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General Examination Regulations

for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Degree Programmes

Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences

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by the third amending statutes

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Section 1

Scope

(1) These General Examination Regulations (*Rahmenprüfungsordnung*, RPO) apply to all undergraduate (bachelor's) and postgraduate (master's) degree programmes at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences. Undergraduate programmes can be offered in full-time, part-time, or as dual (co-op) programmes. Postgraduate programmes can be offered in full-time or part-time. For specific details, refer to the examination regulations for the degree programmes.

(2) Each degree programme has its own individual examination regulations (*Prüfungsordnung*, PO) pursuant to these General Examination Regulations (RPO). They contain the specific rules and provisions stipulated 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 each have a study and examination plan (in accordance with Section 58 (3) HG NRW) containing the following binding information:

- a. The modules of the programme, with their specific types of teaching, learning and examinations
- b. Essential contents and qualification aims of these modules
- c. The amount of weekly in-person instruction per semester (as it relates to the type of teaching and learning) in credit hours (CH) (*Semesterwochenstunden*, SWS)
- d. Credit points (CP)
- e. Mandatory modules as well as electives
- f. All examinations and assessments

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

Section 3

Academic objectives; Purpose of examination; Degree awarded

(1) With due regard to the general academic objectives outlined in Section 58 HG NRW, undergraduate degree programmes should aim, in particular, to convey application-oriented

content on the basis of sound scientific knowledge and practice, while also empowering students to apply scientific methods and develop practice-oriented, interdisciplinary solutions. Postgraduate degree programmes should additionally empower students to conduct scientific research.

(2) Degree programmes conclude with a final undergraduate or postgraduate assessment (*Bachelorprüfung* or *Masterprüfung*, respectively). The professionally qualifying nature of the bachelor's degree is rooted in this final assessment. Its purpose is to assess whether a student has a firm grasp on the technical expertise required to work in a self-reliant manner in a related career field and conduct independent research using sound scientific knowledge and methodology. For specifics, refer to the examination regulations for the degree programmes. The purpose of the final postgraduate assessment is to determine whether students have achieved the goals expected in their master's degree programme based on their performance and quality of work.

(3) Moreover, postgraduate 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 such that they could complete a doctoral dissertation in the future;
- 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 cultivate intellectual and interpersonal skills. These include, in particular, abilities and features such as:

- An abstract, analytical, logical and networked way of thinking
- The ability to familiarise oneself quickly and efficiently with new fields and challenges
- Self-reliance, creativity, openness
- Clear and professional communication
- The ability to give and receive criticism
- The ability to work well in a team

(4) The academic degrees defined in the examination regulations for the degree programmes are awarded for successfully completing the final undergraduate or postgraduate

assessment. For specific details, refer to the examination regulations for the degree programmes.

Section 4

General admission requirements for undergraduate degree programmes

(1) Admission to undergraduate (bachelor's) degree programmes requires eligibility for admission to higher education in Germany, demonstrated by either an unrestricted university entrance qualification (*allgemeine Hochschulreife*) (UEQ), a discipline-specific UEQ (*fachgebundene Hochschulreife*), a UEQ for universities of applied sciences (*Fachhochschulreife*), or equivalent and officially recognised academic qualifications.

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

(3) In addition to the requirements in subsections (1) and (2), students must complete an eight-week basic internship. In general, this internship should be completed before commencing the degree programme. However, students may complete this requirement by the end of their third semester at the latest, provided there are no conflicting arrangements in the examination regulations for their degree programme. Students may also complete a pre-study preparatory internship in lieu of a basic internship. In this case, all rules and provisions for the basic internship apply accordingly. The examination regulations for the degree programmes can waive the basic/preparatory internship requirement if the curriculum of a degree programme includes a sufficient amount of content that results in real world, practical experience. For specifics, refer to the examination regulations for the degree programmes.

(4) Relevant vocational training and career experience can count towards the basic internship requirement. The basic internship requirement is considered met for prospective students applying on the basis of a German UEQ for universities of applied sciences (*Fachhochschulreife*) obtained from a technical college (*Fachoberschule*) in a field related to the degree programme in question.

(5) International exchange students who are studying at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences as part of an official partnership agreement and for a limited period of time (not to include graduation from their degree programme) are exempt from the basic internship requirement. The basic internship requirement is also waived for students in a dual study arrangement. 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 undergraduate 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 applying. In addition, this language requirement is waived for applicants who have achieved B2 in English through their unrestricted UEQ (*allgemeine Hochschulreife*), discipline-specific UEQ (*fachgebundene Hochschulreife*) or UEQ for universities of applied sciences (*Fachhochschulreife*). This is considered the case when an applicant has successfully completed at least seven years of English at a German secondary school and earned a final cumulative mark for English 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 within the jurisdiction of 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 examination regulations for the specific degree programme.

Section 4a

General admission requirements for postgraduate degree programmes

(1) Admission to postgraduate (master’s) degree programmes requires a professionally qualifying undergraduate degree in a relevant field which consisted of at least 210 total ECTS credits or a standard duration of study of at least seven semesters. Relevant degrees are defined in the examination regulations for the degree programmes by specific field and, where appropriate, emphasis area. Additional admission requirements, for example a relevant internship semester or semester abroad, can be set forth in the examination regulations for the degree programmes as well.

(2) In addition to the prerequisites set forth in subsection (1), postgraduate degree programmes may also stipulate a minimum final mark for the professionally qualifying undergraduate 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 specific details, refer to the examination regulations for the degree programmes.

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

(4) Notwithstanding subsection (1), prospective students who are applying on the basis of a professionally qualifying undergraduate degree consisting of fewer than 210, but at least 180 credits (ECTS), or a full-time study duration of at least six semesters may be admitted to a postgraduate degree programme on a provisional basis under the stipulation that the missing credits are obtained during and in addition to their postgraduate studies. The applicant and their responsible Examination Board will usually conclude a formal learning agreement defining both the total number of missing credits and the specific modules which must be completed. Permission to begin work on the postgraduate thesis depends on obtaining a predefined number of credits (refer to Section 24 (1) no. 3).

(5) In case of doubt, the Examination Board will determine whether an applicant's undergraduate degree is considered relevant per subsection (1) based on submitted documentation and, if necessary, a technical discussion with the applicant. The subject-relevance requirement is considered met if the applicant's undergraduate degree programme was in the same field as the postgraduate degree programme or shared the same specialisation track. In the case of other types of qualifications, applicants must demonstrate a level of technical expertise comparable both in scope and content to an undergraduate degree programme as defined by sentence 2. Based on this assessment, the Examination Board can grant admission with or without the stipulation to make up missing requirements, or reject the applicant for admission. The applicant and their 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 is permitted to begin their thesis.

(6) Applicants with a professionally qualifying undergraduate degree from a country other than Germany can also be granted admission if their degree adheres to the requirements set

forth in subsection (1). Decisions on the equivalence of prior degrees obtained outside of Germany must consider 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 postgraduate 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 for the degree programmes can stipulate a 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 within the jurisdiction of 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 examination regulations for the specific degree programme.

(8) *Intentionally omitted.*

Section 5

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

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

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

(3) Internship semesters involve at least 20 weeks of continuous, uninterrupted full-time work. Examination regulations and internship regulations of the degree programmes may stipulate different requirements for the internship period than sentence 1. Examination regulations and internship regulations of the degree programmes may also permit the

possibility of breaking up the internship semester or semester abroad into parts in deviation from sentence 1. Beyond this, in exceptional cases internship semesters and semesters abroad may be broken up into no more than two parts, with one part consisting of at least eight weeks, but only upon request and with the approval of the responsible Examination Board. Internship semesters can also be completed outside of Germany. For internships, the hosting organisation's working hours and policies for its regular full-time employees will also apply to interns, in compliance with all applicable labour laws.

(3a) The topic of the undergraduate thesis is generally assigned in the seventh semester for full-time students, or in the ninth semester for dual and part-time students. The topic of the postgraduate thesis is generally assigned in the third semester for full-time students and in the sixth semester for part-time students.

(4) Degree programmes consist of modules. A module is generally a group of thematically-related and chronologically-coordinated individual courses that are intended to achieve a common educational or qualification-based goal. The internship semester or the semester abroad, the bachelor's thesis and the colloquium are each considered separate modules in undergraduate degree programmes; in postgraduate degree programmes, the master's thesis and the colloquium are considered separate modules. Undergraduate degree programmes are broken down into modules amounting to a total of 210 credits in accordance with the framework in Section 6 (5). Postgraduate degree programmes are broken down into modules amounting to a total of 90 credits in accordance with the framework in Section 6 (5).

(5) Degree programmes also offer students the possibility to choose a specialisation. For specifics, refer to the examination regulations of the degree programmes.

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

(7) Additional information about the breakdown of individual degree programmes and about the type, form and scope of modules can be found in the study and examination plans in the examination regulations for the degree programmes. Additional information about learning outcomes, qualification aims, contents and forms of examination can be found in the module guides, which are openly published and accessible to all students.

Section 6

Breakdown of the final undergraduate and postgraduate assessment; Credits

(1) The final undergraduate and postgraduate assessments include, on the one hand, all examinations and certificates completed in course-based modules, and, on the other hand, a final examination phase consisting of the thesis and the colloquium (refer to the study and examination plans for specifics). The final undergraduate assessment also includes the successful completion of an internship or study abroad semester.

(2) As defined in each study and examination plan, examinations and certificates in course-based modules conclude either the module as a whole or an individual course therein. The Examination Board is responsible for deciding on examination times and phases. For specific details, refer to the examination regulations for the degree programmes.

(3) The progression and examinations of degree programmes must be planned such that it is possible to complete the final undergraduate or postgraduate assessment in the standard duration of study.

(4) Examination procedures must account for the rights granted to students under the German Maternity Protection Act (*Mutterschutzgesetz*) and the German Parental Benefits and Leave Act (*Gesetz zum Elterngeld und zur Elternzeit*), 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 written request to their Examination Board to assert their legal entitlement to an adjustment 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, the chairperson may request further evidence for this from the student. Special examination arrangements can include, in particular:

- Extending the duration of / time allotted for an examination
- Permitting individual rest breaks during a timed examination
- Splitting an examination into smaller parts

- 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 final undergraduate or postgraduate assessment is 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 an individual course and the module as a whole. According to the ECTS standard, one credit point is equivalent to 25-30 hours of work. An entire academic year is assumed to have a workload equivalent to 60 credits. 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 credit account, which is maintained on their behalf by their Examination Board.

(6) All courses, examinations and certificates in modules, as well as the final assessment, are conducted in the language of instruction of the degree programme. Exceptions in the examination regulations for the degree programmes as well as 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 applicable 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 pool of 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 examination regulations within the corresponding faculty. 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 ruling on appeals against 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 graduation progress 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 appeals.

(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 a meeting. At least half of the members with voting power in attendance must be professors. Measures are passed by simple majority. In the event of a tie, the chairperson casts the deciding vote. Non-professor members of Examination Boards may not participate in academic-pedagogic decisions, in particular on credit transfer requests or the appointment of examiners and observers. In addition, student members of the Examination Boards may not participate in decisions or discussions on issues relating to their own examinations or the formulation of examination tasks. 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 within their jurisdiction. This right does not extend to student members for examinations that they must complete in the current examination period.

(5) All members of the Examination Board, their proxies, examiners and observers are subject to strict confidentiality obligations. 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 reached.

Section 8

Examiners and observers

(1) All teachers employed by 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 necessary instructor training as well as professional and research experience and it 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 (see Section 17), students should be notified when they register 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 undergraduate and postgraduate thesis, students will be notified no later than when the topic is assigned. For oral examinations (see Section 18), assignments, term papers and projects (see Section 19), and combined examinations (see Section 14 (3) sentence 2), students should be notified when they register for the examination, but generally no later than two weeks before the examination or, in the case of combined examinations, before the first scheduled examination. Notification by public display, digital 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) Credits earned in degree programmes at other state universities or 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 there is no significant difference in terms of the imparted knowledge and skills in comparison with the substituted modules. This applies analogously to degrees earned in degree programmes as described in sentence 1.

(2) Credited coursework and examinations from a previous institution are considered to have no significant difference if their learning objectives essentially match those of the degree programme offered at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences. Equivalence here should not be determined by schematic comparison, but rather overall assessment and consideration in the spirit of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) as well as the knowledge and skills that were imparted. Equivalence decisions for credits earned at universities abroad must take into consideration 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 significant differences in content, the Central Office for Foreign Education (*Zentralstelle für ausländisches Bildungswesen*) can be consulted for additional guidance.

(3) Upon request, Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences can recognise other knowledge, skills and qualifications for credit based on submitted documentation if said knowledge, skills and qualifications correspond in terms of content and level to the substituted examinations. In the case of knowledge, skills and qualifications earned outside of an academic context, decisions on recognition will be based on the current 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 for the degree programmes.

(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 are to be credited. 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. Credit transfer requests should generally be submitted during the first year of study at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences.

(5) If prior coursework, examinations, knowledge, skills or other qualifications are recognised for credit, then the marks – 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 defined under Section 29 (1).

(5a) Following 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/recognised credits divided by the total number of obtainable credits in the degree programme. If the first decimal place 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 under 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 for university studies, but by other means 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) or certain courses and their corresponding examination or certificate requirements. 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 marks. Marks are awarded for each examination individually by the responsible examiner.

(2) Where 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 grading scheme must 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 cannot be awarded.

(4) The following ranges apply to the grading scale above:

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 digit after the decimal 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 defined in Section 17 no later than six weeks after the examination phase in which they occurred. Students will be notified of the results written examinations defined in Section 19 no later than six weeks after the examination. Notification by digital means, public display or other automated process is sufficient. To this end, students are expected to familiarise and involve themselves with the automated processes used at Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences. Students are responsible for regularly checking their HSRW 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 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 comparison 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 which 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, or 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 examination in the form of an 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 sufficient evidence exists to suspect that a student is indeed able to sit for examinations or at least cast doubt on the student's claim to the contrary, 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 mitigating circumstances provided, then the examination attempt is null and void and the student will be notified that they may register for the same examination attempt again. In the event that a child under the care of a student becomes ill, the student must submit evidence both of the 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 final undergraduate or postgraduate assessment can be declared irrevocably failed. The Examination Board is responsible for this decision. Irrevocably failing the final assessment results in automatic expulsion and deregistration from the degree programme.

(5) Intentionally violating any anti-cheating provisions in these General Examination Regulations is against the law and constitutes an administrative offence in Germany. This administrative offence can result in a fine of up to 50,000 EUR according to the examination regulations for the degree programmes. The Vice-President of Finances and Human Resources and/or the Chancellor of Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences are responsible for investigating and prosecuting administrative offences within the meaning of sentence 1.

Section 14

Purpose, scope and type of examinations

(1) The purpose of examinations in course-based modules 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) Examinations in course-based modules are designed around specific learning goals and generally offered as written examinations (Section 17), multiple choice examinations (Section 17a), oral examinations (Section 18), assignments, term papers and projects (Section 19), or online examinations (Section 20a). A combination of these examination types is also possible with approval of the Examination Board. In the case of semesters abroad, a written examination can be changed into 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 in the case of 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 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 examinations in course-based modules if they:
 1. have met the general admission requirements set forth in Section 4 for undergraduate programmes or Section 4a for postgraduate programmes as well as specific requirements set forth in the examination regulations for their degree programme;
 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 was not 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 within the jurisdiction of the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany.
- (5) The responsible Examination Board will decide on the request on an individual basis if necessary. 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 the chairperson of the Examination Board to withdraw from an examination, generally via the appropriate online tool or otherwise in writing, no later than seven days before the examination without the loss of an attempt.
- (7) Certificates can be earned if the prerequisites in subsection (1) have been met. Formal registration requests are not required for certificates as they are for examinations.

(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 it should instead count as an additional voluntary examination in accordance with Section 31.

(9) The examination regulations for the degree programmes can specify that students must register for their first attempt at an examination within three semesters of the semester in which the module is scheduled to occur according to the relevant study and examination plan.

Section 16

Conduct of 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 as defined by 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 valid and 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 as defined by 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 scheduled 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 problems in a particular subject area and solve them with relevant methods and techniques in a limited amount of time and with 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 decide on any authorised tools or materials for an examination.

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

(5) Students' 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 for passing (pass mark), and the distribution of marks by points (grade distribution table) 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 distribution table must be shifted accordingly, while retaining the same proportional distribution of grades.

(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 distribution table;
4. the mark achieved by the student.

(6) When assessing multiple choice examinations, examiners must remain vigilant for signs or 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 to not have occurred. The total number of examination questions will be reduced accordingly; the adjusted number of questions and point total must be used for all assessments of the affected 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 the mark. In oral examinations before a panel of examiners, the panel jointly assess the performance and award the mark.

(2) The durations of oral examinations are defined in the examination regulations for the degree programmes. For group examinations, the duration must be adjusted accordingly.

(3) The main topics and the results of oral examinations, but in particular the essential facts which were used to determine the mark, must be documented.

(4) Students are permitted to attend another student's oral examination if they intend to sit for the same examination at a future date, provided sufficient space is available and there are no objections from any students being tested. Observing students are not permitted to be present for post-examination discussions or when the mark is disclosed.

(5) Oral examinations can be conducted online via video conferencing software. In this case, 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 observe an online oral examination 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 the subject area being tested. They may be supplemented with an additional presentation and/or technical discussion requirement. 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 specifics, refer to the examination regulations for the degree programmes.

(3) The chairperson of the Examination Board or the assigning examiner must communicate to students in writing, by public display or digitally the task, deadline, format and submission procedure for an assignment, term paper or project.

(4) Section 17 (5) applies accordingly.

(5) When submitting an assignment, term paper or project, students must confirm in writing that their work or, in the case of group work, their appropriately identified contributions 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 teacher 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 example, for lab reports, written analyses, calculations, programming exercises, models, blueprints and sketches, presentations or technical discussions.

(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 digitally or via digital communication means (online examinations), provided they are suitable in this form for assessing whether teaching aims have been 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 internet-based online examination.

(2) When an online examination is offered via the internet, 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 of and the system used for the online examination.

(4) Personal data can be collected for an online examination insofar as it is necessary for properly conducting 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 notify the examiner or supervising person immediately about 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. Terminated examination attempts will not be assessed.

(8) Data collected for digital examinations must be clearly and permanently associated with the students who sat for the examination. Required documentation for an examination can also be digital. In accordance with Section 32, students must be given the opportunity to view their online examinations as well as the resulting assessment.

Section 21

Internship semester

(1) The internship semester defined in Section 5 (3) is intended to introduce students to the future reality of a 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 in real-world situations and gather practical work experience which can be reflected upon, assessed and benefit the student in their final phase of study going forward.

(2) Students must have obtained 90 credits in order to request to undertake the internship semester.

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

(4) The faculties are obliged to actively support students in their search for an internship if they have been unable to secure an internship despite several documented attempts. 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 for the degree programmes 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 non-professorial senior lecturer (LfbA) appointed by the Examination Board. If possible, the student's suggested supervisor should be appointed. After the internship, students must complete a report detailing their experiences. Examination regulations and internship

regulations of the degree programmes can require other or additional requirements than the one set forth in sentence 3.

(6) The supervising professor or non-professorial senior lecturer (LfbA) will recognise and attest via certificate the successful completion of the internship if, in their estimation, the undertaken internship activities are in line with the purpose of the internship semester and the student completed their assigned tasks in a satisfactory manner; where possible, this will be judged on the grounds of the internship certificate and the post-internship report.

(7) If the supervising professor or non-professorial senior lecturer (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 semester abroad in lieu of repeating the internship semester.

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

(9) Internship semesters can be cancelled prematurely for any reason without counting as an attempt, but this may occur only once and only within the first four weeks.

Section 22

Semester abroad

(1) Students can opt for a semester at a university abroad in lieu of an internship. The semester abroad 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 successful completion of examinations, as well as to attend courses at the hosting university in chosen areas and conclude them 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 host country's predominate language.

(2) Section 21 (3) applies accordingly with regard to requests to undertake a semester abroad. In addition, students must already have applied for and secured a slot at a suitable host university abroad. There is no automatic entitlement to a slot at a university abroad.

(3) The Examination Board, in conjunction with the International Coordinator of the faculty, will judge 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 semesters abroad. After conclusion of the semester abroad, students must submit a written report and hold a presentation on their experiences and how these relate to the goals defined in subsection (1) sentence 2.

(5) The supervising professor or non-professorial senior lecturer (LfbA) will recognise and attest via certificate the successful completion of the semester abroad if, in their estimation, the goals set forth in subsection (1) sentence 2 were achieved and the student successfully obtained at least 15 credits (ECTS) during their semester abroad. The examination regulations for the degree programmes can demand students earn a greater number of credits (ECTS) than the minimum defined in sentence 1.

(6) If the supervising professor or non-professorial senior lecturer (LfbA) does not recognise the successful completion of the semester abroad, it can be repeated as a whole up to two additional times. Students may also opt for an internship semester in lieu of repeating a semester abroad.

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

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

(9) Semesters abroad can be cancelled prematurely for any reason without counting as an attempt, but this may occur 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.

Where justified by subject matter, the thesis can also take the form of an academic paper incorporating a literature review. The examination regulations for the degree programmes can stipulate additional rules and requirements.

(2) The master's thesis serves to assess whether students can use both theoretical and applied research methods independently and in a limited period of time independently to develop a practice-oriented work in their field. Students must demonstrate through their thesis that they 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 minutiae 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 teachers 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 a sufficient level of supervision can be assured and with approval of the Examination Board. Students must be given the opportunity to suggest possible topic areas for their thesis.

(4) The chairperson of the Examination Board will ensure that students are assigned a topic for their thesis in a timely manner after submitting a request.

(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 for the degree programmes.

Section 24

Admission to the thesis

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

1. have fulfilled 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 assign the topic and act as thesis supervisor.

(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 the request is undecided.

(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 must be rejected if:

- a) the prerequisites in subsection (1) have not been fulfilled; 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 within the jurisdiction of the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Section 25

Date of assignment and terms for completing 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 digitally of the topic assigned by the supervisor; the date of assignment must be officially documented.

(2) Students are allotted a period of three months (measured from the date of assignment to the submission deadline) in which to complete the bachelor's thesis. Differing rules for part-time students are set forth in the examination regulations for the degree programmes. The

bachelor's thesis may not be submitted within eight weeks of the date of assignment. The examination regulations for the degree programmes govern the time allotted for a master's thesis (as measured 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 the thesis can be feasibly completed before the deadline. In exceptional cases, the chairperson of the Examination Board can extend the working 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 this may occur only once and only within four weeks of the date of assignment. Students on their second attempt may only request a new thesis 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 a digital copy in a format specified by the chairperson of the Examination Board. The digital copy should be submitted via the appropriate online tool in use 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 digital or the two hard copies, is received. The remaining required 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; if a thesis is submitted by post, then the postmarked date will be recorded. 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 for the degree programmes govern the credit point values awarded for successfully completing 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 provide an assessment of their practical significance. The colloquium should also include a discussion on the work that went into the thesis. 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 fulfilled the general admission requirements set forth in Section 4 for undergraduate programmes or Section 4a for postgraduate 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 for the duration of their thesis; 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 when the prerequisites in subsection (2) are met. Section 24 (4) applies analogously to 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 scores 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 apply to colloquia conducted online. Colloquia can be conducted online in justified situations. This is considered the case, in particular, when the student's participation in-person would only be possible with a disproportionate amount of effort and expense.

(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 for the degree programmes govern the credit point values awarded for successful completion of the colloquium.

Section 28

Conclusion of the undergraduate and postgraduate assessment

(1) The final undergraduate assessment is passed when students successfully obtain 210 credits. The final postgraduate assessment is passed when students successfully obtain 90 credits.

(2) The final undergraduate or postgraduate assessment is failed if a mandatory examination, the bachelor's or master's thesis, or the colloquium are irrevocably marked as "Failed" (5.0) or otherwise considered to be irrevocably "Failed" (5.0). In this instance, 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 must 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) thus far, as well as the 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 final undergraduate or postgraduate assessment, where 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 in combination with the grading scale in Section 11 (4). For undergraduate 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 containing the equivalent ECTS grade and a full 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 final assessment 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 also be issued to students at the same time as the final grade certificate; both documents will bear the same date. This certificate is official confirmation that the bachelor's or master's title specified in 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 which 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 final assessment, students may request the opportunity to view their examinations in 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 examination records for course-based modules 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

Invalidation of examinations

- (1) If a student cheats on one or more examinations and this first comes to light after issuing the final grade certificate, leaving certificate or certificate defined in Section 28 (2) sentence 3, then the Examination Board may retroactively invalidate the marks for the affected examinations and declare the final assessment as partially or entirely failed.
- (2) If the prerequisites for admission to an examination had not been fulfilled 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 issuing the final grade certificate, leaving certificate or certificate defined in Section 28 (2) sentence 3, 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 reissued, as appropriate. 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 Examination Regulations entered into force on 10 June 2022.*

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 which are authorised for use by Rhine-Waal University of Applied Sciences may be employed;
- 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' works 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 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.