# heiCONF – Short Guide for Students

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## Abstract

heiCONF is an open source web conference system for teaching with audio and video conferences. This service is hosted at and operated by Heidelberg University. Students don't need an account in heiCONF and may enter a room via shared URL. There are two variants: heiCONF (max. 50 persons, likely interactive formats) and heiCONF-Audimax (max. 200 persons, likely frontal lessons, video only for moderator role).

## Technical Requirements

- Good Internet connection
- heiCONF is a web application, which you can use via a modern web browser – we recommend Chrome or Firefox (Windows, MacOS) for full support. There may be device-related functional limitations with mobile devices.
- Recommended: headset and web cam
- In rare cases, your teacher will offer dial-in via phone.

## Access for students

You receive the date, the specific room URL and maybe also a room access code from your teacher (e.g., via Moodle). At the agreed upon time you plug in your headset, open the specific URL, enter your name and, if necessary, the access code. You may have to wait a little bit for moderator approval before joining. You can change the language via the menu on the upper right.

At the end of the session: If your teacher doesn't end the meeting for all, log out via "Logout" in the menu on the upper right and afterwards close your web browser.

| **Options: text chat & status options, audio and video conference, sharing presentations (or screen sharing), polling, shared notes, whiteboard, breakout rooms** |
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| Your teacher prepares for the meeting and designs the flow of the lesson and the interactions. In heiCONF, a lot of things are allowed by default, but as a student you should not simply try them out without being asked: At any time, you could activate your microphone or web cam, write in "shared notes" or use the text chat or status options. At the beginning of the session, your teacher will tell you what the preferred functions are – usually text chat, unless you are asked to participate via audio or webcam. If you may download a presentation, you see a little arrow on the lower left of the slide. |

## Option 1: Participation via text chat and status options

The public text chat lists contributions by name and chronologically. With many contributions it can quickly become confusing – maybe there is a co-moderator who cares for the chat. Everybody in the meeting room can save the text chat locally at any time – e.g., for saving the results or further processing of the contents.

The purpose of the status options is feedback at short notice and visible for all: Important symbols are "Raise", "Thumbs up" & "Thumbs down".

## Option 2: Participation via audio / web cam

If you have joined the audio (room) as "Microphone" instead of "Listen only" and have a microphone, you can activate it at any time. An activated microphone is visible via small symbol in the users panel and the name list above the presentation, when you are actively transmitting sound into the room.

You can share your web cam via the resp. heiCONF symbol and your web cam transmission will be shown above the presentation. In case of problems with your bandwidth, you can deactivate in your personal view the display of web cams (s. "Settings" in upper right menu).

## Option 3: Participation via uploading a presentation (or screen sharing)

There is only one at a time who has permission to present – usually your teacher. You can recognize this person by the resp. symbol in the users list. If your teacher makes you presenter, you can upload a document (PDF, Word etc.) in the meeting room and show it in the presentation area for all. Via click on the "Plus" symbol and "Upload a presentation" you will then also return to the area to delete the document by clicking on the recycle bin icon.

Teachers might also use the screen sharing – If you also want to share an application with everyone via this way, be careful and check again, that you really share only the wished-for application. The icon for screen sharing is located directly besides the web cam icon.

## Option 4: Participation via taking part in a poll

Polls can only be created with "presentation" permissions and therefore, as a student, you would just choose an answer – the question either is located on the slides of the presentation area or is given per teacher audio. Only the teacher sees the names committed to a poll option. The teacher can show anonymized results of a poll.

## Option 5: Participation via writing in "Shared Notes"

Basically, anyone in the room can write and delete anonymously in the panel "Shared Notes" at any time. Therefore your teacher can define organizational rules, who and when should write in the "Shared Notes" and – according to scenario –ask you to initial your contributions. In "Shared Notes", pro-contra arguments could be neatly collected (better than in text chat). Your teacher may also have already pre-structured the notes with content. This content can be exported by everyone in the meeting room at any time.

## Option 6: Participation via drawing/writing on the whiteboard

Your teacher is able to turn on "multi-user whiteboard permissions" with one single click. The whiteboard can be used for annotation of an underneath presentation or to fill an empty page of a presentation underneath with content. The respective mouse pointer is then underlaid with names and each person can make changes on the whiteboard, however only delete own changes (click on "Clear all annotations" or "Undo annotation"). In case of writing text, draw a selection beforehand on the whiteboard. However, for text writing, there are better options in the meeting room, e.g., text chat or "Shared Notes". Please note that browser or device-related limitations may prevent you from drawing/writing on the whiteboard.

## Option 7: Participation via breakout rooms

Your teacher can activate so-called "breakout rooms" within a meeting for group work. The allocation can be done manually by a teacher or he/she can use "randomly assign". As students, you get the invitation "Do you want to join (Room XY)?" There you will have extended rights and will later be automatically brought back to the main room after the agreed time has elapsed (see countdown timer). Since all participants also remain in the main conference (different browser tab), the joint text chat of the main room can be used if necessary. Your teacher can enter any breakout room - you will see him/her in the participants list.

Even in the breakout room, there can only be one "presenter" at a time, however, each student can take temporarily this permission via +-symbol, in order to upload a presentation afterwards. Please activate during upload also the download option (via click on the arrow symbol), if download is necessary for your group work.

The heiCONF whiteboard function needs an uploaded presentation as foundation– ideally with one or more empty white pages (e.g., PowerPoint or PDF document). Per click on "multi-user whiteboard", afterwards everyone in that breakout room is allowed to draw via whiteboard overlay.

To secure results in the breakout room: Everyone may export the text chat or the "shared notes" at any time during the breakout session. However, if you have used documents via "Upload presentation" during your group time, you can only download the original presentation (small arrow on the lower left of the slide), when the download option was enabled during upload (or later on). The easiest way to save whiteboard results is by taking a screenshot.

## Legal information

Recording is currently not available for data protection reasons and - as soon as the last participant left the room - all room details will automatically be deleted after a few minutes.

## Further documentation and contact at Heidelberg University
URZ: https://www.urz.uni-heidelberg.de/de/heiconf