

General Examination Regulations

for

Bachelor's Degree Programmes

at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences

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Section 1

Applicability of the General Examination Regulations

(1) These General Examination Regulations [Rahmenprüfungsordnung für Bachelorstudiengänge – RPO-B] apply to all bachelor's degree programmes offered by Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences. The official modes of study for bachelor's degree programmes are full-time, dual-vocational and work-study. Further details are provided by the examination regulations of the individual degree programmes.

(2) Each degree programme shall have its own examination regulations, which both supplement and are subject to these General Examination Regulations. The examination regulations shall contain all provisions required by Section 64 (2) of the Higher Education Act of North Rhine-Westphalia [Hochschulgesetz – HG NRW].

Section 2

Study and examination schedules

(1) Examination regulations must include in the appendix a study and examination schedule (Section 58 (3) HG NRW), which provides an overview of the respective programme and gives binding details for the following:

- a. modules and their allocated types of teaching/learning and examinations;
- b. core contents and qualification goals of modules;
- c. volume of study (depending on type of instruction) in credit hours per week [Semesterwochenstunden – SWS];
- d. credit points (CP);
- e. compulsory and elective modules;
- f. examinations.

(2) A study and examination schedule also provides the recommended module progression for completing the degree programme within the standard period of study.

Section 3

Aims and objectives

With due regard to the general study objectives outlined in Section 58 HG NRW and on the basis of sound scientific knowledge, a bachelor's programme should convey, in particular, application-oriented content and enable students to apply scientific methods and to use these methods to develop practical, interdisciplinary solutions to problems within their field. The bachelor's examination concludes the degree programme and constitutes a first academic and scientific qualification towards a career. The purpose of the bachelor's examination is to assess whether a student has acquired a sound grasp of the scientific principles and methods needed to work as an independent professional in their field of study. Further details are provided by the examination regulations of the individual degree programmes.

Section 4

General entry requirements

(1) Admission to a bachelor's programme requires a valid German university entrance qualification, which can be either a general higher education entrance qualification [allgemeine Hochschulreife], or a subject-specific higher education entrance qualification [fachgebundene Hochschulreife], or an entrance qualification to a university of applied sciences [Fachhochschulreife], or other professional qualifications deemed equivalent.

(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), sentence 1, an entrance qualification to a university of applied sciences is not required from those applicants who have completed recognised vocational training and, in accordance with the German Regulations for Entrance to Higher Education for Applicants with Vocational Qualifications [Berufsbildungshochschulzugangsverordnung NRW], thus qualify for direct admission to a German university, or from applicants who have successfully completed an entrance examination or a trial period of study as defined in the HG NRW.

(3) Proof of completion of an eight-week preparatory internship is also required. Applicants are strongly encouraged to undertake and complete this internship before commencement of studies. The final deadline for submission is generally the registration deadline for the fourth semester, unless otherwise stipulated by the Examination Regulations of a particular degree programme.

(4) Relevant vocational and/or career experience can be counted towards the preparatory internship. The preparatory internship requirement is considered met for those applicants who have earned an entrance qualification to a German university of applied sciences by graduating in a relevant discipline from a German technical secondary school [Fachoberschule].

(5) Exempt from the preparatory internship requirement are affiliate students from partner universities who are studying for a limited period of time – not to include graduation – at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences. In addition, students enrolled in a work-study capacity are exempted from the preparatory internship requirement, provided that their programme of study is in the same field or discipline as their current occupation.

(6) An applicant is ineligible for admission to a programme of study if he or she was previously deregistered (exmatriculated) from the same programme of study at a university that is subject to German Basic Law [Grundgesetz] for failing the final attempt at passing an examination deemed mandatory by that institution's examination regulations. Further, an applicant is ineligible for admission to a programme of study if he or she was previously disenrolled from a related or comparable degree programme at a university that is subject to German Basic Law for failing the final attempt at passing a compulsory examination as stipulated by the Examination Regulations of the respective programme of study at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences.

Section 5

Standard period of study; structure of programmes

- (1) The standard period of study for a full-time student, including the practical or study abroad semester, is seven semesters. The standard period of study for dual study and work-study students is nine semesters.
- (2) Degree programmes are divided into modules. As a rule, a “module” refers to a specific group of thematically-related and chronologically coordinated course units, which contribute to a uniform education and qualification goal. The practical semester, study abroad semester, bachelor’s thesis and colloquium each constitute individual modules.
- (3) Full-time students usually complete the practical semester or the study abroad semester in the sixth semester; dual and work-study students usually in the eighth semester. In general, either semester must consist of 20 continuous weeks of full-time work or study, completed without interruption. The required number of weeks in sentence 2 is subject to change through the examination regulations and placement regulations [Praktikumsordnungen] of the individual degree programmes. The practical semester can also be undertaken outside of Germany. The bachelor’s thesis topic is set at the beginning of the following semester: for full-time students this would be the seventh semester and for dual and work-study students the ninth semester. Thus students are able to complete the final colloquium before the end of the semester.

Section 6

Structure of the bachelor’s examination; credit points

- (1) As specified in the relevant study and examination schedule (in the annex of the examination regulations for each degree programme), the bachelor’s examination comprises all examinations and certificates administered over the course of a programme [studienbegleitend], the practical semester or study abroad semester, and the final examination phase, which consists of both the bachelor’s thesis and the colloquium.
- (2) As specified in the study and examination schedule, examinations and certificates may cover a module as a whole or individual course units therein and thus mark the full conclusion of either the whole module or only a component thereof. Assessment shall occur either before or immediately after the final session(s) of the corresponding course unit(s).
- (3) Degree programmes and examination procedures must be planned in such a way that it is possible to complete bachelor’s examination within the standard period of study.
- (4) Examination procedures must allow for the rights granted to students under the German Maternity Leave Act [Mutterschutzgesetz], the German Child Benefits and Parental Leave Act [Gesetz zum Elterngeld und zur Elternzeit], as well as the right to a leave of absence for providing care to persons specified in Section 48 (5) sentence 5 HG NRW. In general, if a student requires a change in the timing of examinations processes, he or she must submit a written request to his or her respective Examination Board.
- (5) The bachelor’s examination is based on a credit point system. All modules and course units are assigned a value in credit points (CP) in accordance with the European

Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). The number of CP awarded for a module is based on the prescribed workload that is usually needed to complete the individual course units and the module as a whole. As per the ECTS agreement, one credit point represents a workload for students of approximately 25 to 30 hours. Furthermore, the allocation of credit points is based on the assumption that a student's workload for a full year is equal to 60 CP in total. Credit points are successfully acquired for a module when a student fulfils the requirements of the respective examination(s) or certificate(s) therein. Earned credit points are recorded in the student's credit point account, which is maintained on his or her behalf by his or her faculty's Examination Board.

(6) All module units, examinations, certificates and the final examination phase shall be conducted in the programme's official language of instruction. The Chair of the respective Examination Board reserves the right to approve exemptions to this rule.

Section 7

Examination Boards

(1) An Examination Board shall be established for a degree programme or for multiple degree programmes in a faculty and shall assume the duties and obligations allocated by these General Examination Regulations and the examination regulations of the respective faculty's degree programmes. In addition, each Examination Board shall be responsible for organising the examinations conducted within its respective faculty. Each Examination Board is an independent body of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences, as well as a public authority within the meaning of German administrative procedural law. Each Examination Board shall consist of a Chair, a Deputy Chair, and five additional members. The Chair, the Deputy Chair, and two additional members shall be elected by the Faculty Council from among the faculty's professors, one member shall be elected from the faculty's research staff, and the remaining two members from the faculty's student body. The term in office for full-time employees of the university and their proxies shall be four years; the term in office for student members and their proxies shall be one year. Members may be re-elected.

(2) Each Examination Board is responsible for ensuring compliance with these examination regulations within its faculty. Furthermore, it is responsible for the organisation and proper conduct of examinations. The duties and responsibilities of the deans as outlined in Section 27 (1) HG NRW shall remain unaffected. Examination Boards are responsible, in particular, for ruling on appeals submitted against decisions made during examination procedures. In addition, Examination Boards are responsible for presenting an annual report to their respective Faculty Council on ongoing trends and developments in examinations and lengths of study. This report shall include corresponding recommendations for reform or alterations to the examination regulations and curricula. Each Examination Board may delegate everyday duties and tasks to the Chair, but not in the case of rulings on appeals submitted by students.

(3) Examination Boards shall have a quorum when the Chair or Deputy Chair, one or more additional professor, and at least two additional members with voting power are present at a meeting. Furthermore, at least half of the members with voting power in attendance must be professors. Examination Boards shall pass resolutions with a simple majority. In the event of a tie, the deciding vote shall be cast by the Chair. Student members of the Examination

Boards, as well as the member from the research staff, shall not participate in votes on scientific-pedagogic decisions, in particular decisions relating to the recognition or assessment of examination results or to the appointment of examiners and observers. Furthermore, student members shall not participate in decisions or discussions on issues that relate to their own examinations or to examination questions.

(4) Examination Board members have the right to be present at examinations within their respective faculty. Student members are prohibited from attending an examination if they are required to sit that same examination in the current examination period.

(5) All members of an Examination Board, their proxies, examiners and observers are subject to strict confidentiality requirements. Those members not employed in public service in Germany shall be sworn to secrecy by the Chair of the respective Examination Board.

(6) Any detrimental decisions made by the Examination Board or its Chair must be communicated to the affected student without delay. Before a decision is final, the student shall have the opportunity to be heard, in accordance with the law.

Section 8

Examiners and observers

(1) All members of the teaching staff at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences are authorised to act as examiners. In exceptional cases, non-members of the teaching staff may be authorised to act as examiners, provided they have the relevant vocational and occupational experience and this decision is deemed necessary and appropriate for accomplishing the purpose of the examination (as second examiner for the thesis, for example). Examiners must possess at least those qualifications being assessed by the respective examination, or equivalent qualifications; this also applies to any qualified observers present during oral examinations. Examiners and observers are appointed by the Examination Boards. They shall carry out their duties without regard to any outside instruction.

(2) The Examination Boards are responsible for ensuring that testing obligations are distributed as evenly as possible among examiners.

(3) The Chair of the Examination Board shall notify students in the respective faculty of the names of the examiners in a timely manner. For written examinations (Section 17), students shall be notified ideally upon admission to the examination, but in general no later than two weeks before the start of the examination phase. With regard to the examination phase at the start of the winter semester, students shall generally receive notification at least one week before the start of the examination phase, notwithstanding sentence 2. In the case of the thesis, students shall be notified when the topic is set. Notification by electronic means or public display is sufficient. For the examinations defined in Sections 18 and 19, as well as for combined examinations outlined in Section 14 (3) sentence 2, students shall be notified upon entry to the examination, which generally occurs no later than two weeks before the start of the examination phase or, in the case of combined examinations, two weeks before the first examination.

Section 9

Credit transfer and recognition of prior learning

(1) Prior periods of study and related examinations (both passed and failed) and coursework, which were completed in an identical programme of study (full or partial) at a university that is subject to the Basic Law of Germany, shall be recognised officially and fully without an equivalence assessment. A “period of study” is defined as any evaluated and documented component of a degree programme at a German university, which, while not equivalent to a full programme of study, nevertheless constitutes a significant acquisition of knowledge or skill.

(2) Prior periods of study, related examinations (both passed and failed), and other coursework not covered under paragraph (1) shall generally be recognised fully on application, unless otherwise deemed not equivalent. Periods of study and related examination results or other coursework are considered equivalent if they share fundamentally similar content, scope and requirements as their counterparts in the respective degree programme at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences. Equivalency shall not be determined on the basis of schematic comparison, but rather by examining and evaluating the overall competencies acquired in each specific case. The equivalency of prior learning achievements completed at universities and institutions outside of Germany shall be determined on the basis of the equivalency agreements approved by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs in Germany [Kultusministerkonferenz] and the German Rectors’ Conference [Hochschulrektorenkonferenz]. In cases of doubt regarding equivalency, the Central Office for Foreign Education [Zentralstelle für ausländisches Bildungswesen] may also be heard.

(3) Skills and qualifications acquired in other contexts can also be credited.

(4) Students are responsible for providing all necessary documents for the recognition of prior learning. Documents must clearly state the completed period(s) of study and the related passed or failed examinations or other coursework, as well as all other skills and qualifications which are to be credited in each case. As a rule, when previous periods of study and credits from university degree programmes are to be credited, students must submit the relevant examination regulations complete with descriptions of the modules, as well as the individual transcript of records or a comparable document. In general, credit transfer requests should be submitted in the first two semesters after the commencement of studies.

(5) If a credit transfer request is approved, the marks for the examination results, skills or qualifications – in those cases where a mark was awarded and the grading system is comparable – shall also be transferred and included in any relevant mark calculations. If no mark was awarded or the grading system is not comparable, but it is possible to surmise a mark based on specific evidence or indications, then a mark shall be assigned according to the evaluation scale in Section 11 (3) and the credit transfer process shall proceed according to sentence 1. If there is a lack of evidence pointing to a specific mark, then a passed examination shall be credited without a mark and not included in any grade calculations. Successful transfer of credits shall be documented in the final grade certificate (see Section 29 (1)).

(6) A maximum of 105 CP may be credited for prior examinations, coursework or other qualifications. Transferring credit for the bachelor's thesis is not permitted. In exceptional circumstances, the Examination Boards reserve the right to deviate from sentences 1 and 2.

(7) The Examination Boards are responsible for all credit transfer requests. Before decisions are made with regards to equivalency, the responsible subject representatives at the University must be consulted.

Section 10

Placement examination

(1) Applicants who have acquired the skills and knowledge necessary to successfully complete a degree programme, but by means other than a university degree, are eligible to sit a placement examination [Einstufungsprüfung] and, depending on the results, begin their studies in an advanced semester, provided this does not clash with any applicable regulations for the allocation of places at a university in Germany.

(2) Depending on the results of the placement examination, an applicant may be partially or fully exempted from the preparatory internship requirement in Section 4 (3), or from certain course units and their respective examination or certificate requirements. Candidates shall receive written confirmation for any decisions made in this regard.

(3) Details concerning the type, form and scope of placement examinations are specified in the Placement Examination Regulations of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences.

Section 11

Evaluation of examinations

(1) Examinations are evaluated and differentiated by marks. Marks are awarded by the examiner responsible for the examination in question.

(2) If multiple examiners are responsible for a single examination, then they shall evaluate the whole examination together, unless otherwise specified below. Where the individual marks are not identical, the final mark shall be determined by averaging the individual marks.

(3) Examinations shall be marked according to the following scale:

1	= very good	= excellent
2	= good	= well above average
3	= satisfactory	= average
4	= sufficient	= meets all requirements despite shortcomings
5	= failed	= does not meet requirements due to significant shortcomings

Marks can be raised or lowered in increments of 0.3 points, allowing for more precise assessment; the marks 0.7, 4.3, 4.7 and 5.3 cannot be awarded.

(4) For marks that fall between two whole numbers, the following ranges shall apply:

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 shall be taken into account; all other decimal places are dropped without rounding.

(5) An examination is passed if a mark of “sufficient” (4.0) or better was awarded.

(6) The mark for a module consisting of multiple separate examinations shall be calculated by averaging the individual marks earned within that module. The marks shall be weighted by their number of credit points.

(7) Students shall be informed of the results of written examinations within the meaning of Section 17 no later than six weeks after the end of the examination phase. Students shall be informed of the results of examinations within the meaning of Section 19 no later than six weeks after the end of the examination. Notification by electronic means or public display is sufficient. Students shall be informed of the results of their thesis no later than eight weeks after the submission deadline. Students shall be informed of the results of oral examinations immediately after their conclusion.

(8) The final cumulative grade for the bachelor’s examination can be supplemented by an ECTS grade upon request, providing a relative indicator of academic performance in addition to an absolute indicator. An ECTS grade illustrates a student’s individual performance in relation to the performance of other graduates in the same programme of study. Accordingly, graduates who are among the:

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

Section 12

Repeating examinations

(1) Failed examinations may be repeated up to two additional times. The thesis and the colloquium, however, may be repeated only once. Previously failed examination attempts, which were undertaken in a related or comparable programme of study, shall count towards a student’s remaining attempts at passing that examination while studying at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences.

- (2) Passed examinations cannot be repeated for a better mark.
- (3) Students who do not re-sit a failed examination within two semesters shall be automatically registered for a repeat examination on a compulsory basis by the respective Examination Board. Details are outlined in paragraph (4) below.
- (4) If a student has not undertaken a re-examination attempt for a previously failed examination nor submitted an application to do so before the last remaining opportunity before the final deadline, then that student shall be automatically registered for this last opportunity on a compulsory basis. This also applies when a re-examination opportunity is offered only once before the deadline. If a student registers for the last re-examination date of his or her own accord, then he or she is prohibited from withdrawing from the re-examination within the meaning of Section 15 (5). If the student fails to appear to this examination and cannot provide good reason for his or her absence, then the examination shall be evaluated as “failed” (5.0). The Examination Board must be notified in writing immediately of any mitigating circumstances for missing an examination, and credible evidence must also be provided. In cases of illness, the Examination Board reserves the right to request a corresponding medical certificate from a doctor of the board’s choosing. If the Examination Board recognises the mitigating circumstances provided, then the deadline for repeating the examination shall be extended until the next examination date offered for that particular examination.
- (5) Exempted from compulsory registration to a repeat examination are students who are on an official leave of absence in accordance with Section 9 of the Enrolment Regulations [Einschreibungsordnung] of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences, or who are currently undertaking a practical or study abroad semester as per Sections 21 and 22. In exceptional circumstances, students may apply for an exemption from compulsory registration to a repeat examination, particularly in the case of students who:
- a. are actively involved in the care and upbringing of minors, within the meaning of Section 25 (5) of the German Federal Education and Training Assistance Act [Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz]; or
 - b. participate as elected representatives in executive bodies of the university, the student body or the individual faculties; or
 - c. are currently exercising the office of Equal Opportunities Officer; or
 - d. have an impairment or serious illness which prolongs the duration of study.

In the case of a), an exemption should generally not exceed three semesters; in cases b) and c), it should generally not exceed two semesters.

Section 13

Withdrawal, examination offences, breach of regulations

- (1) An examination shall be evaluated as “failed” (5.0) if a student is registered for an examination but fails to appear without good reason, or if a student withdraws from an examination in-progress without good reason or otherwise does not complete an examination within the stipulated deadline. Sentence 1 shall also apply when a student does not submit a

master's thesis or an examination in the form of an assignment, term paper or project before the deadline without good reason.

(2) The Examination Board must be notified immediately and in writing of any mitigating circumstances for missing an examination, withdrawing from an examination or failing to submit an examination before the deadline, and credible evidence must also be provided. In cases of illness, the Examination Board reserves the right to request a medical certificate from a doctor of the board's choosing. If the Examination Board officially recognises the mitigating circumstances provided, then the examination attempt shall be declared invalid.

(3) If a student attempts to cheat or otherwise manipulate the results of an examination through deception, fraud, usage of any non-permissible aids or reference materials, etc., then the examination in question shall be evaluated as "failed" (5.0). A student who disrupts the due and orderly examination process can be excluded from the remainder of that examination, usually after first receiving a warning from the examiner or proctor/invigator; in this case the excluded student shall be awarded the mark "failed" (5.0) for that examination. The reason(s) for exclusion shall be put on official record. If a student is excluded from an examination, he or she may appeal the decision to the Examination Board. This right also extends to exclusion on the basis of deception, fraud, usage of non-permissible aids or reference materials, etc.

(4) In the case of repeat or otherwise serious examination offences such as fraud or deception, the bachelor's examination can be declared definitively and irreversibly failed. The respective Examination Board shall be responsible for this decision. If a bachelor's examination is declared to be definitively and irreversibly failed, the student in question shall be automatically deregistered (exmatriculated) from his or her programme of study.

Section 14

Purpose, scope and types of examinations

(1) The purpose of examinations is to continuously assess over the course of the programme whether a student has acquired proficiency in the contents and methods of specific subject areas, and can independently and correctly apply the acquired knowledge and skills.

(2) Examination requirements are based on the contents of the related course unit(s).

(3) Examinations are designed around learning outcomes and are generally conducted in the form of written examinations (Section 17), oral examinations (Section 18), or assignments, term papers and projects (Section 19). A combination of these examination types is also possible with the consent of the respective Examination Board.

(4) The Examination Board will specify the type of examination – as well as the duration in the case of written examinations – generally before the start of the related course unit, in agreement with the examiner(s) and in a uniform and binding manner for all participating students. In addition, the Examination Board shall be responsible for informing students of this information. Notification by electronic means or public display is sufficient.

Section 15

Entry requirements for examinations

- (1) A student can be admitted to an examination only if he or she:
1. meets the general prerequisites of study outlined in Section 4, as well as the prerequisites laid out in the Examination Regulations for his or her degree programme; and
 2. is officially enrolled as a student or has visiting student status [Zweithörer/-in] at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences on the date of examination.
- (2) In general, an application for entry to an examination must be submitted online via the appropriate platform before the deadline set by the respective Examination Board, or otherwise in writing to the Chair of said Examination Board.
- (3) The application must include documents proving that the prerequisites in paragraph (1) have been met, provided that these documents were not submitted previously. An application for entry to an examination shall be denied if:
- a. the prerequisites in paragraph (1) have not been met; or
 - b. submitted documents were incomplete and missing documents were not submitted before the deadline set by the respective Examination Board; or
 - c. the student has previously failed the final permissible attempt for a required examination as per the respective examination regulations in the same programme of study at a university that is subject to German Basic Law, or the final attempt at an examination that is equivalent to the examination specified in the application for entry and in a related or comparable programme of study at a university that is subject to German Basic Law.
- (4) The Chair of the respective Examination Board, or the Examination Board itself in cases of doubt, shall be responsible for all decisions regarding admission to an examination. Notification by electronic means or public display is sufficient.
- (5) A student can submit a request to the Chair of his or her Examination Board to withdraw from a written examination (Section 17) – generally via the online function, otherwise in writing – by no later than ten days before the scheduled examination date without loss of an examination attempt. Deviating from the deadline in sentence 1, in the case of the examination phase at the start of the winter semester, students can submit a request for withdrawal no later than five days before the start of the examination phase; the remaining details in sentence 1 shall apply accordingly.
- (6) Certificates [Testate] can be earned if the prerequisites listed in paragraph (1) have been met. An application for entry to a certificate is not required.
- (7) When registering for the first examination attempt in an elective module, students must make a binding decision as to whether the examination should count towards the acquisition of credit points (CP) or as an additional, non-mandatory examination [Zusatzprüfung] as defined in Section 31.

(8) The examination regulations for the individual degree programmes can also stipulate that students must register for the first attempt at an examination within three semesters from the required point in time defined by that programme's recommended study and examination schedule. Section 12 (4) sentence 1 and sentences 3 through 7, as well as paragraph (5) of this Section shall apply accordingly.

Section 16

Conduct of examinations

(1) Dates for examinations shall be set in such a way that they do not require the cancellation of other course units.

(2) Students shall be notified of the date and scope of written examinations (Section 16) in a timely manner, generally at least two weeks before the begin of the examination phase. Deviating from sentence 1, in the case of the examination phase at the start of the winter semester, students shall generally receive notification at least one week before the start of the examination phase. Notification by electronic means or public display is sufficient. In the case of examinations as defined by Sections 18 and 19 and for combined examinations as defined by Section 14 (3) sentence 2, students shall be notified in a timely manner, generally at least two weeks before the date of examination or, in the case of combined examinations, before the first scheduled examination.

(3) For identification purposes, students must present their Rhine-Waal University ID card in addition to an officially recognised photo ID (e.g. passport) upon request by the examiner or proctor/invigator.

(4) If a disabled student within the meaning of Section 3 of the Equal Rights for Disabled Persons Act of Germany [Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz] can demonstrate via medical certificate or by other credible means that he or she is not able to sit the examination in its current form, in part or in full, due to his or her impairment, then the Chair of the respective Examination Board may permit the student to sit an equivalent examination in a specially arranged form. The Chair of the respective Examination Board is responsible for ensuring, where possible, that the testing conditions do not discriminate against disabled students; in cases of uncertainty, the Chair may request further evidence of impairment from the student in question. Special examination arrangements for disabled students can include in particular:

- extending the duration of examinations / the time allotted to students;
- providing individual rest periods during a timed examination;
- splitting examinations into smaller parts;
- replacing written examinations with oral examinations, or vice versa;
- permitting and, where applicable, providing additional aids or reference materials, personal assistance, adapted examination documents or separate testing areas.

Section 17

Written examinations

(1) The purpose of a written examination [Klausur] is to assess whether students are able to recognise and solve problems in a particular examination field using commonly employed methods and techniques within a set amount of time and with limited help from aids or reference materials. Written examinations may also be conducted on a computer, subject to the approval of the Examination Board, provided that the technical conditions ensure compliance with all statutory data privacy and protection requirements.

(2) The time allotted to students for a written examination is based upon the number of credit points (CP) for the respective course unit. Written examinations are supervised. The examiner shall decide which aids or reference materials, if any, are permitted during an examination.

(3) As a rule, the examination question for a written examination is set by a single examiner. Where justified by subject matter, particularly when multiple disciplines are covered by a single examination, multiple examiners may set the examination question. In this case, examiners shall first jointly define the weighting of the different parts of the examination question.

(4) If a student is repeating a previously failed written examination for the final time permitted by German law, then that final attempt shall be evaluated by two examiners. In all other cases, evaluation by a single examiner is sufficient. In those cases described in paragraph (3) sentence 2, each examiner shall evaluate, in general, only their respective part of the examination question; sentence 1 remains unaffected.

Section 18

Oral examinations

(1) Oral examinations shall be conducted before a single examiner in the presence of a qualified observer, or before a panel of examiners as group or individual examinations. In examinations where an observer is present, the observer has a right to be heard before the mark is determined. In examinations before a panel of examiners, the examiners shall jointly evaluate the examination performance.

(2) The duration of an oral examination is stated in each programme's respective examination regulations.

(3) A record shall be kept of the main topics and the results of an oral examination, including, in particular, all facts used to justify the awarded mark.

(4) Students intending to sit the same oral examination at a later date are permitted to attend the examination of others, provided that there is sufficient space available and the student(s) being tested do not object. Students in attendance are not permitted to be present during subsequent discussions or when the mark is disclosed

Section 19

Assignments, term papers, projects

- (1) Examinations in the form of take-home assignments, term papers or projects involve clearly defined tasks that are taken directly from the theory and practice of the subject area being tested. These examinations may also be supplemented with a presentation and/or a question-and-answer discussion at an advanced level. The examination can be conducted as a group examination if each student's individual contribution is recognisable and verifiable to a sufficient degree. The topic and task must be set in such a way that it is possible to complete the assignment, term paper or project within the given deadline.
- (2) An assignment, term paper or project must generally be completed within a semester. Further details are provided by the examination regulations of the individual degree programmes.
- (3) The Chair of the respective Examination Board or the assigning examiner shall notify students of the task, deadline and submission method for the assignment, term paper or project in writing, by electronic means or public display.
- (4) Section 17 (4) sentences 1 and 2 shall apply accordingly.
- (5) When submitting an assignment, term paper or project, students must also include written and signed confirmation that all work – or, in the case of group work, all of the submitting student's respective and appropriately marked individual contribution – was 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) The purpose of certificates [Testate] is to attest, in particular, exercises, practical courses and seminars. Certificates are awarded when a student has regularly and actively participated in the respective course unit and can demonstrate that he or she has sufficiently practised the subject-specific methods and is able to apply the imparted knowledge and skills. Certificates are issued by the instructor responsible for the respective course unit.
- (2) Certificates are not subject to formal specifications, nor are they subject to any registration or admission procedures. Various documents can serve as proof that certificate requirements have been met: protocols from experiments, written analysis of results, calculations, programming exercises, constructions, design concepts and sketches, oral presentations and question-and-answer discussions at an advanced level.
- (3) Certificates are awarded on a pass/fail basis, do not have a mark and may be repeated an unlimited number of times.

Section 21

Practical semester

- (1) The purpose of the practical semester is to expose students to real-world responsibilities and tasks at a company or organisation that is active in their field of study, thus enabling students to gather valuable professional experience before graduation. In particular, the practical semester should give students the chance to apply knowledge and skills acquired during their studies to practical problems and scenarios, as well as the chance to evaluate and reflect upon their experiences and thus benefit from them in the final phase of their degree.
- (2) Students must acquire at least 90 CP to become eligible for the practical semester.
- (3) Examination Boards are responsible for approving applications for the practical semester and students' work placement proposals.
- (4) If a student can present proof of multiple failed attempts to secure a work placement, then that student's faculty is obliged to actively support his or her further search. If the faculty is unable to help the student find a work placement despite all reasonable efforts, then the student may undertake an applied research project at the university instead of an external work placement. In this case, the regulations governing work placements shall apply analogously to the applied research project. The option of an applied research project at the university instead of a work placement and the option of receiving faculty support in securing a work placement can be excluded by the examination regulations of the individual degree programmes.
- (5) During the practical semester the student will be assigned a mentoring professor by his or her Examination Board. Where possible, the Examination Board shall take into consideration the student's suggested mentoring professor when making a decision. Following the conclusion of the work placement, students are required to compose a written report summarising their experiences. The examination regulations and placement regulations [Praktikumsordnungen] of the individual degree programmes can stipulate different or additional requirements to those in sentence 3.
- (6) The mentoring professor shall officially recognise the successful completion of the practical semester via an attestation, providing he or she is confident that the student's duties and responsibilities during the work placement accurately reflected the purpose of the practical semester and that the student accomplished his or her assigned tasks to a satisfactory degree; when making this decision, the mentoring professor shall also take into consideration any certificates and/or letters of recommendation from the placement provider as well as the student's own report.
- (7) If the mentoring professor does not recognise the successful completion of the practical semester, then it may be repeated once more in full. In this case, students may also opt for a study abroad semester instead.
- (8) 30 credit points shall be awarded for the successful completion of the practical semester.

Section 22

Study abroad semester

(1) Instead of a practical semester, students may also undertake 20 weeks of study at a university outside of Germany. The study abroad semester is intended to serve three purposes in particular:

- Deepen, broaden and assess the theoretical and practical knowledge of students within the meaning of Section 3, and to successfully complete course units in select subject areas for credit through examinations.
- Foster intercultural and international competencies, skills and thinking, particularly in the sense of learning how to work effectively with teachers and students of other nationalities and cultural groups, as well as how to successfully adapt and thrive in an unfamiliar educational system.
- Improve students' proficiency in the language of the host country.

(2) The requirement in Section 21 (3) also applies to the study abroad semester. Additionally, students must show that they have already secured a place in an appropriate exchange to a university abroad. The University is not responsible for distributing places in exchange programmes to students.

(3) The Examination Board, in conjunction with the faculty's international coordinator, is responsible for determining the suitability of a proposed exchange programme in light of the goals listed in paragraph (1) sentence 2.

(4) Section 21 (5) sentences 1 and 2 shall also apply with regards to the assignment of a mentoring professor for students studying abroad. Following the completion of a study abroad semester, students are required to summarise in a written report and a corresponding presentation the experience and insight they acquired during the study abroad semester in terms of the goals listed in paragraph (1) sentence 2.

(5) The mentoring professor shall officially recognise the successful completion of the study abroad semester via an attestation, providing he or she is confident that the aims listed in paragraph (1) sentence (2) were successfully achieved and the student can provide proof that he or she earned at least 15 ECTS credit points via passed examinations during the semester abroad.

(6) If the mentoring professor does not recognise the successful completion of the study abroad semester, then it may be repeated once more in full. In this case, students may also opt for a work placement instead.

(7) 30 credit points shall be awarded for the successful completion of the study abroad semester.

(8) For subject-related reasons, the examination regulations of the individual degree programmes can also exclude the option of a study abroad semester.

Section 23

Bachelor's thesis

(1) The purpose of the bachelor's thesis is to assess whether students are able to independently develop a practically-oriented research assignment in their subject area that incorporates both complex details and overarching multidisciplinary connections, while using applied research methods and with a limited amount of time. The thesis is usually an independent scientific enquiry into the assigned topic, including a comprehensive description and explanation of the generated results. Where appropriate for a student's subject of study, the thesis may also be a term paper focused on relevant technical literature. Further details are provided by the examination regulations of the individual degree programmes.

(2) The thesis topic can be set and supervised by any professor who is authorised to act as an examiner as per Section 8 (1). At the request of the student, the respective Examination Board can also appoint as a supervisor an honorary professor or a lecturer with relevant experience in the corresponding duties and tasks of a thesis supervisor. The thesis can also be completed at a company, organisation or institution outside of the university, providing that a sufficient level of supervision can be assured and subject to the approval of the respective Examination Board. Students shall have the opportunity to suggest a subject area for their thesis.

(3) The Chair of the respective Examination Board shall ensure that students are assigned a thesis topic in a timely manner after submission of the necessary application documents.

(4) Further details on the required scope and form of the bachelor's thesis are provided by the examination regulations of the individual degree programmes.

Section 24

Entry requirements for the bachelor's thesis

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

- a. meet the general prerequisites for study outlined in Section 4; and
- b. are officially enrolled as students or maintain visiting student status [Zweithörer/-in] as per Section 52 (2) HG NRW at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences for the full duration of the bachelor's thesis; and
- c. meet the prerequisites outlined in the examination regulations of their respective degree programme.

(2) The Application for Submission of a Bachelor's Thesis must be submitted in writing to the Chair of the respective Examination Board. Students must also include a declaration of any previous attempts at completing a bachelor's thesis. Furthermore, the application must clearly indicate the name of the examiner who is prepared to assign the topic and act as thesis supervisor.

(3) On written request, a student may withdraw his or her application without loss of an examination attempt and at any time before the official decision regarding the application has been announced.

Non-binding English translation – only the original German texts published in the Official Notices of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences are legally valid.

(4) The Chair of the respective Examination Board or, in case of doubt, the Examination Board itself, is responsible for decisions regarding admission to the thesis. Applications shall be denied when:

- a) the prerequisites listed in paragraph (1) have not been met; or
- b) submitted documents are missing or incomplete; or
- c) the applicant has previously failed the final permissible attempt for a required examination as per the relevant examination regulations in the same programme of study, or the final permissible attempt at a bachelor's thesis in a related or comparable programme of study at a university that is subject to German Basic Law.

Section 25

Date of assignment and writing the bachelor's thesis

(1) The thesis shall be formally assigned by the Chair of the respective Examination Board. The date of assignment is defined as the day on which the Chair of the Examination Board notifies the student of the topic set by the thesis supervisor; the date of assignment shall be put on official record.

(2) Students are given a period of three months – from the date of assignment to the submission deadline – in which to complete the thesis. Students are not permitted to submit their finished thesis within the first eight weeks from the date of assignment. The topic and task of the thesis must be set in such a way that it is possible to complete the thesis before the deadline. In exceptional cases, where a sufficiently justified request is submitted before the submission deadline, the Chair of the Examination Board can extend the submission deadline by up to four weeks. The thesis supervisor is to be heard in connection with this request.

(3) Students may request a new thesis topic one time and without specifying reasons, but only within the first four weeks after the date of assignment. If the requesting student is attempting to pass the bachelor's thesis for a second time, he or she may only request a new topic if this was not done during the first attempt.

(4) In the case of a disabled thesis candidate within the meaning of Section 3 of the Equal Rights for Disabled Persons Act [Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz], Section 16 (4) of these regulations shall apply accordingly.

Section 26

Submission and evaluation of the bachelor's thesis

(1) The thesis must be submitted to the Examination Office in the Student Service Centre within the deadline and as a hard copy, in triplicate, and as an electronic copy (required type and file formats shall be set by the Chair of the respective Examination Board). The date of submission shall be put on official record; if a thesis is submitted via post, the postmarked date shall be recorded as the date of submission. Students must also include with their thesis a written and signed confirmation that all work – or, in the case of group work, all of the submitting student's respective and appropriately marked individual contribution – 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) The thesis shall be evaluated by two examiners. One of the examiners shall be the student's thesis supervisor. If the thesis supervisor is an honorary professor or a lecturer, then the second examiner must be a professor of the student's respective faculty. If the marks awarded by the examiners are not identical, but the difference is less than 2.0 grade points, then the final mark shall be calculated by averaging the two scores. If the difference in scores is greater than or equal to 2.0, then a third examiner shall be appointed by the respective Examination Board to evaluate the thesis. In this case, the final mark shall be calculated by averaging the two best scores. A final mark of "sufficient" (4.0) or better can only be awarded if at least two of the marks are equal to "sufficient" (4.0) or better. All evaluation decisions shall be justified in writing.

(3) Further details on the awarding of credit points for the thesis can be found in the examination regulations of the individual degree programmes.

Section 27 Colloquium

(1) The colloquium is an oral defence (or *viva voce*) of the bachelor's thesis which is evaluated separately and must be held no later than two months after the date of submission of the thesis. The purpose of the colloquium is to assess whether the student is able to orally express the findings of the thesis and their interrelatedness to concepts and ideas both inside and outside of the subject area, to independently justify the findings, and to assess their practical significance. The discussion with the candidate will revolve primarily around the treatment of the thesis topic.

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

- a) meet the general prerequisites for study outlined in Section 4, as well as the prerequisites outlined in the Examination Regulations of their respective degree programme; and
- b) are officially enrolled as students or have visiting student status [Zweithörer/-in] as per Section 52 (2) HG NRW at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences at the time of the colloquium.

(3) The application for admission to the colloquium must be submitted to the Chair of the respective Examination Board. Students must also include a declaration of all previous attempts at completing a post-thesis colloquium. Students may submit an application for admission to the colloquium when they apply for admission to the bachelor's thesis; in this case, the application shall be approved when the prerequisites in paragraph (2) are met. Additionally, Section 24 (4) shall apply regarding the approval and rejection of an application for admission to a colloquium.

(4) The colloquium shall be conducted as an oral examination before the examiners of the thesis, who are responsible for evaluating the discussion and assigning a mark. Should the situation outlined in Section 26 (2) sentence 5 occur, then the colloquium shall be

conducted before the two examiners whose marks were used to calculate the final averaged mark for the thesis. The colloquium usually lasts for approximately 45 minutes. In all other matters relating to the conduct of the colloquium, the provisions governing the conduct of oral examinations (Section 18) shall apply accordingly.

(5) In the case of disabled students within the meaning of Section 3 of the Equal Rights for Disabled Persons Act [Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz], Section 16 (4) of these regulations shall apply accordingly.

(6) Further details on the awarding of credit points for the colloquium can be found in the examination regulations of the individual degree programmes.

Section 28

Final results of the bachelor's examination

(1) The bachelor's examination is passed when a student successfully earns 210 CP.

(2) The bachelor's examination is deemed failed when a student's final permissible attempt at passing a compulsory examinations, the bachelor's thesis or the colloquium is evaluated as "failed" (5.0) or otherwise considered to be evaluated as "failed" (5.0). In this case, the affected student shall receive a written declaration informing him/her of the failed bachelor's examination or the irretrievable loss of the right to sit examinations as per Section 12 (1), as well as providing an explanation of available legal recourse. On request, the Examination Board can issue a certificate listing all successfully completed examinations and their final marks as well as the examinations still needed to pass the bachelor's examination. This certificate must clearly show that the disenrolled (exmatriculated) student has definitively and irreversibly failed the bachelor's examination or lost his or her right to sit examinations as per Section 12 (1).

Section 29

Final grade certificate, final mark, diploma supplement

(1) Students shall be promptly issued a final grade certificate [Abschlusszeugnis] upon passing the bachelor's examination, where possible within four weeks after the colloquium. The final grade certificate shall contain a full list of completed modules and awarded marks; a reference to the completed practical or study abroad semester; the topic, mark and names of examiners for the bachelor's thesis; the mark for the colloquium; and the overall final mark for the bachelor's examination. If credits were transferred from a different institution as per Section 9, then their origin shall also be noted.

(2) The overall final mark for the bachelor's examination shall be equal to the weighted average of the individual marks listed in paragraph (1) sentence 2 and in accordance with the ranges defined in Section 11 (4). The marks are weighted as follows:

- Average of marks earned in modules containing individual course units, with each mark weighted by the number of CP for its module: = 80%
- Mark for the thesis: = 15%
- Mark for the colloquium: = 5%

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(3) The final grade certificate shall be signed by the Chair of the respective Examination Board and affixed with the official seal of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences. In addition, it shall indicate the date on which the colloquium took place.

(4) In addition to the final grade certificate, each graduate shall receive an official Diploma Supplement and a transcript of records, both issued in English.

(5) A student who voluntarily withdraws from the university before successfully completing the bachelor's examination may apply for a premature leaving certificate [Abgangszeugnis], which lists all of the examinations completed during the programme of study. Paragraph (3) sentence 1 shall apply accordingly.

Section 30

Bachelor's degree certificate

(1) A bachelor's degree certificate shall be issued to students at the same time as the final grade certificate and bearing the same date of issue. The bachelor's degree certificate attests the conferring of the bachelor's degree.

(2) The bachelor's degree certificate shall be signed by the Dean of the student's respective faculty and by the Chair of the respective Examination Board, as well as affixed with the official seal of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences.

Section 31

Additional examinations

(1) Students may also sit examinations in modules and course units which are not compulsory for their study programme. Upon request the results of these examinations can be listed on the final grade certificate or the premature leaving certificate, but will not be incorporated into the final mark calculation.

Section 32

Viewing examination records

(1) Following the end of the examination procedure, a student shall be granted upon request the opportunity to view his or her completed written examinations, the examiners' corresponding evaluation sheets, and the minutes of the examination.

(2) Students must submit a request to view examination records to the Chair of the Examination Board within one month from the date of issue of the final grade certificate, premature leaving certificate or declaration of a failed master's examination. Section 32 of the Administrative Procedure Act of North Rhine-Westphalia [Verwaltungsverfahrensgesetz NRW] shall govern students' right to submit a request after expiry of this deadline. The Chair of the Examination Board shall set the time and place of inspection.

(3) Students may request an opportunity to view a marked examination during their ongoing studies after the examination in question has been completed. Requests must be

submitted within one month after publication of the examination results. Paragraph (2) shall apply accordingly.

Section 33 **Nullification of examinations**

(1) If a student has cheated on one or more examination and this becomes known only after the student has been issued a final grade certificate, a premature leaving certificate or a certificate as specified in Section 28 (2) sentence 3, then the respective Examination Board reserves the right to retroactively nullify the marks for the affected examinations and to declare the bachelor's examination, in part or in whole, as "failed".

(2) If the prerequisites for entry to an examination were not met and it can be shown that this was not due to deliberate deception by the student and this inconsistency becomes known only after the student has been issued a final grade certificate, a premature leaving certificate or a certificate as described in Section 28 (2) sentence 3, then this error shall be remedied by the fact that the examination was passed. If the student used deliberate deception to gain wrongful entry to the examination, then the respective Examination Board shall decide upon any subsequent legal action, taking into account the North Rhine-Westphalian Administrative Procedure Act [Verwaltungsverfahrensgesetz NRW].

(3) The consequently incorrect final grade certificate, premature leaving certificate, bachelor's degree certificate or certificate as specified in Section 28 (2) sentence 3 shall be revoked and, where appropriate, reissued to the holder. The statute of limitations for decisions with regard to paragraph (1) and paragraph (2) sentence 2 is five years after the date of issue for a final grade certificate, premature leaving certificate or certificate as described in Section 28 (2) sentence 3.

Section 34 **Entry into force**

(1) These General Examination Regulations shall enter into force on the day after their publication in the Official Notices [Amtliche Bekanntmachungen] of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences.

(2) Examination regulations published prior to these General Examination Regulations shall continue to apply for their respective programme until such time that new examination regulations are enacted which are explicitly subject to these General Examination Regulations.

Note: The current version of these General Examination Regulations entered into force on 20 December 2014.