

Information for students

## How online exams work



**The University of Passau's eScout Team**



*Student tutors  
for online teaching*

**Transfer Forum for Didactical  
Technology (DiTech)**

*Expert Committee for Online Teaching  
at the University of Passau*

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# 1 Introduction – digital exam formats

This handbook is intended to inform us students about how digitally supported exams work and the general conditions that apply to them.

Next to the ordinary face-to-face exams we can also choose digitally supported exams. Instead of testing factual knowledge, you will often be set more complex tasks, which you will have to solve individually or in a group and hand in electronically within a time limit. Portfolio-like formats may also be used; in this case, accompanying assessments are carried out at several points during the course.

The following handbook provides an overview of possible exam formats and how these can be implemented using university learning platforms (especially Stud.IP and ILIAS). When preparing for these alternative exam formats, it will be especially ensured that the applicable assessment criteria are transparent for you. It must be clear under what criteria an exam is deemed passed and what achievements are required for this.

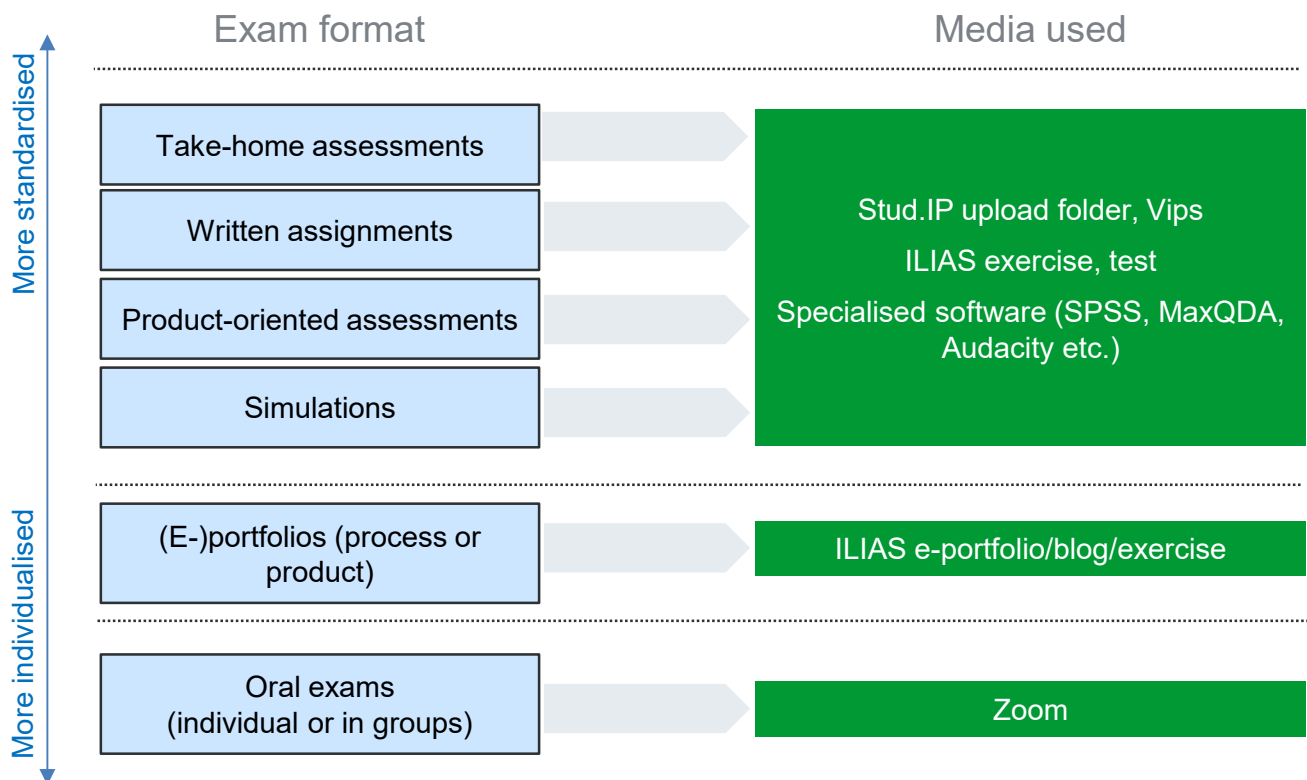
In cases where it is important for you to familiarise yourself with the exam system in advance, such as when you only have two hours for completion, you will be given the appropriate opportunity to do so. Your examiners can, for example, present the system “live” in an information session and also give you the opportunity to ask questions. We recommend that you also take advantage of these opportunities – it will make the exam less stressful.

**Instructions and tutorials** on the use of the learning platforms and tools for digital assessment can be found here: <https://online-lehre.uni-passau.de/tutorials/>

The declaration of originality is **important for digital exam formats**. It serves to ensure that each person’s work submitted in response to a task is solely their own. It is therefore important to print out this declaration of originality **before the exam begins**, sign it by hand and scan it so you can submit this document in addition to the work produced for the exam task in time. Good preparation is also useful here – if you print out, sign and scan the declaration of originality beforehand, you won’t have to do this right before handing in the exam. Therefore, find out in good time how you can produce good-resolution scans with your mobile phone or printer – in case you haven’t done this already.

## 2 Forms of digital exams

In the following, we present the various forms that the digital exams in the 2020 summer semester could take.



These exam formats merely serve as example scenarios; the actual exams may differ from the formats listed here. The examiners are obliged to inform you about the procedure and the general conditions of the exam.

Therefore, please read all the information provided about each course's exam very carefully!

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## 2.1 Take-home assessments and assignments

### Take-home assessment

Once you have **received the task**, it must be completed at **home within** a specific timeframe (normally 24 or 48 hours). The task is rather more concerned with solving **complex comprehension tasks than reproducing (factual) knowledge**. This format can also be used collaboratively in group work, whereby individual performances must be clearly delimited. Uploading is usually done via ILIAS, Stud.IP or via e-mail. If there are any deviations from this, your lecturers will inform you in advance.

### Virtual presentation in combination with handout/seminar paper

Virtual presentations are evaluated on the basis of a written paper (e.g. handout or seminar paper). The presentation is given via ZOOM, the written part is uploaded via Stud.IP or ILIAS. Group presentations are also possible for virtual presentations. Your lecturers will decide whether individuals or groups are tested. For identification purposes, it is important to have your student ID card ready and to point it at the camera if required to do so.

### Write and submit essays online

The starting point is a problem, a contentious thesis or a question. The aim of an essay is to **to take a certain academic position, to plausibly present this position and to develop one's own position using argumentation**. They are normally completed over several days or weeks. They can be submitted via ILIAS, Stud.IP or via e-mail on a defined date.

### Submit your assignment/seminar paper online

An academic seminar paper/assignment is written on a topic that is either provided or that you can choose yourself. These are also submitted via the learning platforms ILIAS, Stud.IP or via e-mail.

### Conduct and submit research online

You must **carry out online research** on a given topic, term or thesis, etc. You must be particularly careful here **to use reputable (internet) sources** so that you can quote and substantiate your research results in a academically sound manner. You may also be required to present and discuss your research results in a **web conference (ZOOM)**. You also submit research via ILIAS, Stud.IP or via e-mail on a defined date.

### Create and document (media) products

(Media) products can be **created in the form of podcasts or videos**, whereby the creation is documented from a technical perspective. These media products **may still be combined with an oral** presentation. The products can be handed in via ILIAS, Stud.IP or via e-mail. You may be required to use various tools (e.g. OBS Studio, ZOOM screen recording, Audacity, Powerpoint, OneNote) to create these products. You will be informed about the exact requirements in each course.

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## Create and document academic products

Academic products can, for example, take the form of **posters, research designs or the evaluation of scientific data**. The creation of the production is documented from a technical perspective. In addition, this form of exam may be combined with an **oral presentation**.

## Short simulations

In case-based and action-oriented exam formats, you will be presented with **complex, problem-based starting points**, which you have to work on using authentic materials. During oral exams (via ZOOM), you may be stopped for the purpose of **'thinking out loud'**; this means that you should share what you are thinking about in that moment with those around you. In the case of written solutions, it is possible that **you will also be asked** to submit a reflection paper to make it easier to understand what premises you are basing your solution on. The written submission is made here via ILIAS, Stud.IP or via e-mail on a defined date.

## Simulation games

These are extensive **simulations in which** you can demonstrate your expertise in realistic and open scenarios. Simulation games are therefore more likely to be used for courses with a high workload. Your results will **either be tested in oral (via ZOOM) or written form**. Reflection papers may be requested to help better understand your strategies and thoughts. The written submission is made here via ILIAS, Stud.IP or via e-mail on a certain date.

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## 2.2 E-portfolios

During a seminar, you will receive **smaller work assignments related to the final assessment/seminar paper** (referred to as process part/process portfolio). The assignments can take the form of research tasks, podcasts/vodcasts, group presentations, shorter academic papers or empirical studies. You will write a final paper (assignment/seminar paper) from the process parts, which will then be used for assessment. The objects portfolio and blog in ILIAS are used to carry out this format.

## 2.3 Oral exams

Oral exams are held via the video conference software ZOOM. In addition to the **examiners**, an **observer** will also be present in virtual rooms. You will be informed of the date in good time (about 14 days in advance). At the beginning of the exam, all participants must first submit their completed **declarations of consent**; you either have to upload this or send it via e-mail. It is especially important that you have a **working webcam with microphone** and that this is always switched on during the exam. You may be asked to hold your student **ID card up to the camera for identification purposes**. If you do not have a student ID card with a photo, you can also use your national ID card or passport. In addition, examiners will request to see your entire exam room; you will have to pan the camera to prove that there are no third parties present with you in the room. Oral exams are generally not electronically recorded. We therefore recommend you to find a quiet corner for the oral exam and preferably in a way that allow examiners to see when someone enters the room. Make sure that you are not disturbed during the exam and switch off your mobile phone to avoid problems.

You will **receive the exam** result in writing in your HISQIS extract; sometimes, you may also receive this directly following in the exam orally via video conference.

Should you **not want to sit your oral exam via ZOOM**, you can take advantage of an **alter-native option**, such as an **in-person oral exam** at the University of Passau or **another exam format**, for example an **e-portfolio**. Please discuss this with your examiner.

### Individual oral exams

You will be orally tested (via ZOOM) **regarding the contents or a set focus point** of one or more courses. Part of the exam may involve giving your **own lecture** and presentation from the courses' subject area.

Be prepared for questions that are not aimed at testing declarative knowledge and that you cannot research on the internet or read from a script off-screen.

### Group oral exams

Several students **will be invited** to attend a virtual meeting room (ZOOM) simultaneously, whereby the course content will be tested in a group. You may be encouraged to interact with your fellow students.

Be prepared for questions that are not aimed at testing declarative knowledge and that you cannot research on the internet or read from a script off-screen.

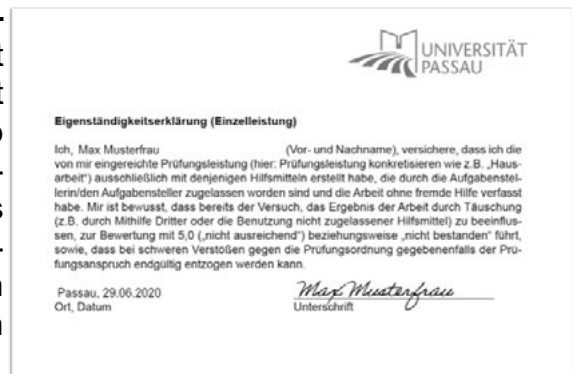


### 3 Won't it be easy to cheat? Proof of identity and originality

Checking whether cheating has taken place on exams is not only important for the university, but also for you!

It is also a matter of equal opportunities and that those who prepare extremely well are not disadvantaged.

Very important here is **the declaration of originality** that you **must** sign by hand in advance and submit along with your work. This provides assurance that you have prepared the assessment without the help of others. You will receive the declaration of originality from the responsible examiners. Sometimes there will also be an option to confirm the declaration of originality directly in the learning platform – in this case, you will always receive further information in the course.



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**Eigenständigkeitserklärung (Einzelleistung)**

Ich, Max Musterfrau (Vor- und Nachname), versichere, dass ich die von mir eingereichte Prüfungsleistung (hier: Prüfungsleistung konkretisieren wie z.B. „Hausarbeit“) ausschließlich mit denjenigen Hilfsmitteln erarbeitet habe, die durch die Aufgabenstellerin/den Aufgabensteller zugelassen worden sind und die Arbeit ohne fremde Hilfe verfasst habe. Mir ist bewusst, dass bereits der Versuch, das Ergebnis der Arbeit durch Täuschung (z.B. durch Mithilfe Dritter oder die Benutzung nicht zugelassener Hilfsmittel) zu beeinflussen, zur Bewertung mit 5,0 („nicht ausreichend“) beziehungsweise „nicht bestanden“ führt, sowie, dass bei schweren Verstößen gegen die Prüfungsordnung gegebenenfalls der Prüfungsanspruch endgültig entzogen werden kann.

Passau, 29.06.2020  
Ort, Datum

*Max Musterfrau*  
Unterschrift

There are several ways to reduce deception attempts to a minimum. One of these are open-book assessments. You are allowed to use aids with these. The questions here are targeted at understanding and factual connections, so they are somewhat more complex than usual.

Especially in the case of formats such as **take-home assessments and assignments**, the originality of the work is ensured via deadlines and randomisation of tasks; it is therefore very likely that you will have to answer different questions to other students. Written assessments may also be combined with an oral presentation. This enables lecturers to check whether the contents have really been understood. You can also expect further, more in-depth questions to be asked here, which serve to help to understand your working process.

To **submit the written assessment together with the completed declaration of originality**, you will have to register with the learning platforms (ILIAS, Stud.IP) using your ZIM ID. Remember that you have agreed to not pass on your user data to third parties in the user regulations. In addition, plagiarism detection software may check your academic papers.

Please make sure **to have your student ID card ready for oral exams**, for example via ZOOM. You can hold it up in front of the camera in order to verify your identity.

## 4 What to do in the event of technical problems?

You basically only need a university e-mail address, a valid ZIM ID and a current web browser for the exams. You should also be enrolled in the corresponding Stud.IP course or in the corresponding ILIAS course. A microphone and a webcam (usually integrated into current laptops) are required to participate in oral exams; it would also be possible to participate in an oral exam via a smartphone. Test your equipment for functionality in advance. Anyone without a computer or an internet connection should inform the examiners of this in advance and in good time.

### During oral exams

If technical problems arise during an oral exam, you should immediately try to **log in again**. Then you can agree with the examiners whether the exam can be continued immediately. You will usually still be entitled to the lost time – the respective examiners will decide regarding this. You will be informed about an **alternative communication channel** beforehand for precisely these kinds of cases, allowing you to quickly contact the university and tell them that you have technical problems. To be on the safe side, take screenshots if your internet connection is interrupted, so that you have proof of your technical problem.

### During exams with a time limitation

During exams, which have a time limitation, you have your own communication channel at your disposal in case of technical problems. You can also get in touch during the exam via a telephone number, chat **channel or similar**.

You will be given the opportunity **to familiarise yourself with the electronic exam system before the exams**, in order to solve any technical and organisational issues in advance. We also recommend that you actually do this. Test the system and familiarise yourself with exam requirements so that you will be less stressed during the exam.

If technical problems occur during the exam (e.g. connection is interrupted), you will be asked to **report the problems encountered to the examiners as promptly and in as much detail as possible (such as with an attached screenshot)**.

We advise you not to wait until the last minute to upload your documents/results/work. The earlier you do this, the better, to ensure that you have a buffer should something go wrong.

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## 5 Exam access arrangement

If you are entitled to exam access arrangements (e.g. extra time), you have an official letter for this. You are obliged to **inform your teacher of this entitlement when registering for the exam** – it may be the case that you have to upload your files to a different place than the other students. You will then receive all the information from the examiners. Please contact them well in advance so there is enough time to make the necessary technical exam access arrangements for you.

## 6 To-dos before the day of the exam

- 1) Decide whether you would like to submit each assessment **this semester** or **rather wait and do this in-person during the winter semester** (however, it is not guaranteed that this will be possible due to the difficult and unpredictable situation as a digital supported exam or as a face-to-face exam).
- 2) Get to know the exam format that is relevant for your **assessment**. The applicable general conditions and evaluation criteria should be transparent for you. You should know exactly when an exam is considered passed and what is required for this.
- 3) **Get informed** about the learning platforms and tools used in your assessment. You can find explanations regarding digital performance assessment under: <https://online-lehre.uni-passau.de/tutorials/>
- 4) **Read and sign the declaration of originality** in advance before the exam day so you can comfortably send it in time together with the documents created during the exam. Find out how to scan your assessment and the declaration of originality at an optimal resolution.
- 5) Ensure that you have a **stable internet connection**. If you do not have a computer or an internet connection, **please inform the examiners of this in advance and in good time**.
- 6) Make sure or test beforehand that you can participate in ZOOM meetings with your device and that your webcam and microphone work correctly for such a meeting. You can find help in this regard on the University of Passau's central help page: <https://www.hilfe.uni-passau.de/online-lehre-mit-zoom/>.

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## 7 To-dos on the day of the exam

- 1) First of all, it is important **to have already filled in the declaration of originality by hand and to have it scanned or photographed**, so you can hand it in digitally along with the completed assignments (if this has not already been done before the exam day).
- 2) A **properly set-up exam room** and a **quiet ambiance** is a prerequisite for success.
- 3) Please make sure to have your **student ID card** ready. You will be asked to point it at the camera in order to verify your identity.
- 4) Make sure that the exam room is set up properly for oral exams via videoconferencing systems. At the beginning of the exam, you may be asked to **show the examiners the room you are in with the webcam**, in order to rule out that third parties are present. You should also sit with your back to the door and switch off your mobile phone to avoid disturbances.
- 5) Does your **webcam and microphone** work? It is essential that the examiners can see and hear you in oral exams. It is best to check this beforehand.
- 6) Check your **internet connection**. Is your digital device connected to WiFi? Are there any problems that can be solved in advance? For example, can you ensure that you will have enough bandwidth during the exam (for example, no-one in the household is streaming videos or music)? You will have an alternative channel of communication with your examiners so you can contact them in case of possible difficulties.
- 7) Log in with your ZIM ID **in good time**, about 10 minutes before the start of the exam.

**Good luck with your digital exams in the 2020 summer semester!**



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