

## Security Information for Online Elections at Hochschule Geisenheim University in the 2023/2024 winter Semester

### General information

The Senate and Student Parliament election in the 2023/2024 winter semester will be conducted by means of an internet-based voting system. The online system is browser-based and supports all common operating systems. Eligible voters can cast their votes easily and intuitively without having to install any special software. To carry out the online election, Hochschule Geisenheim University uses the POLYAS voting system provided by POLYAS GmbH which has been adapted to HGU requirements. In 2021, the voting system has once again been certified by the Federal Office for Information Security (BSI). The certification is based on Common Criteria Standards for online elections and basic security requirements for online voting products that are guided by general election principles. For more information, please click [here](#). Accordingly, online elections are secure under BSI requirements and meet the standards demanded by democratic elections.

POLYAS also has ISO/IEC 27001 certification - an internationally recognized standard for information security management and thus stands for the highest level of data protection.

[Here](#) you can find out everything about security and data protection at POLYAS Online Election.

### Postal ballot

Eligible voters are able to apply to the Election Office for postal vote until January 2, 2024. Upon mailing or delivery of postal voting documents, these voters are excluded from online voting.

### Security information

#### General security information

In online elections, eligible voters can cast their votes on individually used computers with internet access which transmit the votes to the voting system in an encrypted form.

A secure protocol (e.g. HTTPS) is the basis for a secure internet connection. When using Firefox or MS-EDGE, for instance, a secure connection is indicated by a closed lock icon.

Observing these recommended security measures is meant to ensure your personal compliance with the secrecy of the ballot.

### **Using the voting system despite technical limitations or personal impairments**

In general, the voting system is accessible to all eligible users without restrictions or particular difficulties and regardless of their physical and/or technical capabilities. Voters may use the system without any assistance (easily accessible).

### **Technical requirements for the computer workstations used for online voting**

A standard computer workstation – similar to those used in HGU facilities or private households – with a working internet connection is required for the voting process. It is recommended to only use computer workstations in a reliable work environment which ensure general compliance with recommended security standards, e.g. computer workstations in the library. Using computer workstations in unreliable environments is not recommended for security reasons. Please make sure that there is no malware on the computer used for online voting, e.g. trojans to spy out or gather user information. So-called firewalls offer additional protection against malware. Make sure to use an updated antivirus software and keep your operating system and applications up to date. In general, voters are responsible to make sure that the computer they use to cast their vote comply with these recommended security standards.

### **Casting our vote**

Eligible voters cast their vote online in person and without being observed, which they must confirm electronically. During the voting process, voters are responsible to ensure that the secrecy of the ballot is maintained.

### **Safe storage of login data**

Please pay special attention to make sure that your login data (user name and password) is stored in a safe place, and that no authorized third parties have access to your data.

### **Automatic time tracker / logout**

Please exit the voting system properly by clicking on the *Wahl abbrechen / ausloggen* (cancel vote / log out) button if you want to cancel or pause the voting process. If you do not log out properly or leave your computer unattended for a longer period of time, the automatic time tracker will cancel your voting process for security reasons if you have been inactive for about 15 minutes. All of your entries will be lost! In these two cases you must log in to the system again using your login data and repeat the voting process.

### **For more useful tips regarding internet security please visit:**

[https://www.bsi.bund.de/EN/Themen/Verbraucher\\_innen](https://www.bsi.bund.de/EN/Themen/Verbraucher_innen)

If you notice any irregularities or attempted manipulations, please contact the Election Office of Hochschule Geisenheim University immediately.

Contact:

Election Office for Academic Senate elections, Katharina Fouquet,  
[katharina.fouquet@hs-gm.de](mailto:katharina.fouquet@hs-gm.de), Phone 06722 502 275

If you have any technical problems or questions regarding your personal computer workstation, please contact the person responsible for the network to which your computer is connected.

Contact:

IT Service, [it-service@hs-gm.de](mailto:it-service@hs-gm.de), phone 06722 502 250

Service hours:

Monday - Friday 9:00 - 12:00 noon

Monday - Thursday 2:00 - 5:00 pm