Universität Rostock — Traditio et Innovatio

Based on the decision of the Academic Senate of the University of Rostock on April 3, 2020, the University of Rostock has decided to convert the range of courses, as far as possible, to formats without attendance. To ensure that examinations can be carried out even during the period of the physical-distancing there is the possibility of holding oral examinations via video conference. This applies in particular to the still uncompleted exams from the examination period from March 16 to March 31, 2020, and the exams of the following semesters until the resumption of presence. To ensure valid quality standards are upheld, the Rectorate defined the following general guidelines for the realisation of online oral examinations on April 15, 2020.

Framework

When carrying out online oral exams by video conference, it is important to observe the voluntary principle. This means that a switch to this type of examination is voluntary for all participants, i.e. students, examiners and possible competent assessors. Accordingly, the consent of the student must be obtained in advance by e-mail. The student must confirm that s*he has read and understood these guidelines and that s*he agrees to the conditions stated. You can find a sample text for the declaration of consent at the end of this document.

If an oral examination takes place as an online version, the examination law provisions apply following the applicable examination regulations.

- The *level of difficulty*, choice of topics, supportive equipment as well as tested competences in the discussion of the online oral exam must be equivalent to a face-to-face oral exam. (Examiners must ensure that students have access to the literature and other materials for preparation, taking into account the current situation.)
- The *duration of the online oral examination* has to be equivalent to the face-to-face version. If a written examination is replaced by an oral online examination, the time should be chosen appropriately (suggestion: 120 min written examination → 30 min oral online examination; 90 min written examination → 20 min oral online examination).
- To test the technical conditions and get to know the program, a corresponding *preparation time* should be added (approx. 10 min). The participants could also have a test meeting in advance (e.g. the day before).
- In case of *serious technical problems*, both the student and the examiner can cancel the exam.
- Recording of the exam is prohibited.
- One of the examiners or the expert assessor records the course of the examination either written by hand or in a text document on the computer. The forms of the respective study programmes for oral examinations have to be used.

Video conference systems such as DFNconf, zoom, gotoMeeting, skype or BigBlueButton are suitable for the test. The BigBlueButton conference system is linked in the StudIP portal.

Participants

- In each colloquium, only one student sits for the exam.
- The examination hast o be carried out by at least two examiners or one examiner and one competent assessor.

Requirements

To conduct an online oral examination, all participants need

- a computer / notebook / tablet / smartphone with a camera, audio system and microphone as well as
- stable internet access.
- In addition, everyone involved must ensure a trouble-free environment. This includes no other people in the same room and no expected phone calls during the time of the oral examination. If the presence of other people in the room cannot be avoided (for example small children), students have to discuss this individually with their examiners in advance.
- If possible, the availability of the participants via phonecall should be ensured for the case of technical problems. If this is not possible, communication will be by e-mail.

Preparation and execution

1. In the beginning of the video call, all participants should get to know the program in a short preparation time (approx. 10 min). It is also possible to have a test meeting before the actual oral exam. If everyone is familiar with the technical details and technical problems are excluded, the examiners and the student can go through the planned course of the oral examination together and the examiners explain the permitted aids.
2. *(optional)* If a common electronic whiteboard or similar technical equipment can be used, their function must also be briefly tested before the actual colloquium.
3. If the student is not personally known, an identity check has to be carried out at the beginning by showing a photo identification (like identity card, passport, driver's license or similar photo document) via the camera.
4. In order to show that the door is closed, no other people are in the room and no unauthorized aids are used, the student has to do a 360° rotation of the webcam. During the exam, this may be repeated if requested by the examiners.

The colloquium can then begin.

At the end of the oral exam, the student leaves the video conference. If the video conferencing system offers separate video rooms and the examiners want to use them, this is also possible to discuss the grade.

5. As soon as the grading process is finished, the student will be informed by e-mail or the text function of the video conference system that s*he should switch back to the conference.

6. Then, the announcement and justification of the grade are made.

7. If the student needs to confirm that s*he has taken note of the grade, this has to be done by e-mail after the examination. Therefore, name, enrollment number, examination subject and grade must be stated.

8. The protocol drawn up during the online oral examination will be sent to the relevant study office. Grade booking takes place in the examination system.

Procedure in the event of exceptional occurrences

- If the internet connection is interrupted during the online oral examination, an attempt to continue the exam must be made as soon as possible.
- If the connection is interrupted repeatedly, the oral exam must be stopped and held at a different time.
- All disruptions in the course of the examination have to be documented in the protocol, specifying the type, scope and duration.
- If there is suspicion of attempted fraud during the online oral examination, the student can be asked to repeat the 360° rotation of the webcam. In case the doubts cannot be dispelled, the oral exam will be stoped by the examiners with a corresponding note in the protocol. Consequences arise based on current study regulations.

Form for the declaration of consent

I hereby apply to conduct my examination in the subject *[…]* in *[summer/winter semester + year]* as an online oral exam.

I have read the "Guidelines for the realisation of online oral examinations" of the University of Rostock and agree with the mentioned conditions.

I also agree with the use of the platform [*name of the video conference system*] for the examination and the resulting data protection regulations.

Place, Date   Name