# Turiba University

# Bachelor's Degree in computer system

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## Four-Eyes Principle

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# Introduction

The **Four-Eye Method** is a simple rule used in many organizations to make sure that important work or decisions are checked by **two people instead of one**.

This means that when one person does something important—like approving money, checking a document, or making a big decision—another person also looks at it before it is final.
 This helps to **avoid mistakes, catch errors, and stop cheating or fraud**.

The idea is that "two pairs of eyes see better than one."
 By having two people check, the organization can work more safely and honestly.

The Four-Eye Method is often used in banks, offices, schools, and companies to make sure everything is done correctly and fairly.
 In this report, we will learn what this method means, why it is important, how it works, and what problems it can have.

# Origins

The concept originates from accounting, auditing, and corporate governance, where separation of duties has long been recognised as a key control measure.
 In French ("règle des quatre yeux"), it is described as "a rule ensuring that an important decision must be validated by at least two distinct persons."
 Although the term is modern, the idea of dual-control has been practiced for decades across industries.

## Purpose and Benefits

### Purpose

- To **reduce risk of errors** — having a second person review reduces mistakes.

- To **prevent fraud or misconduct** — it becomes harder for one person to act improperly.
- To **increase accountability** — knowing another person will verify the work encourages responsibility.

**Benefits**

- Enhances **internal control** in financial, operational, and compliance processes.
- Improves **auditability and traceability** by keeping a record of who initiated and who approved each task.
- Strengthens **organizational governance and transparency.**
- Builds **trust** among employees and stakeholders.

## Implementation of the Four-Eye Method

**Key Implementation Elements**

1. **Clear definition of roles** – identify who initiates and who reviews or approves tasks.
2. **Segregation of duties** – the initiator and approver must be different individuals.
3. **Documented workflows** – maintain approval steps, timestamps, and audit trails.
4. **Risk-based application** – apply dual approval only to high-value or sensitive tasks.

## Example Applications

- **IT Systems:** In IBM Sterling B2B Integrator, the Four-Eyes Principle ensures that certain administrative actions require a second person's approval.
- **Financial Transactions:** Banks use it to verify large payments or fund transfers.

- **Compliance Monitoring:** Used in sanctions screening so that no single employee can clear or block transactions alone.

## Challenges and Limitations

### Challenges

- **Operational delays** — obtaining two approvals may slow down work.
- **Resource limitations** — smaller organizations may not have enough staff to apply dual controls.
- **Rubber-stamp risk** — if reviewers approve without real verification, the control becomes meaningless.
- **Workarounds** — employees might bypass the rule if it's seen as unnecessary.

## Limitations

- The method **reduces but does not eliminate** risk.
- Too much control can reduce efficiency.
- It depends heavily on an organisation's **culture of honesty and diligence**.

## Best Practices and Recommendations

- Apply the Four-Eye Method to **critical processes only**, not to every small task.
- Use **role-based access control** (RBAC) so only specific people can approve.
- Keep **clear audit logs** with names, times, and actions.
- Avoid "rubber-stamp" approvals — reviewers must carefully check details.
- Balance **control and efficiency** — allow exceptions for urgent tasks with later review.
- Train employees about the importance of dual approval.

- Review and audit the method periodically to ensure it is functioning properly.
- Use **automation tools** and workflow software to make approvals faster and easier.

## Conclusion

The Four-Eye Method is an effective internal control mechanism that improves accuracy, transparency, and accountability within organizations.
 By requiring two people to approve critical actions, the risk of error or fraud decreases significantly.
 Although it may create some delays, its value in improving trust and compliance makes it essential for sound governance.
 When applied with proper training and technology, the Four-Eye Method becomes a cornerstone of responsible management and decision-making.

# References

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