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General Examination Regulations

for Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programmes at
Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences

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Section 1

Scope

(1) These General Examination Regulations (*Rahmenprüfungsordnung*, “RPO”) apply to all bachelor’s (undergraduate) and master’s (postgraduate) degree programmes at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences. Bachelor’s degree programmes can be offered as full-time, part-time, or dual-vocational programmes. Master’s degree programmes can be offered as full-time or part-time programmes. For details, refer to the examination regulations of the degree programmes.

(2) Each degree programme must have its own examination regulations (*Prüfungsordnung*, hereinafter “*the examination regulations*”), which are subject to these General Examination Regulations. They contain the specific rules and provisions required by Section 64 (2) of the Higher Education Act of North Rhine-Westphalia (*Hochschulgesetz*, “HG NRW”).

Section 2

Study and examination plan

(1) The examination regulations for the degree programmes must contain a study and examination plan in accordance with Section 58 (3) HG NRW that details, in a binding manner, the:

- a. modules of the degree programme, with their specific teaching methods, forms of learning, and examinations;
- b. essential contents and qualification aims of the modules;
- c. amount of weekly contact hours per semester (as it relates to the specific teaching/learning methods) in credit hours (CH) (*Semesterwochenstunden*, “SWS”);
- d. credit points (CP);
- e. mandatory modules and elective options;
- f. the examinations and assessments for the degree programme.

(2) The study and examination plan also serves as a guide for students to structure their studies in order to graduate within the standard duration of study.

Section 3

Academic objectives; Purpose of examination; Degree awarded

(1) With respect to the general academic objectives outlined in Section 58 HG NRW, bachelor's degree programmes should aim to impart, in particular, application-oriented content based on sound scientific knowledge and practice, as well as empower students to apply scientific methods and develop practice-oriented, interdisciplinary solutions. Master's degree programmes, in addition to the aforementioned, should also empower students to conduct their own academic research.

(2) Degree programmes conclude with a final assessment, referred to as the bachelor's examination (*Bachelorprüfung*) or master's examination (*Masterprüfung*). The bachelor's examination forms the basis for the professionally qualifying nature of a bachelor's degree. Its purpose is to assess whether students have a firm grasp on the technical expertise needed to work independently in a related career field and conduct research independently using sound scientific knowledge and methodology. For details, refer to the examination regulations. The purpose of the master's examination is to determine whether students have achieved the objectives of their master's degree programme based on their individual performance and quality of work.

(3) Moreover, master's degree programmes aim to produce graduates who:

- grasp the many interrelated concepts within their discipline and chosen emphasis area, and can link these concepts to knowledge and skills in an interdisciplinary manner;
- can conduct scholarly research and comfortably use scientific methodology at an advanced level that would be sufficient for a future doctoral dissertation;
- are adept at developing evidence-based solutions with real-world application;
- can apply theoretical-analytical skills to a wide range of complex issues;
- possess both the technical know-how and key skills necessary for a career in industry.

In addition, all degree programmes at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences aim to convey and develop students' intellectual and interpersonal skills. These include, in particular, abilities and characteristics such as:

- an abstract, analytical, dialectical and networked way of thinking
- the ability to familiarise oneself swiftly with new fields and challenges
- self-reliance, creativity, openness
- the ability to communicate in a clear and professional manner
- the ability to give and receive criticism
- the ability to work well in a team.

(4) The academic degrees defined in the examination regulations are awarded for successfully completing the bachelor's or master's examination. For details, refer to the examination regulations.

Section 4

General admission requirements for undergraduate degree programmes

(1) The prerequisite for admission to a bachelor's degree programme is proof of eligibility to study at a university in Germany, demonstrated by either an unrestricted university entrance qualification (*allgemeine Hochschulreife*), a discipline-specific university entrance qualification (*fachgebundene Hochschulreife*), a university entrance qualification for universities of applied sciences (*Fachhochschulreife*), or an educational background recognised as equivalent.

(2) Prospective students with vocational qualifications who qualify for direct admission to university or have successfully completed an entrance examination and subsequent trial period of study in accordance with the Regulation on Admission to Higher Education for the Vocationally Qualified (*Verordnung über den Hochschulzugang für in der beruflichen Bildung Qualifizierte*) are exempted from the university entrance requirements for universities of applied sciences set forth in subsection (1) sentence 1.

(3) In addition to subsections (1) and (2), students must also complete an eight-week basic internship. As a rule, this internship should be completed before commencing the degree programme. However, students may complete this requirement no later than the end of their third semester of study, provided the examination regulations for their degree programme do not stipulate otherwise. Students may also complete a preparatory internship in lieu of a basic internship. The rules and provisions for the basic internship apply accordingly to preparatory internships. The examination regulations for the degree programmes can waive the requirement for a basic/preparatory internship if the degree programme's curriculum includes a sufficient amount of content for the direct transfer of practical skills. For details, refer to the examination regulations.

(4) Relevant vocational training and career experience can count towards the basic internship requirement. The basic internship requirement is considered fulfilled for prospective students applying on the basis of a university entrance qualification for universities of applied sciences (*Fachhochschulreife*) from a technical college in Germany (*Fachoberschule*) in a field relevant to the degree programme.

(5) International exchange students studying temporarily at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences as part of an official partnership agreement (for a period not to include graduation from the degree programme itself) are exempt from the basic internship requirement. The basic internship requirement is also waived for students in a dual study programme. The basic internship requirement is only waived for part-time students if their work and degree programme are in the same field.

(5a) Admission to bachelor's degree programmes taught in English requires a minimum English proficiency level of B2 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). This requirement is waived for applicants who have already completed an undergraduate degree programme in English prior to enrolment. In addition, this language requirement is also waived for applicants who have achieved B2 proficiency in English as part of their unrestricted university entrance qualification (*allgemeine Hochschulreife*), discipline-specific university entrance qualification (*fachgebundene Hochschulreife*), or university entrance qualification for universities of applied sciences (*Fachhochschulreife*). This is considered to be the case for applicants who have successfully completed at least seven years of English at a German secondary school and earned a final mark of at least "sufficient" (4.0 or better on the German grading scale).

(6) Applicants are ineligible for admission if they have irrevocably failed their final attempt at a mandatory examination in an identical degree programme at a university that is subject to the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany. This applies analogously to degree programmes at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences which share a significant amount of content with the previously failed degree programme, provided this is clearly defined in the applicable examination regulations.

Section 4a

General admission requirements for master's degree programmes

(1) Admission to master's degree programmes requires a professionally qualifying bachelor's degree in a relevant degree programme that consisted of at least 210 ECTS credits or had a standard study duration of at least seven semesters. Relevant degree programmes are defined in the examination regulations according to their field and, where appropriate, emphasis area. Additional admission requirements, for example a relevant internship semester or study abroad semester, can also be set forth in the examination regulations.

(2) In addition to the prerequisites set forth in subsection (1), master's degree programmes may also stipulate a minimum final mark for the professionally qualifying bachelor's degree defined in subsection (1). In addition to the minimum final mark, an equivalent grade on the ECTS grading scale must also be indicated. For details, refer to the examination regulations.

(3) In addition to the prerequisites set forth in subsections (1) and (2), master's degree programmes may also stipulate that applicants have earned a specific number of ECTS credits in specific fields or subject areas as defined in the applicable examination regulations.

(4) Notwithstanding subsection (1), prospective students applying on the basis of a professionally qualifying undergraduate degree that consisted of fewer than 210, but at least 180 ECTS credits, or had a full-time study duration of at least six semesters may be granted conditional admission to a master's degree programme with the added stipulation that the missing credits are earned during their postgraduate studies. The applicant and the responsible Examination Board will usually conclude a formal learning agreement defining both the total number of missing credits and the additional modules that must be completed. Students must have earned a specific number of credits to be granted admission to the master's thesis (refer to Section 24 (1) no. 3).

(5) In cases of doubt, the Examination Board will determine whether an applicant's bachelor's degree is relevant in accordance with subsection (1) based on submitted documentation and, if necessary, a technical interview with the applicant. The subject-relevance requirement is considered met if the applicant's bachelor's degree programme was in the same field as the master's degree programme or had the same specialisation track. For other types of qualifications, applicants must demonstrate a level of technical expertise comparable both in scope and content to an bachelor's degree programme as defined by sentence 2. Depending on this assessment, the Examination Board can grant full admission, conditional admission with added stipulations to make up missing requirements, or reject the admission request entirely. The applicant and the responsible Examination Board will usually conclude a formal learning agreement defining the specific modules which must be completed. Learning agreements may not stipulate more than 30 additional credits and all requirements set forth therein must be completed before the student will be admitted to their thesis semester.

(6) Applicants with a professionally qualifying bachelor's degree from a country other than Germany can also be granted admission if their degree meets the requirements set forth in subsection (1). Decisions on the equivalence of prior degrees obtained outside of Germany must take into account the equivalence agreements of the Standing Conference of the

Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (*Kultusministerkonferenz*) and the Standing Conference of University Rectors (*Hochschulrektorenkonferenz*), as well as any relevant legal regulations. Where doubt remains, the Central Office for Foreign Education (*Zentralstelle für ausländisches Bildungswesen*) should be consulted.

(6a) Admission to master's degree programmes taught in English requires a minimum English proficiency level of B2 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The examination regulations may stipulate a higher minimum level of C1 instead.

(7) Applicants are ineligible for admission if they have irrevocably failed their final attempt at a mandatory examination in an identical degree programme at a university that is subject to the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany. This applies analogously to degree programmes at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences which share a significant amount of content with the previously failed degree programme, provided this is clearly defined in the applicable examination regulations.

(8) *Intentionally omitted.*

Section 5

Standard duration of study; Programme structure; Volume of instruction hours

(1) The standard duration of study for full-time bachelor's degree programmes, including the internship semester or study abroad semester, is seven semesters. The standard duration of study for dual study or part-time bachelor's degree programmes is generally nine semesters.

(2) The standard duration of study for full-time master's degree programmes, including all examinations, is three semesters. The standard duration of study for part-time master's degree programmes is generally six semesters.

(3) Internship semesters consist of at least 20 weeks of continuous, uninterrupted full-time work. Deviating from sentence 1, examination regulations and internship regulations for specific degree programmes may stipulate different requirements for the internship period. Deviating from sentence 1, examination regulations and internship regulations for specific degree programmes may also permit students to break up the internship semester or study abroad semester into smaller parts. Notwithstanding the previous sentences, internship semesters and study abroad semesters may be broken up into a maximum of two parts – with

one part consisting of at least eight weeks – but only in exceptional circumstances and on request to the Examination Board. Internship semesters can also be completed outside of Germany. The hosting organisation's working hours and policies for regular full-time employees, in accordance with all applicable federal labour laws, will apply to students during the internship semester.

(3a) The topic of the bachelor's thesis is generally assigned in the seventh semester for full-time students and in the ninth semester for dual and part-time students. The topic of the master's thesis is generally assigned in the third semester for full-time students and in the sixth semester for part-time students.

(4) Degree programmes are organised into modules. A module is generally a group of thematically-related and chronologically-coordinated individual courses that are intended to achieve a unified educational or qualification goal. The internship semester (or the study abroad semester), the bachelor's thesis and the colloquium are each considered separate modules in bachelor's degree programmes; in postgraduate degree programmes, the master's thesis and the colloquium are considered separate modules. Bachelor's degree programmes are organised into modules with a sum total of 210 ECTS credits in accordance with the framework in Section 6 (5). Master's degree programmes are organised into modules with a sum total of 90 ECTS credits in accordance with the framework in Section 6 (5).

(5) Degree programmes also offer the possibility of a specialisation. For details, refer to the examination regulations.

(6) The volume of study is set forth in the examination regulations.

(7) Additional information about how specific degree programmes are organised and the type, form and scope of modules can be found in the study and examination plans in the examination regulations. Additional information about learning outcomes, qualification aims, contents and types of examination can be found in the module guides, which are published and accessible to all students in an appropriate location.

Section 6

Breakdown of the bachelor's and master's examinations; Credits

(1) The bachelor's and master's examinations consist of all regular (*studienbegleitend*) examinations and certificates as well as a final examination phase consisting of the thesis and the colloquium (for details, refer to the study and examination plans in the examination regulations). The bachelor's examination also includes the successful completion of an internship semester or study abroad semester.

(2) As defined in the study and examination plans, regular examinations and certificates conclude either a module as a whole or an individual course therein. The Examination Board is responsible for decisions on examination times and phases. For details, refer to the examination regulations.

(3) The progression of study and examination procedures of a degree programme must be planned such that it is possible to complete the bachelor's or master's examination in the standard duration of study.

(4) Examination procedures must take into account the rights afforded to students under the Maternity Protection Act (*Mutterschutzgesetz*) and the Parental Benefits and Leave Act (*Gesetz zum Elterngeld und zur Elternzeit*) of Germany, as well as the right to a leave of absence to provide care for immediate family as defined under Section 48 (5) sentence 5 HG NRW. Generally, students must submit a request to their Examination Board to exercise their legal rights to alter the timing of examination procedures.

If students with a disability within the meaning of Section 3 of the Equal Rights for Disabled Persons Act (*Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz*) can demonstrate via medical certificate or other credible means that they are physically unable to complete an examination in part or in whole in its current form, then the chairperson of the Examination Board may permit them to complete an equivalent examination in a more suitable form. The chairperson is responsible for ensuring that these special examination arrangements eliminate any disadvantage for the student with a disability to the fullest extent possible; if the student still believes they are at a disadvantage despite the special arrangements, the chairperson may request further evidence for the student's condition. Special examination arrangements can include, in particular:

- extending the duration / time allotted for an examination;
- permitting individual rest breaks during a timed examination;
- splitting an examination into smaller chunks;

- alternate forms of testing (an oral examination instead of a written examination, or vice versa);
- permitting or providing testing aids, personal assistance, adapted exam sheets or separate testing areas.

(5) The bachelor's and master's examinations are based on a system of credit points. All modules and courses are assigned a credit point value in accordance with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). The number of credits depends on the amount of work, in hours, that is generally required to complete the individual course and the module as a whole. According to the ECTS standard, one credit point corresponds to 25-30 hours of work. An entire academic year is assumed to have a workload of 60 credit points. Credits are awarded to students after they have successfully completed all examination or certificate requirements for a module. These credits are recorded in the student's individual credit account, which is maintained on their behalf by their Examination Board.

(6) All module courses, regular examinations and certificates, as well as the final examination phase are conducted in the language of instruction of the degree programme. Exceptions in the examination regulations and in Section 27 remain unaffected.

Section 7

Examination Board

(1) Each faculty will establish its own Examination Board to organise examinations and handle the duties and obligations set forth by these General Examination Regulations. Examination Boards are considered independent bodies of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences as well as public authorities under German administrative procedural law. An Examination Board consists of a chairperson, a deputy chairperson and six additional members. The Faculty Council will elect the chairperson, deputy chairperson and two additional members from the faculty's professors, one member from the faculty's academic staff, one member from the faculty's non-academic staff and two members from the faculty's student body. The term in office for full-time employees and their proxies is four years; the term in office for students and their proxies is one year. Re-election is permitted.

(2) Examination Boards are responsible for ensuring compliance with the examination regulations of their faculties. They are also responsible for the organisation and proper conduct of examinations. The fundamental responsibility of the deans as defined by Section 27 (1) HG NRW remains unaffected. Examination Boards are responsible, in particular, for deciding on

objections to decisions made during examination procedures. In addition, Examination Boards are responsible for reporting annually to their respective Faculty Council on current trends with regard to both examinations and the study duration of students. Reports will include recommendations for reforming and updating examinations and curricula. Examination Boards may delegate their everyday duties and tasks to the chairperson; this does not apply to ruling on objections.

(3) Examination Boards have a quorum when the chairperson or the deputy chairperson, at least one additional professor, and at least two other members with voting power are present. At least half of the members with voting power in attendance must be professors. Measures are passed by simple majority vote. In the event of a tie, the chairperson has the deciding vote. Non-professor members of Examination Boards may not participate in academic-pedagogic decisions, in particular credit transfer requests or other appraisals of examinations, or the appointment of examiners and observers. In addition, student members of Examination Boards may not participate in decisions or discussions on issues relating to their own examinations or the contents of examinations. For decisions per sentence 5, Examination Boards have a quorum when the chairperson or deputy chairperson and at least two additional professors are present.

(4) Examination Board members have the right to observe examinations in person. This right does not extend to student members for examinations that they must sit for in the current examination period.

(5) All members of the Examination Board, their proxies, examiners and observers are subject to strict confidentiality. Members who are not currently employed in public service must be sworn to confidentiality by the chairperson.

(6) Any detrimental decisions made by an Examination Board or its chairperson must be communicated to the affected student without delay. The student has the right to be heard before a final decision is made.

Section 8

Examiners and observers

(1) All teaching staff at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences are authorised to act as examiners; this also includes academic staff if and insofar as independent teaching duties have been delegated to them within the meaning of Section 45 (2) sentence 2 and Section 44 (2) sentence 2 HG NRW. In exceptional circumstances, other persons may also act as examiners

if they possess the required professional, training-related and research-related experience, and if their involvement is considered necessary and appropriate for accomplishing the purpose of the examination. At a minimum, examiners themselves must possess the qualifications being assessed in the examination, or equivalent; this also applies to any official observers present during an oral examination. Examiners and observers are appointed by the Examination Boards. They are not bound by any outside instruction in their duties.

(2) Examination Boards are responsible for ensuring that examination-related obligations are distributed as evenly as possible amongst examiners.

(3) The chairperson of the Examination Board will notify students of the names of their examiners in a timely manner. For written examinations within the meaning of Section 17, students should be notified when registering for the examination, but generally no later than two weeks before the start of the examination phase. Deviating from sentence 2, in the case of additional examination phases (within the meaning of Section 6 (2) sentence 2) occurring at the start of a semester, students should be notified at least one week before the start of examination phase. For the bachelor's and master's thesis, students will be notified no later than upon assignment of the topic. For oral examinations within the meaning of Section 18; assignments, term papers and projects within the meaning of Section 19; and combined examinations within the meaning of Section 14 (3) sentence 2, students should be notified when registering for the examination, but generally no later than two weeks before the examination or, in the case of combined examinations, two weeks before the first examination. Notification by public display, electronic means or other automated process within the meaning of Section 11 (7) sentences 4 and 5 is sufficient.

Section 9

Credit transfer and recognition

(1) Examinations completed in degree programmes at state universities, state-recognised universities, state vocational academies or state-recognised vocational academies in Germany, or at state or state-recognised universities abroad, or at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences will be recognised upon request if the foreign modules and the modules being replaced at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences do not differ significantly in terms of the acquired knowledge and skills. This applies analogously to degrees earned in degree programmes at institutions defined in sentence 1.

(2) Examinations from different institutions are considered to have no significant difference if their learning outcomes correspond, in essence, to the examinations in the specific degree programme at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences. Equivalence should not be determined by schematic comparison, but rather overall assessment and consideration according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and in terms of the acquired knowledge and skills. Equivalence decisions for credits earned at universities outside of Germany must take into account the equivalence agreements of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (*Kultusministerkonferenz*) and the Standing Conference of University Rectors (*Hochschulrektorenkonferenz*), as well as any applicable agreements within the framework of inter-institutional partnerships. Where doubt remains with regard to equivalence or whether content differences should be considered significant, the Central Office for Foreign Education (*Zentralstelle für ausländisches Bildungswesen*) can be consulted for guidance.

(3) Upon request, Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences can recognise other knowledge, skills and qualifications based on submitted documentation, provided that said knowledge, skills and qualifications are equivalent in terms of content and level to the modules being replaced at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences. In the case of knowledge, skills and qualifications earned outside of a university context, decisions on recognition will be based on the currently valid resolutions of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs. Additional information about the process and criteria for credit transfer requests can be found in the examination regulations.

(4) Students must provide the Examination Board with all necessary documentation for any credit transfer requests. Documents must indicate the period of study as well as the coursework and examinations or other knowledge, skills or qualifications which were completed during this time and for which credits are requested. As a rule, the transfer of credits from prior degree programmes requires a copy of the corresponding examination regulations, module description(s) and the requesting student's transcript of records or a comparable document. As a rule, credit transfer requests should be submitted during the first year of study after enrolment at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences.

(5) If prior coursework, examinations, knowledge, skills or other qualifications are recognised for credit, then the marks – where applicable and insofar as marks were awarded and the grading systems are comparable – must also be transferred and incorporated into the student's current grade point average (GPA) where possible. If no marks were awarded or the grading systems are not comparable, but it is possible to surmise a mark based on specific

indicators, then a mark will be awarded according to the grading scale in Section 11 (3) and the credit transfer process will proceed according to sentence 1. If the grading systems are not comparable and a specific mark cannot be surmised due to a lack of indicators, then the examination will be credited without a mark and not incorporated into the student's current GPA. Transferred credits will be documented in the final grade certificate (Section 29 (1)).

(5a) After the successful transfer of credits in accordance with subsection (1), Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences can and, at the student's request, must place said student into an advanced semester based on the number of transferred credits in relation to the total number of obtainable credits in the degree programme. If the first decimal place of this calculation is less than five, the semester number will be rounded down to the nearest whole number, otherwise it will be rounded up.

(6) *Intentionally omitted.*

(7) The Examination Boards are responsible for credit transfer requests. Examiners as defined under Section 8 (1) may be consulted as needed.

(8) If a credit transfer request as defined by subsection (1) is denied, the affected student may appeal the decision to the Executive Board. The Executive Board will issue a recommendation on the request to the responsible Examination Board.

Section 10

Placement examination

(1) Applicants who have acquired the skills and knowledge needed to study at university, but by means other than previous study experience, are eligible to sit for a placement examination in order to commence their studies in a more advanced semester, provided this does not clash with any applicable regulations for the allocation of slots in degree programmes at German universities.

(2) Depending on the results of the placement examination, the applicant may be partially or fully exempted from the internship requirement set forth in Section 4 (3), certain courses in the degree programme, and corresponding examinations or certificates. The applicant will be notified of this decision directly.

(3) The type, form and scope of the placement examination are regulated by the Placement Examination Regulations of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences.

Section 11

Assessment of examinations

(1) Examinations are assessed in a differentiated manner via a marking system. Marks are awarded for each examination individually by the responsible examiner.

(2) If multiple examiners are involved in a single examination, they will jointly evaluate the examination as a whole, unless otherwise specified below. If the examiners cannot come to a consensus, then the awarded mark will be calculated by averaging the individual scores.

(3) The following marking scheme will be used for examinations:

1	=	Very Good	=	excellent performance on the examination
2	=	Good	=	well above average performance
3	=	Satisfactory	=	average performance
4	=	Sufficient	=	meets minimum requirements despite shortcomings
5	=	Failed	=	performance does not meet minimum requirements due to significant shortcomings.

Marks can be raised or lowered by 0.3 points for more precise assessment; the marks 0.7, 4.3, 4.7 and 5.3 are excluded.

(4) The following ranges apply for marks with decimals:

1.0 – 1.5	=	Very Good
1.6 – 2.5	=	Good
2.6 – 3.5	=	Satisfactory
3.6 – 4.0	=	Sufficient
4.1 – 5.0	=	Failed

Only the first decimal place is taken into account; all other decimal places are dropped without rounding.

(5) A mark of Sufficient (4.0) or better is passing.

(6) The overall mark for modules consisting of multiple examinations is calculated by averaging the marks of the individual examinations. Scores are weighted according to credit values.

(7) Students will be notified of the results of written examinations as defined in Section 17 no later than six weeks after the examination phase in which they occurred. Students will be notified of the results of written examinations as defined in Section 19 no later than six weeks after the examination. Notification by digital means, public display or other automated process is sufficient. Accordingly, students are expected to familiarise themselves with and participate in the automated processes used at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences. Students are responsible for regularly checking their university email accounts and the online portal HIS. Students will be notified of the results of their thesis no later than eight weeks after submission. The results of oral examinations are disclosed immediately afterwards.

(8) The mark for the final bachelor's or master's assessment will be supplemented by an ECTS grade based on the grading table set forth in the ECTS handbook of the European Commission, which is intended to provide a relative assessment of a student's performance in addition to an absolute assessment. In other words, the ECTS grade reflects the student's individual academic performance in relation to other graduates of the degree programme.

Accordingly, graduates who are among the:

top 10 % of their class will receive the grade:	A;
the next best 25% will receive the grade:	B;
the next best 30% will receive the grade:	C;
the next best 25% will receive the grade:	D;
and the remaining 10% will receive the grade:	E.

Section 12

Repeating an examination

- (1) Examinations in modules can be repeated no more than twice. The thesis and the colloquium can be repeated once each. Other rules can be set forth by the examination regulations for the degree programmes.
- (2) Examinations that were successfully passed cannot be repeated.
- (3) *Intentionally omitted.*
- (4) *Intentionally omitted.*
- (5) *Intentionally omitted.*

Section 13

Withdrawal, cheating, violating regulations

- (1) Examinations are considered automatically failed (5.0) if a student registers but does not appear without good reason, if a student withdraws from an examination in progress without good reason or if a student does not complete an examination before the deadline. Sentence 1 also applies to students who do not submit their thesis or other regular examination that was assigned as a take-home assignment, term paper or project before the deadline and without good reason.
- (2) The Examination Board must be notified immediately in writing of any mitigating circumstances for missing an examination, withdrawing from an examination in progress or not submitting an examination before the deadline, and credible supporting evidence must be provided. In the case of health-related reasons, a medical certificate attesting to the student's inability to sit for examinations will suffice. If there is sufficient factual grounds to suspect that a student is likely able to sit for examinations – or sufficient to warrant additional evidence – then Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences is entitled to demand a medical certificate from a doctor of its own choosing and at its own expense; the University must suggest multiple doctors for the student to choose from. Official documents, certificates or assessments will not be requested from the lower municipal health authorities. If the Examination Board recognises the given reasons as valid, then the examination attempt will be invalidated and the student will be notified that they may register for the same attempt again. If a child that is under the

care of a student becomes ill, the student must submit evidence of the child's illness and their care obligation. Sentences 1 and 5 apply accordingly.

(3) If a student attempts to alter the outcome of an examination through cheating or the use of unauthorised aids, then the examination in question will be automatically assessed as failed (5.0). Students who disrupt an examination can be excluded from the room by the examiner or supervising person, usually after being given an initial warning; in this case, the excluded student will receive a failing mark (5.0) for the examination attempt. The reasons for exclusion must be put on official record. Students excluded from an examination may appeal the decision to the Examination Board.

(4) In the event of repeated or unusually serious examination offences, the bachelor's or master's examination can be declared irrevocably failed. The Examination Board is responsible for this decision. Irrevocably failing the final assessment will result in automatic expulsion and deregistration from the degree programme.

(5) Intentionally violating any academic integrity provisions in these General Examination Regulations constitutes an administrative offence in Germany. This administrative offence can be punished with a fine of up to 50,000 EUR depending on the examination regulations. The Vice-President of Finances and Human Resources (Chancellor) of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences is responsible for prosecuting and punishing administrative offences within the meaning of sentence 1.

Section 14

Purpose, scope and type of examinations

(1) The purpose of regular examinations (*studienbegleitende Prüfungen*) is to assess whether students are proficient in the contents and methods of a certain subject area and can apply their acquired knowledge and skills independently and correctly.

(2) Examination requirements are based on the contents of the corresponding courses.

(3) Regular examinations are created according to specific learning goals and generally offered as a written examination (Section 17); a multiple choice examination (Section 17a); an oral examination (Section 18); a take-home assignment, term paper or project (Section 19); or an online examination (Section 20a). A combination of multiple examination types is also possible with approval of the Examination Board. In the case of degree programme-relevant

study abroad semesters, a written examination can be swapped with an oral examination with approval of the Examination Board.

(4) The responsible Examination Board will notify students of the type of examination – as well as the duration for written examinations – generally before the start of the corresponding course, in agreement with the examiners, and in a uniform and binding manner for all participants. Notification of this decision by public display, digital means or other automated process within the meaning of Section 11 (7) sentences 4 and 5 is sufficient.

Section 15

Examination registration requirements

- (1) Students are permitted to register for regular examinations if they:
1. have met the general admission requirements set forth in Section 4 for bachelor's degree programmes or Section 4a for master's degree programmes as well as specific requirements set forth in the applicable examination regulations;
 2. are officially enrolled as students or visiting students at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences on the date of the examination; and
 3. have not yet passed the examination in question (pursuant to Section 12 (2)).
- (2) In general, requests for admission to an examination must be submitted via the appropriate online registration tool before the deadline set by the responsible Examination Board, or otherwise in writing to the chairperson of the Examination Board.
- (3) Requests must include documentation that the prerequisites set forth in subsection (1) have been met, provided documentation has not been submitted previously.
- (4) Requests must be denied if:
- a) the prerequisites in subsection (1) have not been met; or
 - b) submitted documents were incomplete and this was not rectified before the deadline set by the Examination Board; or
 - c) the student in question has irrevocably failed the final attempt at a mandatory examination in the same degree programme or the final attempt at an examination corresponding to the one in the request in a related or comparable degree programme at a university that is subject to the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany.

(5) The Examination Board will decide on requests in cases of doubt. Notification of this decision by public display, digital means or other automated process within the meaning of Section 11 (7) sentences 4 and 5 is sufficient.

(6) Students can request to withdraw from an examination without losing an available examination attempt by contacting the chairperson of the Examination Board generally via the appropriate online tool or otherwise in writing no later than seven days before the examination.

(7) Certificates can be earned if the prerequisites in subsection (1) have been met. Formal registration requests are not required for certificates.

(8) When registering for the first examination attempt in an elective module, students must make a binding decision as to whether credits should be awarded for the examination or if it should instead count as an additional voluntary examination in accordance with Section 31.

(9) The examination regulations can stipulate that students must register for the first attempt at an examination within three semesters of the specific semester in which the corresponding module should be completed according to the study and examination plan.

Section 16

Planning and implementing examinations

(1) Dates for examinations should be set in such a way that they do not require the cancellation of any teaching.

(2) Students will be notified of the date and scope of written examinations within the meaning of Section 17 no later than two weeks before the start of the examination phase. Deviating from sentence 1, Examination Boards can shorten the deadline to nine days for justified reasons. Notification by public display, digital means or other automated process within the meaning of Section 11 (7) sentences 4 and 5 is sufficient. For examinations within the meaning of Sections 18 and 19, as well as for a combination of examinations within the meaning of Section 14 (3) sentence 2, students should be notified generally no later than two weeks before the examination or, in the case of a combination of examinations, two weeks before the first examination.

(3) Students must present their student ID and an official form of photo ID (e.g. passport) for verification purposes upon request by the examiner or supervising person.

(4) Section 6 (4a) applies analogously to students with a disability as defined by Section 3 of the Disability Act (*Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz*).

(5) A record will be made for each examination, containing, at a minimum, the name of the examiner or supervising person, the names of the participating students as well as the start and end time of the examination. Any disruptions, interruptions or cancellations must be documented with the time of occurrence.

Section 17

Written examinations

(1) The purpose of written examinations is to assess whether students can identify and solve problems in a specific subject area with relevant methods and techniques, a limited amount of time, and limited tools and materials. Written examinations can also be conducted via multiple choice. The examination regulations for the degree programmes can exclude the option of multiple choice examinations. Section 17a sets forth the rules for conducting multiple choice examinations.

(2) The time allotted for written examinations depends on the number of obtainable credits for the corresponding course.

(3) Written examinations are conducted under supervision. Examiners will decide on any authorised tools or materials for an examination.

(4) In general, written examinations are created by a single examiner. Where justified, particularly when multiple disciplines are covered by a single examination, multiple examiners may develop an examination together. In this case, the examiners will first jointly decide how the different parts of the examination should be weighted.

(5) A student's third and final attempt at a written examination must be assessed by two qualified examiners. In all other cases, examinations may be assessed by a single examiner. In situations described in subsection (4) sentence 2, each examiner assesses, in general, only their respective part of the examination; sentence 1 remains unaffected.

(6) Section 11 applies to the assessment of written examinations.

Section 17a

Multiple choice examinations

(1) Multiple choice examinations are supervised examinations in which at least 50% of tasks can be solved by indicating the most applicable answer from a given set of possible answers.

(2) Multiple choice questions must be formulated such that they test the specific knowledge, skills and qualifications taught in the corresponding module and ensure reliable assessment results.

(3) The examiner is responsible for formulating multiple choice questions and the given answers. Section 17 (4) and (5) apply accordingly. The correct answer for each multiple choice question, the number of points awarded for a correct answer, the number of points required to pass (pass mark) and the distribution of obtainable marks based on points scored (grade marking scale) must be documented prior to the examination. Multiple choice questions must be formulated such that every given answer can be answered independently with “correct” or “incorrect”, or “yes” or “no”. Points cannot be deducted for unanswered or incorrectly answered multiple choice questions.

(4) If the average mark achieved by students in a multiple choice examination is less than the predetermined pass mark, then the pass mark must be adjusted. Accordingly, all scores which are under the average mark, but still within 15% of it, are considered passing. The grade marking scale must be shifted accordingly, while retaining the same proportional distribution.

(5) Assessments of multiple choice examinations must document the following:

1. the number of possible points and the number of points achieved by the student for each question and in total
2. the pass mark
3. the grade marking scale
4. the mark achieved by the student.

(6) When assessing multiple choice examinations, examiners must remain vigilant for signs of poorly or incorrectly worded questions, indicated by an unusually large number of incorrect answers in comparison to other questions. If there is evidence that certain questions or answer possibilities were worded poorly or incorrectly, then these examination questions are considered not to have occurred. The total number of examination questions will be

reduced accordingly; the reduced number of questions and overall point total must be used for all assessments of said examination. Reductions in the number of questions on a multiple choice examination may not result in any disadvantages for students.

Section 17b

Intentionally omitted.

Section 18 **Oral examinations**

(1) Oral examinations are usually conducted before a single examiner and a qualified observer, or as an individual or group examination before a panel of examiners. In oral examinations with an observer, the examiner must first consult with the observer before awarding a mark. In oral examinations before a panel of examiners, the panel will jointly assess the performance and award a mark.

(2) The length of an oral examination is defined in the examination regulations. For group examinations, the duration will be adjusted accordingly.

(3) The main topics and the results of oral examinations, in particular the essential facts which led to a specific mark, must be documented.

(4) Students who wish to take the same oral examination at a later date can be permitted to attend the oral examination of another student as a listener, provided sufficient space is available and a student being tested does not object. Listeners are not permitted to attend post-examination discussions or be present when the mark is announced.

(5) Oral examinations can be conducted online via video conferencing software. An oral examination is considered to be an online examination in accordance with Section 20a as soon as a single person, whether student or examiner/observer pursuant to subsection (1), participates in the oral examination via video conferencing software. All students and other participants must remain visible for the entire duration of the examination. Students in the same degree programme should be permitted to attend an online oral examination as listeners in accordance with subsection (4).

Section 19

Assignments, term papers and projects

- (1) Examinations in the form of take-home assignments, term papers or projects involve clearly defined tasks derived from the theoretical and practical context of a specific subject area. They may be supplemented with an additional presentation and/or technical discussion. These examinations may be completed as a group if each student's individual contribution is sufficiently recognisable and verifiable. The topic and task must be defined such that it is possible to complete the examination before the deadline.
- (2) In general, an assignment, term paper or project must be completed within a single semester. For details, refer to the examination regulations.
- (3) The chairperson of the Examination Board or the assigning examiner must communicate to students the task, deadline, format and submission procedure for an assignment, term paper or project in writing, by public display or electronically.
- (4) Section 17 (5) applies accordingly.
- (5) When submitting a take-home assignment, term paper or project, students must confirm in writing that their work – or their appropriately labelled contributions in the case of group work – were produced independently and made use of no resources or sources other than those which were clearly cited, with quotations duly marked as such.

Section 20

Certificates

- (1) Certificates serve to confirm, in particular, the successful completion of exercises, internships or seminars. They are awarded to students who have shown proficiency in subject-specific methods and the application of the knowledge or skills which were taught. Certificates are awarded by the instructor responsible for the specific course or class.
- (2) Certificate requirements are not standardised, nor are they subject to any formal registration or admission procedures.

(3) Certificates can be awarded for lab reports, written analyses, calculations, programming exercises, models, blueprints and sketches, presentations or technical discussions, for example.

(4) Certificates are not graded and can be repeated an unlimited number of times.

Section 20a

Online examinations

(1) Examinations as defined by Sections 17-20 can be completed electronically or via electronic means of communication ("online examinations"), provided this form is appropriate for assessing whether the teaching objectives were achieved. Examinations completed on a computer are considered online examinations. Online examinations can be completed via the internet or in person. Online examinations in person are conducted in rooms provided by Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences. Students connecting to an online examination via the internet may choose a suitable room for the examination themselves. Each student must remain alone in their chosen room for the duration of the online examination.

(2) When an online examination is offered remotely, students may request the opportunity to sit for an in-person examination instead. The principle of fair and equal treatment for examinations must be observed for all participants.

(3) Students must be notified in a timely manner that an examination will be conducted online. Students must also be notified of the minimum technical requirements for the online examination. Students must be given the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the technical requirements and system used for the online examination.

(4) Personal data can be collected for an online examination insofar as it is necessary for the proper conduct of the examination. Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences will ensure that all collected personal data are processed in accordance with relevant data privacy laws, in particular the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (EU 2016/679), as amended. The data processing required for an online examination must be explained to students beforehand in a transparent, comprehensive and intelligible manner. The data privacy provisions in Annex 1 also apply to online examinations. Annex 1 is an integral part of these General Examination Regulations.

(5) Supervision of online examinations must comply with the data privacy provisions in Annex 1. When verifying students' identity in accordance with Section 16 (3), students may cover unrelated data on their IDs. Recording, storing or uploading IDs is not permitted.

(6) Examiners or supervising persons can require from students a declaration that the examination was completed without outside assistance or any unauthorised tools or materials.

(7) In the event of a technical issue during the examination, the affected student must immediately notify the examiner or supervising person of the problem. Waiting until after the examination has concluded is considered late. If the technical issue can be resolved quickly, then the time allotted to the affected student can be extended accordingly. If it is no longer possible to complete the examination properly due to the technical issue, then the examiner or supervising person must terminate the examination attempt. Terminated examination attempts will not be assessed.

(8) Data collected in electronic examinations must be clearly and permanently identifiable with the students who sat for the examination. The required documentation for an examination can also occur electronically. In accordance with Section 32, students must be given the opportunity to view their online examinations as well as the corresponding assessment.

Section 21

Internship semester

(1) The internship semester defined in Section 5 (3) is intended to introduce students to a later career through a clear set of practical workplace responsibilities in a relevant company or organisation. In particular, the internship semester serves as an opportunity for students to apply the knowledge and skills acquired in their degree programme to real-world situations and gather practical work experience for reflection, assessment and their own personal benefit going into the final phase of their studies.

(2) As a rule, students will be admitted to the internship semester if they have obtained at least 90 credits. The examination regulations for the individual degree programmes can stipulate that students may earn fewer credits than the minimum defined in sentence 1 before undertaking their internship semester.

(3) The Examination Board is responsible for deciding on requests to undertake the internship semester and approving proposed internships.

(4) If students have been unable to secure an internship despite several documented attempts, the faculty is obliged to actively support the student in their search. If it is not feasible for the faculty to secure an internship, the affected student may undertake an applied project at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences instead of an external internship. The rules governing the internship semester apply analogously to the applied project. The examination regulations can exclude the option of an applied project instead of an external internship as well as the obligation to actively support students in their search for an internship.

(5) Students undertaking an internship semester will be supervised by a professor or lecturer for special purposes (LfbA) appointed by the Examination Board. If possible, the supervisor suggested by the student should be appointed. After the internship, students must write a report detailing their experiences. The examination regulations and internship regulations of the degree programmes can stipulate requirements deviating from or in addition to sentence 3.

(6) The supervising professor or lecturer for special purposes (LfbA) will recognise and attest via certificate the successful completion of the internship if, in their estimation, the activities undertaken during the internship fulfil the purpose of the internship semester and the student completed their assigned tasks in a satisfactory manner; the internship certificate and the post-internship report will be taken into account for this assessment.

(7) If the supervising professor or lecturer for special purposes (LfbA) does not recognise the successful completion of the internship, it can be repeated as a whole up to two additional times. Students may also opt for a study abroad semester instead, provided their examination regulations do not explicitly exclude this option.

(8) Thirty (30) credits are awarded for successful completion of the internship semester.

(9) Internship semesters can be cancelled prematurely for any reason the loss of an attempt, but only once and only within the first four weeks of the internship.

(10) Examination regulations can exclude the option of an internship semester for professional reasons, particularly in order to strengthen a degree programme's international focus, and thus obligate students to undertake a study abroad semester within the meaning of Section 22. If a student would face unreasonable hardship resulting from this obligatory study abroad semester, then it will not be considered an obligatory requirement. The applicable

examination regulations will define specific cases of “unreasonable hardship” as well as the alternatives that the affected students must complete instead. Alternative arrangements must be suitable in that they provide sufficient opportunity for students to obtain the same knowledge and skills as a study abroad semester.

Section 22

Study abroad semester

(1) Students can opt for a semester at a university abroad in lieu of an internship. The study abroad semester should accomplish specific goals, in particular:

- to expand and refine students’ theoretical knowledge and practical skills acquired in their degree programme in accordance with Section 3, to demonstrate proficiency therein via examinations, to attend courses at the hosting university in specific areas, and to conclude said courses with examinations;
- to promote intercultural competence and a global perspective, particularly in terms of learning how to work together with teachers and students from different national and cultural backgrounds and adapting to unfamiliar educational structures; and
- to improve proficiency in the language of the host country.

(2) Section 21 (3) applies accordingly with regard to requests to undertake a study abroad semester. As a rule, students will be permitted to begin their study abroad semester if they have obtained at least 90 credits. The examination regulations for the individual degree programmes can stipulate that students may earn fewer credits than the minimum defined in sentence 1 before undertaking their study abroad semester. In addition, students must already have applied for and secured an available spot at a suitable host university abroad. There is no automatic entitlement to a spot at a university abroad.

(3) The Examination Board, in conjunction with the faculty’s International Coordinator, will decide on the suitability of a proposed semester abroad with regard to the goals set forth in subsection (1) sentence 2 and thus the request to undertake the semester abroad.

(4) Section 21 (5) sentences 1 and 2 apply accordingly with regard to the supervision of study abroad semesters. After conclusion of the study abroad semester, students must write a report and give a presentation on their experiences and how these relate to the goals defined in subsection (1) sentence 2.

(5) The supervising professor or lecturer for special purposes (LfbA) will recognise and attest via certificate the successful completion of the study abroad semester if, in their estimation, the goals set forth in subsection (1) sentence 2 were achieved and the student was successful in earning at least 15 ECTS credits during their semester abroad. The examination regulations can stipulate that students must earn more than the minimum number of ECTS credits defined in sentence 1.

(6) If the supervising professor or lecturer for special purposes (LfbA) does not recognise the successful completion of the study abroad semester, it can be repeated as a whole up to two additional times. Students may also opt for an internship semester instead, provided their examination regulations do not explicitly exclude this option.

(7) Thirty (30) credits are awarded for successful completion of a study abroad semester.

(8) The examination regulations can exclude the option of a study abroad semester for technical reasons.

(9) Study abroad semesters can be cancelled prematurely for any reason without loss of an attempt, but only once and only within the first four weeks.

Section 23

Thesis

(1) The purpose of the bachelor's thesis is to assess whether students can use theoretical and applied research methods independently and in a limited period of time to develop a practice-oriented work in their field that adequately explores both technical details and broad interdisciplinary connections. The bachelor's thesis usually involves independent scientific research into the assigned topic with a detailed description and explanation of the results. When justified by subject matter, the thesis can also take the form of a literature review. The examination regulations can stipulate additional rules and requirements.

(2) The master's thesis serves to assess whether students can use both theoretical and applied research methods in a limited period of time to develop a practice-oriented work in their field independently. Students must demonstrate in their thesis that they have systematically and methodically studied the subject area, developed a solution using abstract and analytical thinking that was not restricted to isolated cases, and sufficiently considered both the technical details and interdisciplinary correlations of the topic in their analysis. The

master's thesis usually involves independent scientific research into the assigned topic with a detailed description and explanation of the results.

(3) Any professor within the meaning of Section 8 (1) can be appointed as first examiner for a thesis. Students may also request other instructors at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences as their first examiner in lieu of a professor. A thesis can also be completed at an external company or institution, provided that sufficient supervision can be ensured and with the approval of the Examination Board. Students must be given the opportunity to suggest possible topic areas for their thesis.

(4) After submitting the application, the chairperson of the Examination Board will ensure that students are assigned a thesis topic in a timely manner.

(5) The thesis can also be permitted as group work if each student's individual contribution is clearly distinguishable (and thus assessable) due to clear and distinct delimitation by section, page numbers or other criteria. Subsections (1) and (2) remain unaffected.

(6) The requirements for the scope and form of a thesis are defined in the examination regulations.

Section 24

Admission to the thesis

(1) Students are eligible for admission to the thesis if they:

1. have met the general admission requirements set forth in Section 4 or 4a as well as specific requirements set forth in the examination regulations for their degree programme;
2. are officially enrolled as students at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences or as visiting students in accordance with Section 52 (2) HG NRW for the duration of their thesis; and
3. have obtained the minimum number of credits defined in the examination regulations for their degree programme.

(2) Requests for admission to the thesis must be submitted to the chairperson of the Examination Board via the appropriate online registration tool before the deadline set by the Examination Board. Requests must also include a declaration of any previous attempts at

completing a thesis. In addition, requests must clearly indicate the name of the examiner who has agreed to act as thesis supervisor for the assigned topic.

(3) Students may withdraw their request for admission to the thesis via the appropriate online registration tool at any time and without loss of an attempt as long as a decision on the request has not been announced.

(4) The chairperson of the Examination Board or, in cases of uncertainty, the Examination Board itself, will decide on requests for admission to the thesis. Requests will be rejected if:

- a) the prerequisites in subsection (1) have not been met; or
- b) required documents are missing or incomplete; or
- c) the requesting student has irrevocably failed the final attempt at a mandatory examination in the same degree programme or the final attempt at a corresponding thesis in a related or comparable degree programme at a university that is subject to the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Section 25

Assigning and writing the thesis

(1) The thesis will be formally assigned by the chairperson of the Examination Board. The date of assignment is defined as the day on which the chairperson of the Examination Board notifies the student in writing or electronically of the topic that was agreed upon with the supervisor; the date of assignment must be officially documented.

(2) Students are allotted a period of three months (from the date of assignment to the submission deadline) to complete the bachelor's thesis. Differing rules for part-time students are set forth in the examination regulations. The bachelor's thesis may not be submitted within eight weeks of the date of assignment. The examination regulations define the time allotted for a master's thesis (from the date of assignment to the submission deadline). They can also stipulate that the thesis may not be submitted during a specific time frame. The thesis topic and assigned tasks must be formulated such that it is feasible to complete the thesis before the deadline. In exceptional cases, the chairperson of the Examination Board can extend the submission deadline by up to four weeks on the grounds of a justified request submitted before the original deadline. The thesis supervisor should be consulted in connection with this request.

(3) Students may request a new thesis topic for any reason, but only once and only within four weeks of the date of assignment. Students on their second thesis attempt may only request a new topic if they did not do so on their first attempt.

(4) With regard to students with a disability as defined under Section 3 of the Equal Rights for Persons with a Disability Act (*Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz*), Section 6 (4a) applies accordingly.

Section 26

Submission and assessment of the thesis

(1) The thesis must be submitted in full via the correct procedure and before the deadline as a hard copy (in duplicate) as well as an electronic copy in a format specified by the chairperson of the Examination Board. The electronic copy should be submitted via the appropriate online tool used at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences. For deadline purposes, the date of receipt is defined as the day on which the first full copy of the thesis, whether electronic or as double hard copy, is received. The remaining copy of the thesis can be submitted as a next step, but the thesis is not considered fully submitted until all required copies have been received. The date of receipt must be put on official record; for submissions delivered by post, the postmarked date is considered the date of receipt. Students must also submit a written declaration together with the two hard copies of their thesis that all work (or their appropriately identified individual contribution in the case of group work) was produced independently and made use of no resources or sources other than those which were clearly cited, with quotations duly marked as such.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection 1, if the submission of two hard copies can be considered unsuitable or infeasible, a more suitable form for the thesis and/or individual media can be submitted with approval of the chairperson of the Examination Board.

(3) A thesis must be assessed by two examiners. One of the examiners should be the thesis supervisor. If one of the examiners is an honorary professor or a sessional lecturer, the other examiner must be a professor of the faculty. If the marks awarded for a thesis are not identical, but the difference between the two is less than 2.0 points, then the final mark will be calculated by averaging the two scores. If the difference is greater than or equal to 2.0 points, then a third examiner will be appointed by the Examination Board to assess the thesis. In this case, the final mark is calculated by averaging the best two of the three marks. A final mark of "Sufficient" (4.0) or better can only be awarded if at least two of these marks were "Sufficient" (4.0) or better. All marks must be justified in writing.

(4) The examination regulations define the credit point values awarded for successful completion of the thesis.

(5) Section 11 also applies to the assessment of a thesis.

Section 27 Colloquium

(1) The colloquium supplements the thesis, but is assessed separately. The colloquium should be held within two months of submission of the thesis. Its purpose is to ascertain whether students can orally express the findings of their thesis as well as the technical details and interdisciplinary connections, substantiate this information in an independent manner and assess their practical significance. The colloquium should also include a treatment of the thesis topic with the student. The colloquium can be held in a language other than the official language of instruction of the student's degree programme with approval of the Examination Board. Colloquia can only be held in German or English.

(2) Students are eligible for admission to the colloquium if they:

1. have met the general admission requirements set forth in Section 4 for bachelor's degree programmes or Section 4a for master's degree programmes as well as any additional requirements set forth in the examination regulations for their degree programme; and
2. are officially enrolled as students at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences or as visiting students in accordance with Section 52 (2) HG NRW at the time of the colloquium; and
3. have obtained the minimum number of credits defined in the examination regulations for their degree programme.

(3) Requests for admission to the colloquium must be submitted to the chairperson of the Examination Board. Requests must include a declaration of any previous attempts at completing a colloquium. Students may also submit a request for admission to the colloquium when requesting admission to the thesis; in this case, the application will be approved automatically as soon as the prerequisites in subsection (2) have been met. Section 24 (4) applies analogously to the approval or rejection of a request for admission to the colloquium.

(4) The colloquium will be conducted and assessed by the two thesis examiners as a joint

oral examination. Should the situation described in Section 26 (3) sentence 5 arise, the colloquium will be jointly conducted and assessed by the two examiners whose individual marks were used to calculate the final mark. The colloquium is approximately 45 minutes in length. The provisions in Section 18 (oral examinations) apply analogously to how colloquia are conducted.

(4a) Section 20a applies to colloquia conducted online. Colloquia can be conducted as online examinations in justified cases. One example of a justified case, in particular, is if it would require a disproportionate amount of effort and expense for a student to participate in person.

(5) With regard to students with a disability as defined under Section 3 of the Equal Rights for Persons with a Disability Act (*Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz*), Section 6 (4a) applies accordingly.

(6) The examination regulations define the credit point values awarded for successful completion of the colloquium.

Section 28

Conclusion of the bachelor's or master's examination

(1) The bachelor's examination is passed when a student has successfully earned 210 credits. The master's examination is passed when a student has successfully earned 90 credits.

(2) The bachelor's or master's examination is failed if a mandatory regular examination, the bachelor's or master's thesis, or the colloquium is irrevocably marked as "Failed" (5.0) or otherwise considered to be irrevocably "Failed" (5.0). In this case, students will be notified in writing of the failed final assessment or the loss of the right to sit for examinations in their degree programme in accordance with Section 12 (1); this notification will also include an explanation of available legal recourse. Upon request, the chairperson of the Examination Board can issue a certificate showing all of the student's successfully completed examinations (with marks) to date, as well as any remaining examinations which would be required for the student to graduate. This certificate must clearly show that the student has irrevocably failed the final assessment or lost their right to sit for examinations in their degree programme in accordance with Section 12 (1).

Section 29

Final certificates, overall grade and diploma supplements

(1) Students will be promptly issued a final grade certificate (*Abschlusszeugnis*) upon passing the bachelor's or master's examination, if possible within four weeks of the colloquium. This certificate contains a full accounting of completed modules and awarded marks; a reference to the student's internship semester or semester abroad; the thesis topic, mark and names of the examiners who assessed it; the mark for the colloquium; and the student's overall cumulative mark for the degree programme. If credits were transferred from a different university in accordance with Section 9, their origin will also be noted here.

(2) The overall cumulative grade for the degree programme is calculated on the basis of the individual marks in subsection (1) sentence 2 and based on the ranges in Section 11 (4). For bachelor's degree programmes, the cumulative mark is weighted as follows:

- Average of all marks earned for course-based modules, weighted by credit point value of the corresponding module: 80 %
- Mark for the bachelor's thesis: 15 %
- Mark for the colloquium: 5%

For master's degree programmes, the cumulative mark is weighted as follows:

- Average of marks earned for course-based modules, weighted by credit point value of the corresponding module: 65 %
- Mark for the master's thesis: 30%
- Mark for the colloquium: 5%

(2a) The final grade certificate will include an attachment with the equivalent ECTS grade and an explanation thereof.

(3) The final grade certificate will be signed by the chairperson of the Examination Board and affixed with the official seal of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences. It will also indicate the date of the colloquium.

(4) Every graduate will also receive a diploma supplement in German and English. The seal of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences will be affixed to the diploma supplement.

(5) Students who withdraw from Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences before passing the bachelor's or master's examination may request a leaving certificate (*Abgangszeugnis*)

containing a list of all examinations which were completed during their studies. Subsection (3) sentence 1 applies accordingly.

Section 30

Degree certificate

(1) A bachelor's or master's degree certificate will be issued to students at the same time as the final grade certificate, with both documents bearing the same date. This certificate is official confirmation that the bachelor's or master's title (Section 3 (4)) has been conferred to the recipient. A translation of this certificate in English will also be included.

(2) The degree certificate will be signed by both the dean and the chairperson of the Examination Board of the student's faculty and affixed with the official seal of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences.

Section 31

Additional examinations

Students may voluntarily sit for examinations in modules and courses that are not mandatory for their degree programme. Upon request, the results of these examinations can be noted on the final grade certificate or leaving certificate, but will not be used to calculate the final cumulative mark.

Section 32

Viewing examination records

(1) After the conclusion of the bachelor's or master's examination, students may request the opportunity to view their examinations from the degree programme, the corresponding evaluations and the minutes for each examination.

(2) Students must submit a request to view examination records to the chairperson of the Examination Board within one month of the date of issue of the final grade certificate, leaving certificate or declaration of a failed final assessment. Section 32 of the Administrative Procedure Act of North Rhine-Westphalia applies with respect to students' right to submit requests after expiry of this deadline. The chairperson of the Examination Board will arrange the time and place for viewing.

(3) Students may request to view the records for regular examinations once the examination in question has been concluded. Requests must be submitted within one month of notification of the results of the examination. Subsection (2) applies accordingly.

Section 33

Nullification of examination results

(1) If a student cheats on one or more examinations and this first comes to light after the final grade certificate, leaving certificate or certificate defined in Section 28 (2) sentence 3 has been issued, then the Examination Board may retroactively invalidate the marks for the affected examinations and declare the bachelor's or master's examination as partially or entirely failed.

(2) If the prerequisites for admission to an examination were not met and it can be shown that this was not the result of deliberate deception by the student and this inconsistency first comes to light after the final grade certificate, leaving certificate or certificate defined in Section 28 (2) sentence 3 has been issued, then this error is remedied by the successful completion of the examination. However, if the student used deliberate deception to gain wrongful admission to the examination, the Examination Board will decide upon any subsequent legal action in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act of North Rhine-Westphalia.

(3) An incorrect final grade certificate, leaving certificate, bachelor's or master's degree certificate, or certificate defined under Section 28 (2) sentence 3 will be revoked and, when appropriate, reissued. The statute of limitations for decisions with regard to subsection (1) and subsection (2) sentence 2 is five years from the date of issue of a final grade certificate, leaving certificate or certificate defined in Section 28 (2) sentence 3.

Section 34

Entry into force

These General Examination Regulations will enter into force on 1 March 2018, but at the latest on the day after the publication of the German-language original as an Official Notice of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences.

Note: These regulations entered into force in their present version 8 June 2024.

Annex 1: Data privacy regulations for conducting online examinations

The following provisions apply to online examinations, in particular those relying on video conference tools:

- Prior to the examination, students must be informed in a transparent, comprehensive and easy-to-understand manner of the general and specific monitoring actions which will be taken during the examination.
- Only software/tools authorised by Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences may be used.
- Recording is strictly prohibited. Screenshots and any audio/visual recording are not permitted.
- Monitoring of student's surroundings is prohibited, in particular by requesting to move the camera around to show the vicinity or demanding any visual or audio verification of surroundings.
- Examiners/supervising persons must use a split-screen arrangement to ensure the online examination occurs in a comparable setting as an in-person examination.
- Viewing students' work in progress is prohibited (students are not obligated to reveal their "thought processes").
- Hidden monitoring of students is strictly prohibited; all monitoring activities must be disclosed or revealed (i.e. by showing) to students.
- Any actions undertaken in response to suspected cheating may not be revealed to other students.
- Particularly invasive tools are prohibited due to a lack of legal basis for their use (for example: attention/movement/eye tracking, ambient audio monitoring, AI tools).
- Any monitoring of students' computers beyond simple visual supervision is prohibited (on the grounds of confidentiality and the integrity of IT systems).
- GDPR compliance for data transfer must be observed when relying on service providers which process or publish personal data on servers located outside of the EU.