

# Participation Rules

for

# Language Courses

offered by the

# International Center

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## **Preamble**

Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences has distinguished and positioned itself as a uniquely international university in the German higher education landscape. Language courses play an indispensable role against this backdrop for a number of reasons.

The Office of Languages and Intercultural Communication of the International Center views language courses as a vehicle for practising and expanding not only language proficiency, but also life skills such as intercultural competence and effective learning strategies. Accordingly, the somewhat recent decision to incorporate foreign language courses into the curricular requirements of degree programmes at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences provides students opportunities to further develop their scholastic aptitude while also laying the foundation for a memorable and meaningful semester or internship abroad. Language courses also prepare students to tackle the linguistic challenges inherent to working in international teams. Indeed, mastering foreign languages, promoting and empowering multilingualism and teaching intercultural skills are utterly essential to a globalised world and considered key success factors for graduates of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences.

## **Section 1 Scope**

This document affects all language courses offered by the Office of Languages and International Communication (“Office of Languages”) of the International Center of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences (“HSRW”).

## **Section 2 General Registration Requirements; Key Registration Dates**

- (1) Registering for German courses at level A1.2 or higher requires appropriate proficiency in German for the corresponding level. Proof of proficiency can be demonstrated via an appropriate language certificate from the Office of Languages, a language certificate issued by an recognised external language institution within the past six months, or an official placement test conducted in the Language Lab of the Office of Languages. For more information about the placement test process, please see our registration portals for Kleve or Kamp-Lintfort in Moodle.
- (2) Registration for language courses takes place online in Moodle. No other form of registration is recognised.
- (3) Registering for more than 6 CH of language courses in a single semester requires prior permission from the Office of Languages.
- (4) Participating in identical language courses of the same level, or in consecutive levels, is not permitted.

- (5) Registration windows for language courses will be announced in advance in Moodle, generally no later than **4 weeks** before courses are scheduled to begin. Registration windows will open no later than **2 weeks** before courses are scheduled to begin.
- (6) Other methods of registration (in person, by telephone) are not possible.

### **Section 3 Waiting Lists and Moving Up**

- (1) Students who were placed on a waiting list during the registration period are eligible to move up into the course in question through an internal and automatic selection procedure. Should a registered participant fail to attend the course according to the rules set forth in Section 8, he or she will be removed from the course, allowing the first person on the waiting list to move up. Waitlisted students are selected in order of the date and time of their registration.  
Students who move up into a course receive an automatic email notification of their status change.
- (2) Waitlisted students may only move up in the first two weeks of the course, as courses are closed after the 3rd week.
- (3) There is no entitlement to a seat in a course for waitlisted students.

### **Section 4 Criteria for Registration**

- (1) If the number of students interested in registering for a particular language course exceeds the number of available slots, registration requests will be sorted by priority, where possible, according to the following criteria:
  - a. Curricular language courses (ECTS courses)
    - I. Regularly enrolled students at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences who must complete a language course according to their curriculum.  
“Degrees of need” are further prioritised according to the following sub-categories:
      - II. Students in their final semester of study (7<sup>th</sup> semester for undergraduate curricula).
      - III. Students generally eligible to receive curricular credit for a language course.
      - IV. Students not or no longer eligible to receive curricular credit for a language course, but who wish to complete a particular language course in order to continue their current learning progression.

- V. Students neither eligible to receive curricular credit for a language course in the current semester nor in need of completing a course in order to continue their current learning progression.
  - b. Non-curricular language courses (non-ECTS courses):
    - I. Students neither eligible to receive curricular credit for a language course in the current semester nor in need of completing a course in order to continue their current learning progression.
- (2) In specific cases, the aforementioned groups of students may be further sorted by priority according to the following special considerations:
- a) Equal opportunities: Students with a disability, chronic illness or with special care responsibilities (for immediate family members residing in the same household, or for in-laws or other blood-relatives who have a legally recognised need for care and assistance).
  - b) Students who previously failed or were otherwise unable to complete the language course in question.
  - c) After the aforementioned criteria have been exhausted, registration is prioritised by time.

The Office of Languages will use available means to ensure that students defined by paragraph (1)(a) will not experience undue delay in their academic progression as the result of exclusion from a language course due to participation restrictions.

## **Section 5**

### **Fees**

- (1) Language courses are offered to students and staff of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences at no charge. Should course-related fees for students and staff of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences arise, these will be defined in a separate schedule of fees.
- (2) Course materials are generally not provided at no charge and, accordingly, must be purchased by participants before courses begin, provided they are not available in some form in the University Library. This does not apply to course readers, which are always available for copying in the University Library.
- (3) Participants who have not obtained required course materials by the third session will be deregistered from the course.

## **Section 6**

### **DUO for German B2**

- (1) Eligible to receive a DUO license from HSRW are all students who have successfully completed German B1.2 and signed an official Learning Agreement according to Section 5(2)(a).
- (2) Requests for a DUO license must be made in writing and sent to the designated contact person of the Office of Languages (refer to Moodle). The DUO-based self-study course offered by HSRW is coupled with at least three Learning Guidance sessions over the course of the semester:
  - a) An initial Learning Guidance appointment (“registration”) which serves to verify the student’s eligibility for a DUO license according to Section 5(1) as well as his or her general suitability for the rigorous self-study regimen required to complete a DUO course. If the student is considered eligible and suitable for a DUO license, a Learning Agreement outlining both the scope of study and the duties of the student will be drawn up and signed. By signing the Learning Agreement, the student agrees to the provisions contained therein, including, in particular, the seven day test period, during which the student can return the DUO license and withdraw from the Learning Agreement without penalty or disadvantage.
  - b) The second appointment (“midterm”) serves to evaluate the student’s learning process and progress vis-à-vis the Learning Agreement.
  - c) The final appointment (“wrap-up”) occurs at the end of the course and serves to evaluate the student’s overall learning process and accomplishments for the entire course.
- (3) Students who violate the Learning Agreement referred to in Section 5(2)(a) will lose their eligibility to receive a DUO license financed by Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences.

## **Section 7**

### **Rules for Participation in a Language Course**

- (1) All language course participants must have a legitimate seat in the course in accordance with the registration procedure set forth in Section 2.
- (2) In accordance with Section 7 (1), neither waitlisted students (Section 3) nor any student without proper registration may join, attend, sit in on etc. a language course.
- (3) The Office of Languages is permitted to restrict maximum number of course participants on the basis of the Higher Education Act of North Rhine-Westphalia, Section 54(2)(a). As a rule, a maximum of 20 students may register for a language course offered during the lecture period, and a maximum of 18 students for intensive courses offered outside of the lecture period. The maximum number of participants for a course can be lowered for safety purposes due to the size of a room.

- (4) The Office of Languages reserves the right to cancel language courses that do not exceed this minimum requirement up to three days before the course is scheduled to begin. The minimum number of participants for offering a language course is seven (7) in Kleve and five (5) in Kamp-Lintfort. The Office of Languages reserves the right to cancel a language course with fewer than seven (7) regular and active participants for Kleve and five (5) for Kamp-Lintfort by the third week after first consulting with the instructor.
- (5) The number of participants at the end of a course as well as the number who pass the final examination directly affects whether a follow-up course for the next consecutive level will be planned and offered in the subsequent semester.

## **Section 8 Mandatory Attendance Requirement**

- (1) Language courses offered by the Office of Languages have a mandatory attendance requirement of 84%, calculated from the week in which a student is officially admitted to a course. For example, if joining a language course with one weekly session from the first week, students must fully attend at least 11 of 13 sessions. For courses with two weekly sessions and joining from the first week, students must attend at least 22 of 26 sessions.
- (2) In other words, periods of absence should not exceed 8 contact hours (CH) for courses with a total of 52 CH, or 4 CH for courses with a total of 26 CH. Students who cannot attend the first session of the course are required to notify their teacher in advance. Students must also inform the teacher of whether they intend to continue with the course. Absences communicated in this way can be counted as “excused”. Contact emails for teachers are listed under course registration links and generally adhere to the following pattern: `firstname.surname@hsrw.org`.
- (3) An unexcused absence in the first course session results in the immediate loss of the right to participate in that course.
- (4) Seats that become available as the result of subsection 3 will be automatically distributed to the next student on the waiting list (Section 3) or, if no waiting list exists, become available for booking by any other student until the end of the registration period.
- (5) Instructors may decide on exceptions to the aforementioned rules on a case-by-case basis with the agreement of the Offices of Languages. As a rule: always notify your instructor if you will be absent!

## **Section 9 Learning Guidance**

- (1) Learning Guidance is available for students of German and English who are currently in a course or learning either language on their own, or who have complex questions about German or English, about learning a language in general or about a language project they are currently working on. In a one-on-one session with an instructor of German or English, students can discover new learning strategies and practice methods, as well as receive additional practice material. Learning Guidance teaches effective learning

practices to tackle the challenges of learning a foreign language more successfully. It is particularly useful for students actively preparing for a project or pursuing their own self-study language goals.

- (2) Learning Guidance is obligatory for B2 students who have received a DUO license from HSRW. For all other students, Learning Guidance is an optional service offered by the Office of Languages.
- (3) Registration in Moodle is required. For regular students, an appointment usually requires 30 minutes; for DUO students, at least 45 minutes are required.
- (4) Learning Guidance appointments are offered only during the lecture period.

## **Section 10 Grade Composition**

- (1) Grade composition for ECTS language courses in German and English can be found in the respective course syllabi.
- (2) Grade composition and course contents for non-ECTS language courses are defined by the Office of Languages together with input from the instructors and can vary as a result.

## **Section 11 Final Examination**

- (1) Final examinations for German courses consist of a written test with sections for writing, reading and listening comprehension, as well as a concluding oral examination conducted with one or more participants together. Test formats for German courses are modelled after examinations for Goethe Certificates. For the levels B1.1 and B1.2, an additional graded project is required for ECTS credits and will be included in the final course grade.
- (2) In the case of ECTS English courses, the final grade is generally based on a final written examination, a graded presentation or both. Additional information about final examination requirements can be found in the module descriptions and syllabi for each course.
- (3) For non-ECTS language courses, the final grade is based on a final examination with sections for writing, reading and listening comprehension, as well as a concluding oral examination conducted with one or more participants together.
- (4) Make-up dates for examinations can be requested in justified, individual cases, but must be scheduled before the general examination period of HSRW. Requests must be submitted to the course instructor, who will confer with the Office of Languages first.
- (5) After successful completion of a language course, students are entitled to a course certificate containing information about the course, the workload and the final grade

achieved. Requests must be submitted using the online form found on the HSRW homepage.

## **Section 12**

### **Contact**

Contact information for the Office of Languages can be found on the HSRW homepage under "International". Opening hours for the Language Labs are regularly updated in Moodle.