

Online education and behaviour

Disclaimer

- This document is a further explanation of existing documents (the THUAS Educational Vision and the Student Charter) and existing legislation.
- We find ourselves in a new situation, in which we are forced to temporarily provide more education online than in-person. In this experimental phase we still have a lot to learn in every layer of the organisation. That means we cannot rule out that the online code of conduct will need to be adjusted in the future.

Do you have any questions about this document or additions? Please contact Fee Romein, student services policy staff member, at: hazfromein@HHS.nl

Introduction

The Hague University of Applied Sciences (THUAS) needs unambiguous guidelines for online behaviour and its communication about this. This way, both lecturers and students will know what is possible, what is allowed and what is required. Three things are required to meet this need:

- A clear vision and policy for online education and behaviour.
- An explanation of the legal frameworks of legislation (GDPR in particular).
- Advice for students and lecturers that offer guidelines for daily practice.

It is also desirable for THUAS to have a clear set of rules to define what we mean by good conduct and what action we will take if students, lecturers or other staff members demonstrate inappropriate behaviour online.

The need for clear guidelines, and communication about these, translates into:

1. A vision on (online) behaviour;
2. Policy for online behaviour;
3. Guidelines for online behaviour (THUAS students and staff members).

This document will address online education in a limited, general manner. THUAS' general policy for (online) education can be found in the Educational Vision. The policy for [online examinations](#) is available on the Employee Portal.

1. Vision on (online) behaviour

The same attitude and behaviour online as in class

THUAS has formulated its vision on education in the document 'Educational vision and framework for full-time bachelor's degree programmes'. This vision applies to all our education. Visibility and involvement are key words here. In online education, we expect the same attitude and behaviour from lecturers and students as during in-person education. The same etiquette and codes of conduct that apply when following (or providing) education within the walls of THUAS also apply, in principle, within the *virtual walls* of THUAS. During a lecture, lecturers and students demonstrate respect for each other,

students focus on the lecture, and they also allow others to focus on the lecture and everyone participates actively.

Security, commitment, professionalism

THUAS places great importance on security, commitment, professionalism in all forms of education: both in-person and online.

Safety and Security

'Lecturers create a safe environment and offer opportunities to engage in dialogue from different perspectives' - Educational vision, p. 18

Students and staff members should feel free and safe to share their opinions, ideas, needs and identity. Everyone in the class appreciates different perspectives. The lecturer pays attention to mutual differences and ensures a safe learning environment. The same freedom, safety, appreciation and attention continue undiminished in online education.

THUAS recognises that online teaching presents challenges that are less prevalent during in-person education. Signals that normally would call the attention of the lecturer in a subtle way are now less visible. For example, a student who lingers to create an opportunity to ask a (personal) question. That is why we ask our lecturers to be extra alert and make sure that all students feel seen and heard. Both inside and outside of class.

Connectedness

'THUAS offers education that is accessible and feasible for everyone who [...] has the will to succeed and the willingness to put in a considerable effort.' - Educational vision, p. 5

To be a successful student, it's important that you feel connected with the degree programme and your fellow students. That is why THUAS enables the participation of every student. Our education is characterised by inclusiveness. Together we create social cohesion and ensure connectedness and tolerance. (Educational vision, p. 9)

Visibility is very important to enable participation. At the beginning of the lesson, the lecturer and the students make agreements not only about behaviour, but also about camera usage in class. When a camera should be turned on depends on the learning situation, group size and learning objectives.

Professionalism

THUAS expects students to behave professionally and as a starting professional. For students this means being representative of the profession for which you are studying. This also includes your behaviour and visibility online.

2. Policy for online behaviour

'If educational activities take place outside the buildings and grounds of the university of applied sciences, the rules (as far as possible) still apply.' - Educational vision, p. 6

A stimulating work and study environment

A code of conduct applies within THUAS to ensure a proper work and study environment. The general code of conduct applies to all our students, staff members and visitors. These are included in the [Code](#)

[of Conduct and Disciplinary Measures](#) Regulation, which is part of the Student Charter 2020-2021, part 1. The code of conduct contributes to a pleasant and stimulating work, study and living environment at the university of applied sciences. In this climate, collegiality, respect and consideration for the other are part of normal conduct and inappropriate behaviour is quickly addressed.

Policies and frameworks

'Our education is activating, challenging and feasible: our education demands a considerable effort from students and requires that they study and participate very regularly and actively' - Educational vision, p. 9

The existing code of conduct and disciplinary measures for online education and the associated legal frameworks are explained below. Together they form THUAS' policy for the way lecturers and students should behave online. It's not an exhaustive list. For any codes of conduct that are not specifically mentioned, the description in the [Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Measures](#) applies.

Camera usage

'For security, communication and identification purposes, clothing covering the face [...] is not permitted to be worn inside the buildings, on THUAS' sites or in examination venues [...]' [Code of conduct and disciplinary measures](#), Article 2.2.

The starting point is that we behave as much as possible the same way in online education as we do during in-person education. Lecturers¹ and students are required² to turn on their camera and appear on screen during online classes - at least when the lecturer requests this and the lesson is not being recorded. THUAS has the right to know who is speaking. Students and lecturers are not obliged to upload a passport photo.

Background

The background and any background noise may not disturb the lesson. This is important because education is often given and followed at home. To prevent showing more than is necessary, we recommend that you blur your background or select a (neutral) background that THUAS provides. Please note: we recommend using Blackboard. Keep in mind that Blackboard does not allow you to blur your background.

Carefully consider what you will show online as a background or in the room. Offensive images or statements are not allowed. Statements of religion, belief or political preference are examples of special personal data.³ If this personal data is shown, THUAS can take it as a form of permission to process this information.

Recordings

Only THUAS may - after prior consideration - record the lessons. The students will not appear on screen

¹ Lecturers who, due to personal circumstances, have compelling reasons to not appear on screen, may file an objection with their manager. The manager will assess each case individually and seek a solution.

² Students who, due to personal circumstances, have compelling reasons to not appear on screen, are advised to discuss this with their lecturer. The manager will assess each case individually and seek a solution.

³ A complete overview of special personal data can be found at:
<https://autoriteitpersoonsgegevens.nl/nl/onderwerpen/algemene-informatie-avg/mag-u-persoonsgegevens-verwerken#wat-verstaat-de-avg-onder-bijzondere-persoonsgegevens-6339>

(and cannot be heard). When making this decision, the lecturer will take the values of safety and connectedness into account. The lecturer communicates clearly in advance to students that a recording will be made.

To record or stream classes, the lecturer must use the available tools for online education, to ensure this is done securely. Students and third parties are prohibited from recording the lessons. Students with a disability can request the 'lecture recording' facility via the Student Counsellor.

It is not permitted to make recordings or screenshots, not even for personal use. The recordings made by THUAS can be made available to the students. The recording made by THUAS will remain within the (online) environment of THUAS.

It's also not permitted for any recording to be distributed, posted online, given or made available to third parties outside the university of applied sciences. In the event of a breach, THUAS may apply measures as described in Article 11 of the [Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Measures 2020-2021](#).

Recordings are saved for a maximum of one academic year.

Dress code

An online lesson is subject to the same dress code as an in-person lesson.

3. THUAS's online code of conduct

THUAS's vision and policy on online behaviour can be translated into the following ten codes of conduct for online education⁴:

1. We are all responsible for a good work, study and living environment: you show collegiality, respect, and consideration for each other.
2. You behave the same way in the online learning environment as in the offline learning environment.
3. You do not use inappropriate language or gestures (to be assessed by the lecturer and fellow students) during an online lesson.
4. You come to the lecture prepared and actively contribute to the class.
5. Participating in class means that you are visible. The only exception is when the lesson is being recorded. Only THUAS is allowed to record any (online) lessons. Students will be notified of this in a timely manner and will not be depicted and/or be audible.
6. Your background is neutral or invisible/blurred.
7. Your microphone is muted unless you're talking. The lecturer gives the student the floor.
8. You use the chat to ask content-related questions in a professional way (please be aware of your language).
9. An online lesson is subject to the same dress code as an in-person lesson.
10. Both lecturers and students can bring up inappropriate behaviour. As a first step, THUAS would encourage a good discussion about the situation.⁵

⁴ The codes of conduct for online education also apply to online meetings.

⁵ As a second step, a complaints procedure can be started.

Internal sources

- [Educational vision and framework for full-time bachelor's degree programmes](#)
- The [Student Charter](#) of THUAS
- The 10 commandments (Spatial Planning degree programme)
- [THUAS' Integrity Code](#)
- Protocol for inappropriate behaviour in ICT chat (informal)
- [Complaints Procedure for Inappropriate Behaviour](#) (THUAS)
- [Blended Learning Framework](#)
- [Quick wins](#) in online education

External sources

- [UU online education etiquette](#)
- [GDPR and online education at Fontys](#)
- [Education in times of corona, what to expect \(RU\)](#)
- [Code of Conduct for remote learning \(LU\)](#)
- [Education during corona](#) - Guidelines from personal data authority
- [Moeten we lerenden verplichten de camera aan te zetten?](#) (blog by Wilfred Rubens - translates as: Should we force students to turn on the camera?)