

# Examination regulations of the Faculty of Mathematics, Informatics and Natural Sciences for study programmes leading to the degree of Master of Science (M.Sc.)

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## OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Ed.: The President of the University of Hamburg

Department 31 – Quality and Law

### Examination regulations of the Faculty of Mathematics, Informatics and Natural Sciences for study programmes leading to the degree of Master of Science (M.Sc.)

From 20 October 2021

On 8 November 2021, the Presidential Board of the University of Hamburg adopted the Examination Regulations of the Faculty of Mathematics, Informatics and Natural Sciences on 20 October 2021 on the basis of § 91, paragraph 2, number 1 of the Hamburg Higher Education Act (HmbHG) of 18 July 2001 (HmbGVBl. p. 171) in the version of 29 May 2018 (HmbGVBl. p. 200), taking into account the Framework of Examination Regulations for Academic Examinations at the University of 25 January 2018, 22 February 2018 and 8 November 2018, approved the examination regulations of the Faculty of Mathematics, Informatics and Natural Sciences for degree programmes leading to the degree of “Master of Science” (M.Sc.) in accordance with § 108 paragraph 1 HmbHG.

#### Preamble

These examination regulations govern the general structure and the examination procedure for all consecutive degree programmes of the Faculty of Mathematics, Informatics and Natural Sciences leading to the degree of Master of Science (M.Sc.); they are supplemented by subject-specific regulations for the individual degree programmes.

#### § 1

##### **Aim of the study programme, purpose of the examination, academic degree, implementation of the study programme**

- (1) The general objectives of university teaching are defined in § 2 paragraph 1 of the Framework of Examination Regulations for Academic Examinations at the University, as amended. In addition to these, the study objective of the Master's degree programmes is to impart thorough subject knowledge and to acquire in-depth scientific and methodological qualifications. The specific study objectives are contained in the subject-specific regulations.
- (2) A passed Master's examination proves that the study objective described in the respective subject-specific regulations has been achieved.
- (3) The passed Master's examination is a second professional qualification for which the academic degree “Master of Science (M.Sc.)” is awarded.
- (4) The organisational implementation of the study programmes is carried out by the Faculty of Mathematics, Informatics and Natural Sciences.
- (5) The selection criteria and special admission requirements for the Master's degree are regulated in separate statutes for the respective degree programmes.

- (6) Following admission to the degree programme, the Faculty of Mathematics, Informatics and Natural Sciences at the University of Hamburg is entitled to communicate with students electronically in all study-related administrative matters (including transmission of documents such as letters and notices).
- (7) Regulations to ensure good scientific practice and the prevention of scientific misconduct at the University of Hamburg are regulated in a corresponding statute of the Academic Senate of May 15, 2014, as amended.

## § 2

### **Standard period of study**

The standard period of study is four semesters, including all examinations, the Master's thesis, any work experience and excursions that may be included in the degree programme. In the case of part-time study, two part-time semesters increase the standard period of study by one semester. The courses offered in accordance with the subject-specific regulations and the examination procedure shall ensure that the Master's degree programme, including all examinations, can be completed within the standard period of study.

## § 3

### **Subject counselling**

- (1) As a rule, subject counselling is provided by lecturers of the degree programme.
- (2) Students are obliged to take part in subject counselling during the introductory phase.
- (3) Students must take part in a subject advisory service before they have exceeded the standard period of study according to § 2 by two semesters if they have not yet completed all examinations. Students who do not participate in the subject counselling because they have exceeded the standard period of study will be exmatriculated in accordance with § 42 paragraph 2 number 7 HmbHG.
- (4) The subject-specific regulations may provide for compulsory subject counselling at an earlier stage if it is to be expected that students will exceed the standard period of study.

## § 4

### **Programme and examination structure, modules and credit points (CP)**

- (1) The degree programme has a modular structure; the structure of the degree programme, the module requirements and the number, type and duration of the module examinations are regulated in the subject-specific regulations. Detailed module descriptions, including the qualification objectives, are presented in the module handbooks. Modules can be: compulsory modules which are obligatory, compulsory elective modules which are to be selected from a given catalogue of modules, and freely selectable modules (elective modules). Freely selectable modules can be chosen from the entire range of modules offered by the University of Hamburg, subject to available places.
- (2) Modules are self-contained teaching and learning units. In modules, a partial qualification of the qualification objective of the respective degree programme is imparted. The workload (attendance, self-study and examination effort) for the individual modules is shown in credit points (CP). As a rule, 1 credit point corresponds to a workload of 30 hours. The total scope of the degree programme, including the Master's thesis, comprises 120 credit points. The acquisition of credit points is linked to the successful completion of the module. The subject-specific regulations define the criteria that must be fulfilled for the successful completion of a module.
- (3) The Master's examination consists of module examinations. The Master's thesis is regulated in a final module, which may also provide for further examination performances. If subject-specific regulations for the final module allow for further achievements, which do not account for more than 20 % of the final module grade and which, furthermore, cannot be carried out over a longer period of time in the case of force majeure, the chairpersons of the examination board can determine an alternative form of examination at the request of the students. The chosen form of examination must be suitable to evaluate in a competence-oriented manner the achievement of the qualification objectives defined for the final module.

- (4) In principle, the degree programme must be commenced immediately.
- (5) A degree programme can be completed with the status of part-time student. Students can apply for this status at the Student Services. The decision on the application for enrolment as a part-time student is made in accordance with the legal requirements in the University of Hamburg's enrolment regulations in the currently valid version. Part-time students must immediately notify the Academic Services Office of their changed student status (notice of approval from the Service for Students). For part-time students, an individual study plan is drawn up in consultation with the Examination Board within the framework of a subject advisory service.

## § 5

### Types of courses

- (1) Types of courses are in particular:
  1. lectures for the detailed presentation of a subject area;
  2. exercises for deepening and applying the lecture material;
  3. proseminars/seminars for the independent development of knowledge and its transfer;
  4. projects, project studies to train problem awareness for subject-specific or experimental work through participation in a subject-orientated project.
  5. internships to learn subject-specific knowledge, methods and skills;
  6. work-related internships;
  7. excursions/field exercises.

Courses may be held as face-to-face, blended learning, or e-learning courses.

The subject-specific regulations may provide for further types of courses or combinations of types of courses. In accordance with § 5 paragraph 2 of the Framework of Examination Regulations for Academic Examinations at the University of Hamburg of 25 January 2018, 22 February 2018 and 8 November 2018, the subject-specific regulations may only stipulate compulsory attendance for lectures in cases justified by university didactics. Compulsory attendance for lectures is excluded. The courses with compulsory attendance are to be named and justified in the subject-specific regulations. The subject-specific regulations shall also specify whether compulsory attendance applies to admission to the repeat examination. Participation in the courses requires registration.

- (2) The subject-specific regulations only stipulate compulsory attendance for courses if qualification objectives of the associated module can generally only be fully achieved through regular attendance. Attendance is compulsory for the following types of courses:
  - a) seminars and proseminars, as these also aim to improve critical faculties and the ability to lead discussions;
  - b) excursions, as these are intended to acquire skills related to region-specific knowledge;
  - c) internships, as students should be enabled to solve practical problems under guidance;
  - d) projects, as these also serve the acquisition of social competences, e.g. the ability to work on projects in a team.
- (3) For exercises, the subject-specific regulations stipulate compulsory attendance if the qualification objectives of the associated module cannot usually be fully achieved outside the exercises.

## § 6

### Restriction of attendance of individual courses

The number of participants may be limited for individual courses if this is necessary for their proper implementation. The restriction must include the criteria for the selection of participants and must be announced in an appropriate manner.

## § 7

### Examination board

- (1) Examination boards shall be formed for the organisation of examinations, compliance with the provisions of these regulations and the other tasks stipulated by these examination regulations. An examination board shall comprise: three members from the group of university teachers, one member from the group of academic staff and one member from the group of students. In addition, a member of the Academic Services Office, usually the study coordinator of the degree programme, participates in the meetings with an advisory vote. The members of the examination board should generally belong to the respective subject.
- (2) The members of an examination board and their deputies shall be appointed by the relevant faculty body on the proposal of the respective group. The term of office of the members and deputies is two years, that of the student member one year. The re-election of a member is possible. If a member leaves prematurely, a successor is elected for the remaining term of office. The examination board shall elect the chairperson and the deputy chairperson from among the members of the group of university lecturers who are members of the examination board.
- (3) The examination board shall not meet in public. It shall constitute a quorum if at least three members, including the chairperson or the deputy chairperson and one other member of the group of university teachers, are present. In the event of a tie, the chairperson shall have the casting vote. The decisions of the examination board shall be recorded in minutes.
- (4) The examination board may delegate tasks to the Academic Services Office for the preparation and implementation of its decisions as well as the organisational handling of examinations; the chairperson of the examination board shall have the same powers of delegation.
- (5) The examination board, in cooperation with the dean's office, shall ensure that the study and examination achievements can be completed within the time periods specified in these regulations. The examination board shall also ensure that the dates for the module examinations are set and announced in good time.
  - (a) If, in cases of force majeure, it is impossible to enable students to complete their examinations and coursework properly and on time, the responsible examination board shall decide on appropriate measures. Such measures may include, in particular, the offer of additional examination dates and the provision of other equivalent examinations. The same applies to coursework and according academic achievements. These examinations and coursework must be suitable for assessing the achievement of the qualification objectives defined for the degree in a competence-oriented manner.
  - (b) If a student can credibly demonstrate that he or she or a person living with him or her in the same household is at increased risk of a serious COVID-19 illness due to a health impairment and that, for this reason, he or she is therefore unable for a longer period of time to take examinations in whole or in part under the intended conditions or to take them within the deadlines specified in these regulations, the chairperson of the examination board can take appropriate measures to compensate for the disadvantages upon written or electronic application. Such measures may include, in particular, a change in the external examination conditions and the acknowledgement of equivalent achievements. The same applies to coursework. The application should be submitted immediately, at the latest one week before the start of the examination.
- (6) The members of an examination board have the right to attend the examinations. This right does not extend to the decision on the grade and its announcement.
- (7) The members of an examination board and their deputies shall be subject to official secrecy. If they are not in public service, they shall be sworn to secrecy by the chairperson.
- (8) Incriminating decisions of the examination board shall be communicated to the student in writing without delay, stating the reasons and the legal basis. The decision shall be accompanied by instructions on how to appeal.
- (9) The examination board may, in compliance with the provisions of data protection law and with legally binding effect, make public orders, the setting of deadlines and other decisions to be taken in accordance

with these regulations, in particular the announcement of registration and examination deadlines as well as examination results, by posting them at the Academic Services Office, on the Internet or in any other suitable manner.

## § 8

### **Crediting of periods of study, course work and examination results**

- (1) Periods of study, course work, examinations and professional studies or internships integrated into the course of study which have been completed at a university, equivalent institution of higher education, in state-recognised distance learning courses, at other educational institutions, in particular in courses of study at state or state-recognised universities of cooperative education and at universities of applied sciences, shall be recognised upon application by the student(s), provided that there are no significant differences between the knowledge and skills acquired and those to be acquired at the receiving university. Recognition with conditions is possible.
- (2) When recognising periods of study, academic achievements and examinations completed outside the Federal Republic of Germany, the equivalence agreements approved by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany and the Standing Conference of Rectors of the Universities of Hamburg as well as agreements of the University of Hamburg and the other universities involved in the degree programme within the framework of university partnerships or university cooperation agreements shall be observed.
- (3) Knowledge and skills acquired in a way other than through a degree programme, which are equivalent to those and are required for successful completion of a degree programme, shall be recognised to the extent of up to half of the study and examination credits to be taken.
- (4) If examination achievements are credited, the grades – insofar as the grading systems are comparable – shall be adopted and included in the final grade. If the grading systems are not comparable, the examination performance shall be marked “passed”.
- (5) The chairperson of the examination board shall decide on the credit according to paragraphs 1 to 3 upon application by the student. The documents required for the recognition shall be enclosed with the application. An application for recognition of examination achievements is excluded as soon as the student is in an examination relationship relating to the corresponding module. This is the case, for example, if there is a binding examination registration and/or at least one examination attempt has already been taken. A binding examination registration exists when the registration and deregistration phases have been completed. Recognition may be refused by the examination board if it proves that there are either substantial differences between the knowledge and skills acquired and those to be acquired at the receiving higher education institution pursuant to paragraph 1 or that knowledge and skills acquired by means other than study are not equivalent pursuant to paragraph 3.

## § 4

### **Admission to module examinations**

- (1) Participation in the module examinations requires registration with the office responsible for the examination procedure (Academic Services Office). Registration for the module examination is binding after expiry of the registration period. The period for registration and the registration procedure shall be announced by the Academic Services Office in an appropriate manner. In the case of a second repeat examination, the examination board may make admission dependent on the condition that the student has previously taken part in a subject advisory service. In justified exceptional cases, the examination board may determine a different type of examination at the request of the student.
- (2) If the subject-specific regulations stipulate compulsory attendance at courses (cf. § 5 paragraph 1, sentences 3 and 5), regular attendance at the courses provided for the module may be a prerequisite for admission to a module examination. In principle, regular attendance is deemed to have been achieved if no more than 15 % of the courses of a module have been missed. If the absence is not justifiable, admission to the examination date may be granted subject to a condition. The reason for the absence must be substantiated. The condition is determined by the teacher of the missed course; it must be suitable for documenting that the missed course material has been made up. Further details can be regulated in the subject-specific regulations.

- (3) Registration for module examinations requires enrolment for the respective degree programme. This enrolment also applies to participation in compulsory elective and elective modules offered by other subjects.
- (4) Admission may only be refused if
  1. the requirement specified in paragraph 1 is not fulfilled,
  2. the requirement specified in paragraph 2 is not fulfilled or the condition specified in paragraph 2 is not fulfilled,
  3. the requirement specified in paragraph 3 is not fulfilled,
  4. the admission requirements for the module are not met, or
  5. the academic performance required in the subject-specific regulations has not been achieved.

Sentence 1 No. 4 shall not apply if the candidate has completed the examinations of all previous modules but not all examinations have been assessed. In such cases, the candidate shall be admitted to the subsequent examination.

- (5) The student must be informed immediately of any non-admission.

## **§ 10**

### **Repeating module examinations**

- (1) Module examinations can be repeated three times.
- (2) For each module examination, there are basically two examination options at the end of the courses. A repetition only takes place for failed module examinations or partial module examinations. The examinations should be taken at the earliest possible time during the course.
- (3) Elective and compulsory elective modules may be changed. If a compulsory elective or elective module is changed or, for organisational reasons, not offered a second time, examination attempts taken in other modules will not be counted.

## **§ 11**

### **Compensation for disadvantages for students with disabilities or long-term or chronic illnesses**

- (1) If a student can credibly demonstrate that he or she is unable to complete all or part of an examination under the prescribed conditions or to pass the examination within the deadlines specified in these regulations due to a disability or long-term serious or chronic illness, the chairperson of the examination board may, upon written or electronic request, take appropriate measures to compensate for the disadvantages. Such measures include, in particular, a change in the external examination conditions, an extension of the deadlines for taking examinations and the provision of equivalent examinations. The same shall apply to course work.
- (2) In the case of decisions by the chairperson of the examination board in accordance with paragraph 1, the Disability Officer must be involved in accordance with § 88 paragraph 3 HmbHG.
- (3) The reasons for the requested disadvantage compensation must be explained by the student. Suitable evidence may be required to substantiate this.

## **§ 12**

### **Examiners**

- (1) Examiners shall be appointed by the examination board in accordance with the provisions of the HmbHG as amended.
- (2) Examiners for the module examinations are in principle the lecturers responsible for the courses of the respective module. The examination board decides on exceptions. In the case of only one examination and several lecturers, the examination board may determine the lecturer responsible for the examination.

- (3) Members of other higher education institutions as well as academics from non-university research institutions may also be appointed as examiners.

## § 13

### Course Credits and Module Examinations

- (1) The module description may provide for the completion of course work. Course work may be graded. The subject-specific regulations may stipulate that a successfully completed academic performance is a prerequisite for a module examination.
- (2) Module examinations shall take place in the form determined by the examiners in accordance with the subject-specific regulations on the fixed dates. Module requirements may be stipulated for the module examinations in the subject-specific regulations.
- (3) A module examination is generally conducted as an overall examination (module examination). In special cases justified by the selection of the type of examination and the didactic concept, several modules can also be completed with a joint examination. The credit points of a module are acquired with the successful completion of the module. Depending on the stipulations in the subject-specific regulations, successful completion requires the passing of module examinations and/or the successful completion of course work. In exceptional cases, the subject-specific regulations may stipulate that not all partial examinations must be passed.
- (4) The following types of examination may be specified for module examinations in the subject-specific regulations:
- a) **Written examination**  
A written examination is a piece of work to be completed under supervision, in which given tasks are to be worked on alone and independently using only the approved aids. The duration of a written examination is at least 45 minutes, at most 180 minutes. Written examinations can also be conducted in the form of multiple choice.
  - b) **Oral examination**  
An oral examination is an examination discussion in which the students are to demonstrate that they have mastered the examination material. Oral examinations are conducted as individual or group examinations. The duration of the examination should be at least 15 minutes and at most 45 minutes per candidate. Students may propose examination topics for oral examinations. Oral examinations are taken by an examiner in the presence of an assistant who has at least the qualification to be determined by the examination or an equivalent qualification. The essential subjects and results of the oral examination are to be recorded in minutes. The minutes shall be signed by the examiner and the assessor and included in the examination file. Members of the university, especially students of the same degree programme, are allowed to participate in oral examinations as listeners, unless the candidate requests the exclusion of the public. This right does not extend to the decision-making and the announcement of the grade.
  - c) **Term paper**  
A term paper is the written elaboration of a given topic that was dealt with within the framework of the relevant module. A term paper consists of a minimum of five and a maximum of 30 pages. The duration of the examination is up to three months. The term paper must be submitted in written form and, at the request of the examiner, also on an electronic storage medium. In the context of the assessment of assignments, a computer-aided plagiarism check can be carried out by external institutions. In this case, it must be ensured that a copy of the work submitted for this purpose is not made accessible to third parties there and is deleted after the plagiarism check.
  - d) **Presentation**  
A paper is an oral presentation on a given topic. In addition, a written elaboration of the topic of the presentation may be provided. The oral presentation usually lasts a minimum of 15 minutes and a maximum of 75 minutes. The optional written paper must be at least three and no more than 30 pages long. The processing time for the written paper is up to 30 weeks from the submission of the topic. In deviation from this, the examiner may determine that the processing time is up to six weeks from the presentation.

- e) Completion of internships  
Students have successfully completed their internship if they have carried out the experimental work specified by the responsible lecturer and have demonstrated their knowledge by means of colloquia, protocols or written work. The submission deadline for the written work is set before the start of the course. Colloquia, protocols and written papers are based on the transcript and, if applicable, original scientific literature and/or own research. Protocols and written papers are based on the subject-specific standards in their form of presentation, their structure and their length (two to 50 pages). Colloquia usually have a duration of at least ten and at most 60 minutes. As a rule, internship certificates are to be completed by the end of the respective semester in which the associated course ends. If the course takes place in whole or in part during the lecture-free period, the examiner may extend this deadline by a reasonable period of time.
- f) Project completion  
Project degrees are successfully completed by a presentation of the solution to the chosen topic in the form of a paper and/or a final report for the project. The processing time for final reports is up to 20 weeks from the issue of the topic. In the case of a presentation or final report in the form of a group work, the contribution of the individual candidate must be clearly recognisable, distinguishable, and assessable. The duration of a presentation for each candidate is at least ten minutes and at most 60 minutes. As a rule, project completions must be concluded by the end of the respective semester in which the associated course ends. If the course takes place in whole or in part during the lecture-free period, the examiner may extend this deadline by a reasonable period of time.
- g) Exercises  
Exercises require continuous active participation by the students. Exercises are achieved by written assignments in individual or group work. In addition, the presentation of individual exercises can be planned. The written assignments are carried out on exercises that are set by the responsible lecturer. The number of written assignments is between four and 14 per semester. The length of individual papers is between two and 15 pages. As a rule, the written assignments are to be concluded in the semester in which the corresponding course is completed. If the course takes place in whole or in part during the semester break, the examiner may extend this deadline by a reasonable period of time.
- h) Completion of excursion  
Excursions are successfully completed by the submission of a report on the objectives and results. The report is based on the transcript, original scientific literature and own research. It is oriented towards scientific publications in its form of presentation, its structure and its length of five to 30 pages. The processing time is at least two and at most 20 weeks from the issue of the topic of the scientific excursion/field exercise. As a rule, the report is to be prepared in the semester in which the associated course is completed. If the course takes place in whole or in part during the lecture-free period, the examiner may extend this deadline by a reasonable period of time.
- i) Completion of professional internship  
Professional internships are successfully completed by the submission of a report on the objectives and results. The report has a length of five to 30 pages. The processing time is a minimum of two and a maximum of 20 weeks after completion of the internship.
- j) Take-home exam  
A take-home exam is carried out by the student working on a given question at home with the help of aids within a short period of time. The duration of the work can range from 60 to 240 minutes. The specific duration of the work is usually announced by the examiner before the start of the course, at the latest two weeks before the examination. The examiners may also set a guideline for the scope of the paper. If the module description in the subject-specific regulations for a module examination or partial module examination provides for a written examination pursuant to § 13 Paragraph 4 Letter a) as the type of examination, the examiners may provide for the type of examination Take-Home Exam as an alternative. In these cases, the specific type of examination is usually announced before the start of the course, at the latest two weeks before the examination. The assignments for the Take-Home Exam are handed out in person or in electronic form. The time of issue and submission will be announced to the students in advance. The time frame between the time of handing out and handing in can be longer than the specified duration of the processing. When handing in the work, the student assures that he or she has written the work independently and has not used any aids other than those permitted. As part of the assessment of the take-home



exam, a computer-assisted plagiarism check can be carried out by external institutions. It must be ensured that a copy of the work submitted for this purpose is not made accessible to third parties and is deleted after the plagiarism check.

k) Electronic examination

In an electronic examination, the questions to be worked on are depicted in a digital and interactive examination setting. Such settings can be, for example, simulations, business games, work in and with modelling software, practical applications in and of software (e.g. ERP software) and development environments (e.g. programming). Question and/or answer formats in which multimedia content is integrated or annotated with sequence accuracy or group-oriented types of examinations in which processing and division of labour are enabled and mapped by IT environments can also be such examination settings.

Further types of examinations may be specified in the subject-specific regulations.

- (5) Examinations may, where applicable, be conducted via an electronic remote data network (on-line examinations).
- (6) Authentications prior to or during an examination are usually carried out with the help of an official photo ID (e.g. identity card), which must be shown upon request. In the case of several persons to be authenticated in examinations pursuant to paragraph 5, authentication shall be carried out individually, e.g. in a breakout room, in compliance with data protection.
- (7) In order to prevent cheating during an examination conducted as an online examination pursuant to Paragraph 5, the students are obliged to activate the camera and microphone function of the communication device used (video supervision) and to direct it appropriately. Moreover, video supervision shall be set up in such a way that the personal privacy and data protection of the persons concerned are not restricted more than necessary for the justified purposes of control. Video surveillance shall be carried out by supervisory staff of the university. Recording and automated evaluation of image or sound data of video supervision is not permitted. Sentences 1-4 shall apply mutatis mutandis to the transmission of images and sound required to conduct an oral or practical examination as an online examination pursuant to paragraph 5.
- (8) (8) If, in the case of an online examination pursuant to Paragraph 5, the transmission of the examination task, the processing of the examination task, the transmission of the examination performance or video supervision is technically not feasible at the time of the examination, the examination shall be terminated at the respective stage and the examination performance shall not be assessed. The examination attempt is deemed not to have been taken. This does not apply if the student is responsible for the disruption. If, in the case of an oral or practical examination pursuant to Paragraph 5, the image or sound transmission is temporarily disrupted, the examination shall be continued after the disruption has been remedied. If the technical malfunction persists so that the examination cannot be conducted properly, the examination shall be repeated at a later date; sentences 2 and 3 shall apply accordingly. If the technical malfunction occurs after a substantial part of the oral or practical examination has already been completed, the examination may be continued and completed in another suitable format, in particular by telephone without the use of a video conferencing system, after agreement between the examiners and the candidate. This does not apply to practical examinations where image transmission is absolutely necessary for the assessment of the examination performance.
- (9) Participation in an online examination pursuant to paragraph 5 is voluntary. The voluntary nature of participation shall be ensured by the fact that the respective type of examination is also offered in a non-digital manner, if possible in the same examination period.
- (10) If alternative types of examinations are provided for a module in the subject-specific regulations and these have not already been specified in a module handbook, the respective type of examination shall be announced at the beginning of the course. This is not necessary if, in exceptional cases, the choice of the type of examination is incumbent on the student. The same applies to the options according to paragraph 4. Examinations can be taken in German or English. Further details are regulated by the subject-specific regulations.
- (11) The specific scope and duration of the examination are specified and announced by the examiner in the subject-specific regulations, in the module handbook or at the beginning of the course.

## § 14

### Master's thesis

- (1) The Master's thesis is intended to prove that the candidate is able to independently work on a problem from the respective subject according to scientific methods within a specified period of time.
- (2) The candidate may propose topics and supervisors with the application for admission. The proposal for the supervisor shall be complied with as far as possible and justifiable. Upon request, the examination board shall arrange for a supervisor.
- (3) The topic is issued by the supervisor. The time of issue and the topic as well as the two examiners shall be recorded. The topic can only be returned once and only within the first four weeks after it has been issued and only with reasons. The topic of the Master's thesis can be withdrawn by the supervisor upon justified application by the student. In cases of doubt, the chairperson of the examination board shall decide. The new topic shall be issued immediately, but within four weeks at the latest.
- (4) The Master's thesis shall be written in German or English. The subject-specific regulations shall govern further details.
- (5) The processing time of the Master's thesis is regulated by the subject-specific regulations in a processing scope of 15 to 30 credit points. The topic, assignment and scope shall be limited by the supervisor in such a way that the deadline for completion can be met. The chairperson of the examination committee may approve an extension of the deadline for completion of the project if a justified application is submitted before the deadline for completion of the project has expired. The prerequisite for an extension of the processing period is that the reasons for the extension are not the responsibility of the candidate and are reported immediately. The reasons for the need for an extension must be comprehensively explained and substantiated in writing or in electronic form by the candidate, in the case of illness by submitting a medical certificate. In principle, the extension may not exceed half of the originally planned processing period.
- (6) The Master's thesis must be submitted to the Academic Services Office in due time in triplicate in writing and also in electronic form. The chairperson of the examination committee may specify the digital form and the means of transmission. Access by the electronic means specified by the chairperson of the examination committee shall be deemed to meet the deadline. The written copy must be submitted without delay. In the case of postal delivery to the Academic Services Office, the date of the postmark shall be deemed the date of submission. The examiners and the candidates can bilaterally agree that the examiners each receive a further written copy of the Master's thesis. The candidate bears the burden of proof for the submission or delivery of the Master's thesis. The date of submission shall be recorded. When handing in the thesis, the student must affirm in lieu of oath that he or she has written the thesis independently. Furthermore, the student has to affirm in writing that the submitted written version corresponds to the one on the electronic storage medium. If the work is not handed in on time for reasons for which the candidate is not responsible, the examination committee shall decide on the further procedure; as a rule, a new topic is issued without this being considered a repetition. In this case, paragraph 5, sentence 6 applies accordingly. If the thesis is not handed in on time for reasons for which the candidate is responsible, § 16 paragraph 1 shall apply.
- (7) The Master's thesis shall be assessed in writing or in electronic form by the supervisor and another examiner from the group of examiners (§ 12). At least one examiner must have performed additional academic work according to § 15 paragraph 4 HmbHG, which can be proven e.g. by a habilitation. In the case of examiners pursuant to § 64 paragraph 2 sentence 2 HmbHG, the examination board shall ensure that the topic of the Master's thesis only covers the examination material of the examiners' courses or the modules belonging to them.
- (8) The Master's thesis shall be assessed by both examiners without delay, at the latest six weeks after submission. In the case of an above-average number of examination procedures or for comparable objective reasons, the chairperson of the examination board may allow for a longer assessment period. The grade of the Master's thesis is calculated from the arithmetic mean of the grades awarded by the two examiners, taking into account § 15, paragraph 3. If the Master's thesis is graded "insufficient" (5.0) by only one of the two examiners, the chairperson of the examination committee shall appoint a third examiner. If the third examiner assesses the thesis with at least "sufficient" (4.0), the grade of

the Master's thesis is determined as the arithmetic mean of the three assessments, taking into account § 15 paragraph 3, but at least with "sufficient" (4.0). If the third examiner assesses the thesis as "insufficient" (5.0), this thesis shall be deemed to have been graded as "insufficient" (5.0) overall.

- (9) The Master's thesis may be repeated once if the overall grade is "not sufficient" (5.0). The repetition must be applied for within a period of six weeks after the announcement of the negative examination result. A second repetition is only possible in justified exceptional cases. Returning the topic of the Master's thesis within the period specified in paragraph 5 sentence 3 is only permitted if the candidate has not yet made use of this option.
- (10) Examinations for which students were already registered and which were not offered due to force majeure shall be deemed to have been taken when determining the modules or credit points required for admission to the thesis. For graduation, however, the modules must have been completed with a passed examination. If examinations cannot be offered or can only be offered to a limited extent due to force majeure, the examination board may determine that admission to the final module is also possible with a lower number of credit points or a lower number of successfully completed modules in exceptional cases.

## § 15

### Assessment of examination performance

- (1) The assessment of the examination performances shall take place immediately, at the latest four weeks after the examination; § 14, paragraph 8, sentence 2 shall apply accordingly. The grades for the individual examination performances shall be determined by the respective examiners. Examination performances which are not included in the overall grade may be assessed as passed or failed, provided they are not assessed with the following grades:

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| 1 = very good    | an outstanding performance,  |
| 2 = good         | a performance that is significantly above average requirements,                        |
| 3 = satisfactory | a performance which meets average requirements,  |
| 4 = sufficient   | a performance which, despite its shortcomings, still meets the requirements,           |
| 5 = insufficient | a performance which no longer meets the requirements due to considerable deficiencies. |
- (2) For the differentiated assessment of the examination performances, intermediate values can be formed by lowering or raising the grades by 0.3; the grades 0.7; 4.3; 4.7 and 5.3 are excluded.
- (3) If the examination performance of a module is composed of several partial performances, the grade of the module can be calculated from the arithmetic mean of the grades of the individual examination performances or as a mean of the grades for the partial performances weighted by means of credit points. The first two decimal places after the decimal point are taken into account; all other places are deleted without rounding. The grades of the partial examinations of the final module can be weighted independently of the credit point distribution. The same applies to the assessment of an examination performance by several examiners. The method of calculation is regulated in the subject-specific regulations. The grade is:

|                    |      |
|--------------------|------|
| from 1.0 to 1.15   | 1.0  |
| above 1.15 to 1.50 | 1.3  |
| above 1.50 to 1.85 | 1.7  |
| over 1.85 to 2.15  | 2.0  |
| over 2.15 to 2.50  | 2.3  |
| over 2.50 to 2.85  | 2.7  |
| over 2.85 to 3.15  | 3.0  |
| over 3.15 to 3.50  | 3.3  |
| over 3.50 to 3.85  | 3.7  |
| over 3.85 to 4.0   | 4.0  |
| above 4.0          | 5.0. |

An overall grade is calculated for the Master's examination. Paragraph 3, sentence 3 applies accordingly. The overall grade is usually calculated as the mean of all graded module examinations weighted by credit points. The subject-specific regulations may stipulate deviating regulations. The subject-specific regulations may also stipulate that individual (partial) examinations are not included in the overall grade.

- (4) The overall grade of a passed Master's examination shall be:
- |  |              |
|--|--------------|
| with an average of up to and including 1.50      | very good    |
| with an average of 1.51 up to and including 2.50 | good         |
| with an average of 2.51 up to and including 3.50 | satisfactory |
| with an average of 3.51 up to and including 4.00 | sufficient   |

In the case of outstanding performance, the overall grade "passed with distinction" may be awarded. Further details are regulated in the subject-specific regulations.

- (5) In addition to this grade, a percentage rank according to the standards of the "European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System" (ECTS grade) shall also be shown in the degree certificate.

## § 16

### Missed examinations, withdrawal

- (1) An examination performance shall be deemed to have been assessed as "insufficient" (5.0) if the candidate misses an examination date or an examination deadline within the meaning of these regulations without good reason, withdraws after the start of a (partial) examination or does not start or complete a written examination performance within the scheduled processing time.
- (2) The reason given for the withdrawal or failure to attend must be notified to the examination board in writing or in electronic form without delay and must be made credible. If the candidate is ill, a medical certificate must be submitted. Partial examinations already completed shall be credited. After completion of an examination, reasons for withdrawal can no longer be asserted.
- (3) The Act on the Protection of Mothers at Work, in Training and in Studies (Maternity Protection Act – MuSchG) of 23 May 2017, as amended, applies to pregnant and breastfeeding students. A pregnant student shall inform the relevant office of her pregnancy and the expected date of delivery as soon as she knows that she is pregnant. Upon request, a medical certificate or the certificate of a midwife or maternity nurse shall be presented as proof. A student who is breastfeeding should inform the relevant body as early as possible that she is breastfeeding. As soon as the relevant body has been informed, it shall immediately concretise a risk assessment and determine the necessary protective measures. The student must be informed of the result of the concrete assessment. The maternity protection periods interrupt any time limit of these examination regulations. The duration of maternity leave shall not be included in the time limit. Applications by the student for parental leave periods according to the law on parental allowance and parental leave (BEEG) must be taken into account. Students must inform the examination board in writing or in electronic form no later than four weeks before the date from which they wish to take parental leave, enclosing the necessary evidence, of the period or periods for which they wish to take parental leave. In the case of urgent reasons, an appropriate shorter period is possible in exceptional cases. The examination board shall examine whether the legal requirements exist which would provide an entitlement to parental leave in the case of employees and shall inform the candidate of the result and, if applicable, of the new examination deadlines. Paragraph 2, sentences 3 and 4 apply accordingly.

## § 17

### Deception, breach of order

- (1) If the student attempts to influence the result of an examination by cheating or using unauthorised aids, the examination shall be assessed as "insufficient" (5.0) or "failed". In the case of written examinations and oral examinations, non-permitted aids include, for example, mobile phones. The same applies to examination performances by students who make their examination results available to others during the examination procedure without this being expressly provided for.
- (2) In the event of cheating or the use of unauthorised aids within the meaning of paragraph 1 during and after the distribution of examination papers, the candidate shall not be excluded from continuing the examination performance. The respective invigilator shall make a note of the occurrence, which he or she shall submit to the chairperson of the examination board immediately after completion of the examination. The candidate shall be informed immediately about the decision. The decision on the

existence of an attempt at cheating is made by the chairing member of the examination board. The decision on the existence of an attempt at cheating is made by the chairing member of the examination board. The candidate shall be given the opportunity to comment beforehand.

- (3) If a candidate has cheated in an examination and this fact only becomes known after taking the examination, the grade may be corrected in accordance with paragraph 1 and the Master's examination may be declared failed. The incorrect certificate shall be withdrawn and, if necessary, a new one issued. The Master's certificate shall also be withdrawn with the incorrect certificate if the Master's examination was declared "failed" due to deception. A decision according to sentence 1 is excluded after a period of five years from the date of the certificate.
- (4) Students who have repeatedly or in a particularly serious case been guilty of academic misconduct in a written examination or in an academic activity may be exmatriculated in accordance with § 42 paragraph 3 no. 5 HmbHG.
- (5) A candidate who disturbs the orderly conduct of the examination may be excluded from the continuation of the examination by the respective examiner or invigilator; in this case, the examination performance in question shall be deemed to have been graded "unsatisfactory". In serious cases, the examination board may exclude the candidate from taking further examinations.
- (6) In the case of decisions under paragraphs 1, 3, 4 and 5, the candidate may request a review by the examination board. The request must be made without delay.

## **§ 18**

### **Final failure of the Master's examination**

- (1) The Master's examination is definitively failed if
  - a) a module examination was assessed with "not sufficient" (5.0) in its last repetition or is deemed to have been assessed with "not sufficient" (5.0) or
  - b) the Master's thesis was assessed with "insufficient" (5.0) in its last repetition or is deemed to have been assessed with "insufficient" (5.0).
- (2) If the Master's examination has been definitively failed, the chairperson of the examination board shall issue a notice stating all examination results and the reasons for the failure of the Master's examination. The notification shall be provided with instructions on how to appeal and shall be made known to the student.

## **§ 19**

### **Appeal procedure**

Objections to the examination procedure and to examination decisions must be lodged with the chairperson of the examination board in writing, in electronic form in accordance with § 3a (2) of the Hamburg Administrative Procedure Act or for record within one month of notification, otherwise within one year. The objection should be substantiated in writing or electronically. If the examination committee does not redress the objection or does not redress it in full, it is to be forwarded to the university's objection committee.

## **§ 20**

### **Certificate, diploma and diploma supplement**

- (1) A certificate shall be issued immediately upon passing the Master's examination, if possible within four weeks after passing the last examination. The certificate shall contain information on the successfully completed modules relevant for the Master's degree, including the grades achieved and credit points earned, the topic and grade of the Master's thesis, the overall grade and the total credit points achieved. The certificate shall be signed by the chairperson of the examination board and bear the seal of the University of Hamburg. The certificate shall bear the date of the day on which the last examination was taken.

- (2) In addition to the certificate, the candidate receives the diploma with the date of the certificate. This certifies the award of the Master's degree. The diploma is signed by the dean and bears the seal of the University of Hamburg. The Dean's Office may delegate the authority to sign to the chairpersons of the examination committees. An English translation shall be attached to the certificate.
- (3) In addition, the examination board shall issue a diploma supplement and a transcript of records in German and English.

## **§ 21**

### **Invalidity of the Master's examination, remedying examination deficiencies**

If the requirements for taking an examination were not fulfilled without the candidate intending to deceive, and if this fact only becomes known after the certificate has been issued, this defect shall be remedied by passing the examination. If the candidate has intentionally and unlawfully obtained the opportunity to take the examination, the examination may be declared "insufficient" (5.0) and the Master's examination may be declared "failed". The candidate shall be given the opportunity to comment before a decision is made. § 17, paragraph 3, sentences 2 and 3 shall apply accordingly.

## **§ 22**

### **Inspection of examination files**

Up to one year after completion of the individual module examinations, inspection of the candidate's written examination papers, the related reports and the examination records shall be granted within a reasonable period of time upon written application by the candidate, insofar as these have not already been handed over.

## **§ 23**

### **Effective date**

These examination regulations come into force on the day after publication as an official announcement of the University of Hamburg.

Hamburg, 22 December 2021  
**University of Hamburg**