Aalto University Examination Guidelines

Approved by decision of the Vice President on 30 June 2016.
These guidelines entered into force on 1 August 2017.

Aalto University Examination Guidelines (pdf)

Contents:

- 1 Regulations on examinations
- 2 Examination arrangements
  - 2.1 Examination timetable
  - 2.2 Procedure for registering for examinations
  - 2.3 Right to attend examinations
  - 2.4 Language of examination questions and answers
  - 2.5 General provisions on examination proceedings
  - 2.6 Examination materials
  - 2.7 Examination hall log and verification of identity
  - 2.8 Accessibility
- 3 Evaluation and grading of examinations
- 4 Violation of regulations and disciplinary action
- 5 Exceptional circumstances

Footnotes

1 Regulations on examinations
Provisions on examinations are set forth in Chapters 2, 6 and 8 of the Aalto University Examination Guidelines (abbreviated OOS). Provisions on violations of examination regulations and consequent disciplinary action are set forth in the Aalto University Code of Academic Integrity.

The present guidelines supplement the OOS and apply to the examinations organised by Aalto University. These guidelines are also to be observed in cases where learning is evaluated by methods other than examination (such as online or oral examinations), when applicable.

The guidelines also pertain where applicable to the Bachelor’s level education organised by the Mikkeli campus, when applicable.

2 Examination arrangements

2.1 Examination timetable
If the degree requirements of a course include an examination, a minimum of two possibilities must be arranged for taking the examination each year. These examinations are announced in the examination timetable for the School. Additional opportunities for taking examinations may be provided by the teacher.

The schedule of the examinations held in examination halls is published at least one month before the start of term. The schedule of online examinations is described in detail in the learning environment for the course (e.g. in MyCourses).

(OOS, Section 26): The timetable for the examinations (examination timetable) for autumn must be published prior to the start of the term. The examination timetable for the spring term must be published a minimum of one month before the start of the spring term.

An examination is held when students have registered for it within the registration period.

Guidelines for e-exams and terms of use for the EXAM electronic examination system

2.2 Procedure for registering for examinations

Registering for a course is at the same time registration for interim tests and for the course examination.

Registration shall be done separately for examinations or assessments not included in the registration for the course.

The registration period for such examinations begins 60 days prior to the examination in question (Vice President decision 28 Nov. 2013).

For such examinations, students must register via the designated electronic system no later than 7 days beforehand. Students will receive a confirmation of successful registration.

If requested by the examination organiser, late registration for the examination may be done in the electronic system up to two days before the examination. Once the registration period has ended, students may no longer cancel their registration; however, they should inform the examination organiser immediately if illness or other impediments arise.
If there is a problem with the registration, the student may contact the academic affairs manager for the School or his/her designated person. The academic affairs manager will determine whether there was a possible technical or factual error on the part of the University and assess what measures need to be taken.

2.3 Right to attend examinations

**OOS (Section 25):** Students shall register for examination to confirm their right to complete it.

Only students who have registered as instructed for the examination have a right to be graded and receive the credits.

Only examination registrants may enter the examination hall or online examination site. If failure to register for an examination is noted only after the student has turned in his or her answer sheet, the situation shall be interpreted in favour of the student and his or her examination shall be graded.

Registration for an examination is interpreted as participation in it, and a failure to attend the examination is marked in the student register.

2.4 Language of examination questions and answers

**OOS (Section 25):** In the examinations, the students are required to complete their study attainments in the language of instruction unless otherwise instructed in the course. In addition, students have the right to receive the examination questions in Finnish and Swedish, and complete their examination answers in Finnish or Swedish when the language of instruction in the course is Finnish or Swedish. This right to receive the examination questions in Finnish and Swedish, and complete examination answers in Finnish or Swedish does not apply to the courses which are annually lectured both in Finnish and Swedish, to the courses in the field of business and economics or language studies.

Students shall report their preference regarding which national language to receive the examination questions in when they register for the course. Students who register for only the examination shall report their language preference to the examination organiser when registering for the examination. Students who are prevented from participating in a parallel course in the national language (Finnish or Swedish) of their choice may nevertheless use that language to answer the examination questions.

2.5 General provisions on examination proceedings

**OOS (Section 25):** Students must follow the instructions issued by the invigilator.

During an examination, whether held in a hall or online, students are to follow the instructions of the examination invigilator.

An examination begins when the invigilator gives permission to start. It is forbidden to browse the examination materials before the examination begins.

In examinations lasting over 60 minutes, examinees are allowed to arrive up to 30 minutes after the official commencement. They may leave the examination hall with the permission of the invigilators no sooner than 35 minutes after the official commencement.

The time of the examination is counted from the actual commencement until the examination time (stated beforehand) has elapsed. The examination ends when the invigilators declare the time expired, and the stop time is also displayed in the hall. Students must immediately stop work on the examination when the time expires.

Any questions may be directed at the invigilators. Questions concerning examination exercises are answered if this is possible without compromising the equal treatment of the students.

The possibilities for toilet visits during the examination are limited and visits are supervised.

2.6 Examination materials

Examinees use the answer sheets issued by the invigilator. All answer sheets issued must be turned in at the end of the examination. The question sheets must also be returned if requested. Failure to turn in any answer sheets may be considered as an attempt to cheat. The final answer sheets must be marked and set apart from any rough work. Examinees may request additional answer sheets from the invigilator. Separate instructions are given for electronic and other flexible examination options (online, oral or group examinations).

As a rule, the student participating in an examination is allowed to bring only his or her identification and essential writing materials into the hall. If other materials are permitted, they will be announced in connection with the course information and examination questions. The materials must be kept visible and they cannot be lent to other candidates. The invigilator has a right to check the materials. Other belongings of the participants are left in the location indicated by the invigilator. The University assumes no responsibility for the safekeeping of belongings brought into the examination hall or for any damage to them.

2.7 Examination hall log and verification of identity

A log is kept of the examination. The names of the examinees are recorded either in the examination hall log or in an appendix to it. The logs are retained for at least as long as the answer sheets of the same examination. If the log is included in evidentiary material to investigate alleged misconduct, it will be retained in the same manner as all material pertaining to such investigations.

**OOS (Section 25):** During examinations, the invigilators of the examination must keep an examination hall log noting the names of the invigilators and participants of the examination. Students who take part in an examination must prove their identity.

The identity of each student participating in the examination is verified upon his or her returning the answer sheets. Identity may be verified by a student card, an official ID certificate or a Finnish or EU driving licence with photo ID. An attempt will be made to provide participants without an ID an opportunity to verify their identity at a later time. Students desiring this option must comply with the invigilators’ instructions. The examination answers of participants whose identity has not been verified are not graded.
2.8 Accessibility

Accessibility is also considered when making arrangements for examinations. Students in need of alternative arrangements for disability or health reasons must contact the examination organiser within the registration period. Any special arrangements must be implemented in a manner that minimises the need for processing sensitive data.

3 Evaluation and grading of examinations

The teacher in charge of the course is responsible for evaluating the examination. A course may also include other staff to help with the reviewing of the examinations. The evaluation of examinations follows the provisions on disqualification.

**OOS (Section 30):** The teacher in charge of the course is responsible for ensuring that information regarding the accepted study attainments and the number of passed and failed students are published within four weeks of the examination date or other deadline given for the completion of the study attainment. At the same time, the teacher has to inform students how and when they will be given the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the evaluation and grading criteria and with the application of those criteria to their own performance. The results are published either on the electronic noticeboard or other noticeboard of the school.

For special reasons, the head of the unit in charge of the course may grant an extension to the notification period. Students who are affected by the extended grading period must be notified of the granted extension without delay.

The evaluation criteria of study attainments are public after the publication of the results, unless otherwise provided in the Act on the Openness of Government Activities (Laki viranomaisten toiminnan julkisuudesta 621/1999).

**OOS (Section 31):** The teacher-in-charge of the course ensures that the details of the course grading are submitted to those handling the student register as the results are published. The results must be entered into the student register without delay after their publication. In cases where courses consist of several study attainments, the date of completion entered into the register is the date of completion of the last study attainment.

As applicable, the provisions set forth here on courses also apply to theses.

Written or otherwise recorded examinations must be retained for a minimum of six months after the publication of the examination results. Answer sheets of examinations that are not graded due to misconduct or other reasons are also retained for a minimum of six months after publication of the results. The written examinations shall be destroyed in an appropriate manner.

3.1 Appealing against the grade of an examination

Students who are dissatisfied with the grading of an examination may raise an appeal with the teacher in charge of the evaluation and grading. Students dissatisfied with the appeals decision of the teacher may appeal then appeal further to the Academic Appeals Board.

**OOS (Section 35):** Students dissatisfied with the grading of a study attainment may appeal against it either orally or in writing to the teacher in charge of the evaluation. The appeal against a grade of a study attainment shall be filed within 14 days of the date on which the student has been offered the opportunity to see the results and the evaluation criteria applied to their study attainment.

The teacher in charge of the evaluation must give the decision regarding the appeal in writing. Students dissatisfied with the decision of the teacher regarding the appeal may appeal the matter to the Academic Appeals Board within 14 days of receiving notification of the decision.

4 Violation of regulations and disciplinary action

The invigilator shall intervene in any suspected cheating, disruptions or other violations of the instructions given on the examination. When necessary, the invigilator may interrupt the examination of a student suspected of violating the regulations. The invigilator records in the examination hall log his or her observations and the measures that were taken. After the examination, a student suspected of a violation has the right to view the notes made about him or her in the log.

**OOS (Section 25):** The invigilator may interrupt the examination of a student disturbing the examination or violating university’s code of conduct.

The invigilator or the teacher in charge of the course reports suspected violations on examinations to the academic affairs manager of the School, submitting his or her written account of the incident.

Suspected violations are dealt with following the procedure set forth in the Aalto University Code of Academic Integrity. The student and the invigilator are heard in the process. The grading of the examination of the examinee will not be completed until the suspected misconduct has been investigated. The teacher must grade the examinations of other students in accordance with the deadlines specified in the regulations, even if an investigation is underway into suspected student misconduct.

**OOS (Section 40):** A study attainment may be left ungraded, if the student is deemed to have violated the Code of Academic Integrity while completing it. Students violating the Code of Academic Integrity may be subject to disciplinary action on the grounds set forth in the Universities Act.

5 Exceptional circumstances

**OOS (Section 25):** In an emergency or similar exceptional circumstances an examination may be discontinued altogether. After a discontinued examination, the teacher in charge of the course decides on whether the study attainments may be evaluated fairly or whether a new examination without delay should be arranged for the participants.

In the case of an emergency situation during an examination (fire alarm, power cut, acute illness), the examination may be continued after the emergency is over at the discretion of the invigilator. If the invigilation has continued without disruptions during the emergency, the examination may be continued. Otherwise, the examination is suspended.
The schools are responsible for ensuring that invigilators are aware of the measures to be taken under an emergency or exceptional circumstances.

Footnotes

1 Examination timetable: A schedule, drafted by Learning Services (LES), of examinations as separate teaching events.

2 Interim test: One or more tests, mid-course exams, oral examinations or other assessment.

3 Course examination: The first possibility at the end of the teaching period to take the examination for the course. Course organisers may arrange several possibilities to take the examination during the academic year if a large number of students, for example, will be taking the course examination. Students shall be informed of these examinations in the course brochure at the start of the course.

4 Examination organisers: BIZ, Learning Services or the examination office; CHEM, the examination contact person of the department

5 It is recommended that these requests be collected (via MyCourses, for example) at the start of the course.

6 Official commencement: The start time as marked in the examination timetable (for examination hall examinations).

7 Actual commencement: The time the examination actually begins (for examination hall exams)

8 Any such requests shall appear on the question sheet itself.