FAQs concerning remote oral exams

Which are the most important legally binding documents?

- Please stay up to date with the latest directive COVID-19: Measures with regard to teaching: https://ethz.ch/en/studies/legal-principles-degrees/legal-basis/directives.html
- Student guidelines for Zoom-proctored oral exams (20 Aug 2020): https://ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/associates/services/lehre/lehrbetrieb/leistungskontrollen/files-en/RemoteExamOral_Student_EN.pdf

What information do I have to provide to the students?

It is compulsory to inform the students about:

- allowed aids (books, notes, calculators, data tables, etc.);
- two independent ways of contacting the examiners in case of problems, including phone/SMS;
- any other exam guidelines that require preparation from the students' part;
- if the exam will be recorded, you will ask for the students' consent via e-mail and inform them who has access to the recording for what purpose, as well as where and how long it is stored;
- if needed, an email address or uploading functionality to transfer an electronic copy of written notes and whether or not students will also be required to use postal mail to send their written notes to ETH (and the address to do so).

Please make sure to inform your students as soon as possible!

Do I need an observer ("Beisitzer") for a remote oral exam?

An observer must always be connected to Zoom. The observer can be an assistant or a scientific employee. He/she supports the examiner and compiles the exam protocol (Art. 18 of the Leistungskontrollenverordnung ETH Zürich).

How do I set up and run an oral exam in Zoom?

Make sure to have installed the latest update for Zoom: https://ethz.ch/services/de/it-services/katalog/multimedia/video-konferenz/zoom.html#zoom-security-general-update

Zoom settings for oral examinations are listed here: https://ethz.ch/services/de/it-services/katalog/multimedia/video-konferenz/zoom.html#zoom-exam-oral

Please also consult the detailed and explicit quickstart guide from EPFL:
https://www.epfl.ch/education/teaching/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/QUICKSTART_OralOnlineExams-Jan-12-2021.pdf
This guide also includes many hints and helpful suggestions that are easily transferable to our ETH environment.

How can students share notes during an online exam?

The guide from EPFL mentioned above offers a range of possible solutions (slide 8, Option 2):
https://www.epfl.ch/education/teaching/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/QUICKSTART_OralOnlineExams-Jan-12-2021.pdf
For extensive handwritten notes we recommend the following procedure: Students need to join the exam with two devices. a) their laptop as a main channel and b) their smartphone to share handwriting. Prior to taking the exam, students need to install the freely available Zoom App on their smartphone and test their setup. The following video offers guidelines to students on how to set up the smartphone and to build a phone holder made of books:
https://tube.switch.ch/videos/a42637e4

What should I do if a student has technical problems with the internet connection?

Please keep in mind that it is the student's responsibility to ensure a stable broadband internet connection for the oral exam. Obvious failure to this will render the exam void or result in a failing grade. If a student encounters technical problems before or during an online oral exam, he/she should contact you immediately. You should provide a phone number where you can be reached. You will have to document the technical failures in the protocol, and it will be left to your judgment if, how, and when the exam will be continued or repeated. Make sure to inform the examinations office about any rescheduling.

How can I check the identity of the students?

If you are assessing a large number of students and you do not know all of your students personally, you may take a screen shot of each student when he/she is showing his/her student ID on the cam (with visible face) and add this picture to the exam protocol.

How can students ensure that their handwritten notes are readable?

It is best to write with a dark blue or black pen (not with a light pencil or with light colored inks) on plain white paper (not lined or squared). Write only on one side to prevent the image from appearing on the backside.

Am I allowed to record the oral exam?

Recording of the exam is only permitted if the respective candidate is informed in advance of the intended use and data scope of the recording and explicitly agrees that the recording may be made. It is your responsibility to ensure that the video stream or the recording will not be made available to anybody except ETH personnel on a strictly need-to-know base.