

Guide to remote testing

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Please note: This is the English translation of the Dutch original version.

Remote testing is not always easy. You cannot assume that a student at home unsupervised takes a graded test in a fair way. How do you handle this well? Below are a number of principles and practical tips.

Principles for remote assessment (for a grade)

If you want to test remotely, keep in mind the following principles:

- Students should know in advance what is expected of them and what they are assessed on.
- All students should be given the same test. You can vary the question formulation. For example, all students are instructed to write an argument, but views or sources may differ.
- Students must be familiar with and have practiced the test form.
- Students must have the same prior knowledge and have the same sources.
- Students should know that they may be checked for plagiarism afterwards (check on the internet or instruments such as [Ephorus](#) or other plagiarism scanners).
- The test should yield (approximately) the same opinion by different assessors.
- The test must produce a reliable result.

Tips for remote testing

In addition to the above principles, we have received various tips from teachers for remote testing.

- Make sure to split your class into smaller groups. A remote test with 20 or more students can be problematic.
- If you still want to work with a larger group at the same time, ask parents or exam students (who are now ready) as supervisor (or proctor) to help. It is important to make good agreements about this.
- You can sometimes take a test that consists of multiple assignments in a 'teacher pace' mode. Each question has the same start and end time and as a teacher you determine the

joint start. This prevents students who are quickly finished with the entire test from exchanging answers.

- With a multiple choice test, it is important that you mix up the question and preferably use an [item bank](#). Students therefore do not all get the same questions and cannot pass on answers.
- Some assessment programs have a special assessment mode where students cannot open other tabs, use chat programs or take screenshots ([proctor mode](#)). This can often be useful.
- Sometimes it may be advisable to use a video program to monitor the students during the test (but make good [agreements](#) about this). Pupils can thus also take a written test (spelling / grammar). The student hands in his work by taking a photo of his work and emailing or [sharing it](#).
- You can also choose other forms for a test, but still have the same goals, final objectives or subjects. Consider, for example, giving advice (using video), writing an argument, a practical assignment (in a specific time). Here the focus is on so-called [higher thinking skills](#). Students can use different websites, method sites or other sources. Here, too, it is important that students have a clear start and end time. Otherwise, students will have an interim conversation with each other.
- In addition to an open assignment, you can also choose to promote group work by not having the above assignment made individually, but in groups. Digital collaboration is then an additional assessment component.

Formative assessment

Many teachers who already [test formatively](#) will feel like a fish in water during this phase. By giving the students more autonomy, tailor-made programs are created in which no standard summative tests fit. Many examples and inspiration can be found in the Dutch Facebook group '[Active learning without grades](#)'. It can also sometimes be useful to convert a number of formative parts into a grade (although that is actually not the intention). Think of converting a rubric into a grade, assessing a 'think aloud assignment', assessing solution strategy. You have to be creative here.

Tips for device and environment

- Communicate with the parents / guardians that a test is being taken.
- Make sure the student is in an area where they will not be disturbed.
- Check whether the device is sufficiently charged or hanging from a charging cable.
- Close as many programs as possible (such as Netflix, Youtube, games, etc.), perhaps also for other users at home.
- Check the camera and other aids (keyboard, mouse, sound, microphone etc).

Digital oral testing

In the MVT courses, oral tests or school exams have been used for some time and this is very common. It just doesn't happen digitally yet. Digital oral tests are also an option for other subjects. How do you best do that? Below we give some tips.

Tips for taking a digital oral test

If you take an oral test digitally, for example a high stakes test, first check whether it needs to be adjusted and coordinate this with the exam secretary or the schoolboard.

What do you have to take into account when taking an oral test or school exam?

- Ask the student if he can sit in a quiet area where he cannot be disturbed. Ask parents or caregivers to help with this if necessary.
- Take a good look at the digital resource you will be using. There are many tools that can help with the digital oral test, but they must of course be allowed by your school. Are you unsure about a tool or are you not sure if it is allowed? First ask your ICT coordinator or the Data Protection Officer. Do you already work with a certain tool at your school, for example Microsoft Teams or Google Classroom? Then use this for the digital oral test.
- Keep in mind that a student can use illicit aids. One way to check this is to ask the student to show the room through the camera on their device. You can immediately see whether there are textbooks, a telephone or an extra laptop nearby. Ask the student to remove it.
- If you need a second assessor, instruct them well in advance about the agreements during the oral test. You can also choose to take the oral test and submit it to a second assessor at a later time.
- During the call, keep in mind that the connection may falter or drop out in the meantime. If you restart the conversation, ask the student again to show the room via the camera.
- Keep in good contact with the student. Watch for noticeable behavior that could indicate cheating or fraud.
- Can students use certain (digital) sources, websites or (external) references? Please indicate this clearly in advance.
- It can be useful to store the test digitally, for example as proof that the oral test has been taken digitally.

Cheating and fraud

How can you prevent students from cheating or fraud during a digital "knowledge or cognition test" at a distance? A question that cannot be answered without any technical knowledge, but where you also have to look closely at information security and privacy. Principles are as follows

- A student should not use options such as opening additional tabs, the calculator, spelling correction or a search engine such as Google.
- As a teacher, you must be able to inspect the student's test location in advance so that no tools (such as telephone, dictionary or other laptop / tablet can be used)
- As a teacher you must be able to watch and listen during the test (camera surveillance and access to microphone)
- The student should be in a quiet area where they cannot be disturbed or others can help him or her
- Images should be able to be included to provide retrospective evidence as evidence of fraud.
- The images must be able to be deleted again after completion and determination of the result

- Processing agreements must be concluded with the suppliers involved (testing software, chat and video programs and security software).
- Students' devices must have a camera and a microphone. In that case, you can use the school's collaborative platform, such as Microsoft Teams or Google Hangouts Meet, which allows you to monitor the student (watch video and audio in real time and record it if necessary).

With the school's testing platform, for example [Safe-exam browser](#) or [Exam.net](#), you can enforce that students cannot open additional tabs in their browser to make cheating more difficult.

With some assessment platforms it can also make a difference whether you use school-managed devices and unmanaged devices from students. The latter are devices that are used at school according to the Bring Your Own Device principle (BYOD). There are also schools that work with a combination of both.

Since the testing environment is being amended and with it the testing regulations, the MR will also have to be informed. Because remote testing, with a deviation from the usual course of events (in the classroom), is now different. In this environment, different rules and consequences apply.

When assessing for a grade at a distance, there is sufficient basis to use and store images and sound. You do not actually need parental permission for this. On the other hand, it is advisable to describe this process well and to communicate with those involved, as it can be accompanied by a punitive measure (such as an insufficient one).

Disclaimer

Remote testing always has its limitations. You cannot assume that the result is 100% reliable. It is an intensive process, you must have a large keyboard and you are dependent on a stable internet connection with the students. In addition, all students must also have the necessary equipment and the right space. If this cannot be arranged, consider other forms of assessment and customization is the only option.