important that students receive clear information about which aids are permitted during the examination. In some cases, it may be a good idea to state which aids are not permitted. Whether this is helpful for the examination must be decided on a case-by-case basis. If collaboration is not permitted, it is also a good idea to provide information specifically stating this.

It is important that the examinees have been told what plagiarism is. Also inform them about how references are expected to be used during the examination.

It may be relevant to provide information about how the department handles cases of suspected deceptive conduct in an examination, and explain the possible consequences if a student is found guilty by the Disciplinary Board. The information to the examinees is important with regard to a case of suspected deceptive conduct in an examination. When a case is reviewed by the Disciplinary Board, what information the examinee received leading up to the examination is a crucial factor.

Technology

The examination should be planned and conducted in a manner that hinders deceptive conduct. If possible, use the Urkund electronic plagiarism detection system. It may be effective to randomise the order of examination questions or to design the examination in timed blocks to minimise the opportunity to obtain information during breaks. According to the guidelines for conducting remote written examinations, use of Zoom solely for the monitoring of an examination is not permitted.

Teaching and learning aspect

If the exercises are formulated so that the examinee must perform independent analysis and synthesis, there is less risk of deceptive conduct. This also turns the examination into an opportunity for learning. Remote examination of factual knowledge that can be easily searched for online increases the risk of deceptive conduct.