

## Framework Regulations for Degree Programs and Examinations at Freie Universität Berlin

This version corresponds to the first amended regulations of November 18, 2020 (*FU-Mitteilungen* No. 29/2021, p. 474)

### Preamble

On the basis of Section 9.1.4 of the supplemental rules and regulations (*Teilgrundordnung [Erprobungsmodell]*) of Freie Universität Berlin of October 27, 1998 (*FU-Mitteilungen* No. 24/1998), the Academic Senate of Freie Universität Berlin issued the following Framework Regulations for Degree Programs and Examinations (*Rahmenstudien- und -prüfungsordnung, RSPO*) on February 13 and March 20, 2013.\*

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\* These regulations were confirmed by the Executive Board of Freie Universität Berlin on March 25, 2013, and by the Berlin Senate department responsible for higher education on July 2 and 17, 2013. The confirmation of these regulations by the Berlin Senate department was originally considered valid for the period lasting up to May 31, 2014; however, this was extended indefinitely by means of a memorandum on March 19, 2014.

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Section 1 Scope

(1) These framework regulations for degree programs and examinations contain general regulations for the organization and implementation of degree programs and examinations, departmental academic advising, and interdisciplinary requirements and procedures for completing degree program coursework and examinations in degree programs of Freie Universität Berlin that conclude with a bachelor's or master's degree and require regulations across all degree programs in the interest of uniform procedures. Details of the respective degree program or range of courses are governed by the relevant degree program and examination regulations, which apply in addition to these framework regulations for degree programs and examinations.

(2) Insofar as no other regulations indicate otherwise, the framework regulations for degree programs and examinations also apply to degree programs leading to a state examination.

Section 2 Degree Programs and Range of Courses

(1) A bachelor's degree program leads to a first professional degree from a university. In addition to the subject-specific degree components, two interdisciplinary fields of study are offered, one of which is integrated into the respective bachelor's degree program:

1. General Professional Skills (*Studienbereich Allgemeine Berufsvorbereitung, ABV*) and
2. Teacher-Related Professional Studies (*Studienbereich Lehramtsbezogene Berufswissenschaft, LBW*).

For the ABV and LBW fields of study, regulations are provided in separate degree program and examination regulations.

(2) There are two structural models for degrees in bachelor's degree programs that are distinguished as follows:

1. Study in a core subject, supplemented by the study of modules from another related field or fields, and the study of ABV if required by the individual examination regulations. This model is referred to as the "mono-bachelor."

2. The study of a core subject and of modules from one or two other subject areas, as well as the study of ABV or LBW. This model is referred to as the combined bachelor's degree or "combi-bachelor."

(3) The level of the learning objectives for the degree programs, core subjects, secondary subjects, fields of study, and modules shall be established on a scale according to the knowledge to be acquired in each case.

(4) When establishing a master's degree program, it shall be determined whether it is a consecutive master's degree program pursuant to Section 23.3.1a or 1b of the Berlin Higher Education Act (BerlHG) in the version of July 26, 2011 (GVBl. p. 378) or a master's degree program providing further education pursuant to Section 23.3.2 BerlHG. A consecutive master's degree program, pursuant to Section 23.3.1a BerlHG, builds on a bachelor's degree program in an in-depth, broadening, or interdisciplinary manner. A consecutive master's degree program, pursuant to Section 23.3.1b BerlHG, requires a university degree that qualifies graduates for a profession, but does not build on specific bachelor's degree programs. A master's degree program offering continuing education pursuant to Section 23.3.2 BerlHG conveys course content that generally requires a first university degree qualifying the student for a profession and subsequent qualified practical professional experience of generally not less than one year. In the case of master's degree programs offering continuing education, the specific connection between the professional qualification and the program concept must be made clear. Continuing education master's degree programs are not based on the existing course offerings of the consecutive master's degree programs.

(5) In deviation from the design variants described above in paragraphs 2 and 4, reform models for structuring courses of study may be designed, tested for a limited period of time, and, as the case may be, incorporated into the degree programs offered by Freie Universität Berlin. In particular, reform models can include professionalization phases for direct career entry, intensive study phases in preparation for a doctorate, or study abroad phases.

### Section 3 Standard Time to Degree

(1) A bachelor's degree program has a standard time to degree of at least three years and at most four years. At least 180 credit points must be earned for a bachelor's degree.

(2) A master's degree program has a standard time to degree of at least one year and no more than two years. At least 300 credit points, including the first professional degree, must be earned to attain a master's degree.

(3) Consecutive master's degree programs pursuant to Section 23.3.1a BerlHG shall be designed to achieve a total of 300 credit points in conjunction with a previous bachelor's degree program.

(4) The total standard time to degree for a bachelor's degree program and a consecutive master's degree program, pursuant to Section 23.3.1a BerlHG, amounts to a maximum of five years in total.

(5) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraphs 1 to 4, Freie Universität Berlin allows students to study on a variable schedule in order to enable them, for example, to work while studying or to take on family responsibilities even without formal part-time student status. There is no entitlement to special curricular arrangements in the context of a variable-time degree program.

#### Section 4 Modularization and Examinations during the Course of Study

(1) Modules are thematically and temporally self-contained study units that are assigned credit points. Modules are designed in such a way that they can usually be studied within one semester or one year. Modules should have a scope of at least five credit points.

(2) Modules are designed separately for bachelor's and master's degree programs, and a corresponding range of courses is provided. As an exception, modules from a master's degree program can be offered for a bachelor's degree program in a scope of up to 15 credit points; this scope can be altered in justified cases if the learning objectives to be achieved with these modules distinctly serve the learning objectives of the bachelor's degree program. Modules from a bachelor's degree program may be offered on an exceptional basis for a master's degree program in a scope of up to 15 credit points; this scope can be altered in justified cases if the learning objectives to be achieved with these modules distinctly serve the learning objectives of the master's degree program. Modules already completed as part of a bachelor's degree program may not be taken again in a master's degree program.

(3) The acquisition of gender and diversity competence shall be considered in an appropriate way as an integral part of the degree programs in the learning objectives and module descriptions.

(4) Modules are generally completed with a standardized examination (module examination). The module examination is related to the learning objectives of the module and assesses the achievement of these objectives. The scope of the examination shall be limited to what is necessary for this purpose. A module examination can be composed of different elements that take into account the learning objectives of the module.

(5) In justified cases, the degree program and examination regulations may stipulate that multiple modules may be completed with one comprehensive module examination.

(6) The module examination results are evaluated with a grade according to the grade scale outlined in Section 18. The respective examination regulations may stipulate that, for individual modules or a field of study, the module examination results are assessed without the grade scale (pass/fail) or that no module examination has to be taken in specific individual modules.

(7) In the case of performance assessments conducted without the grade scale, the student may receive feedback that addresses the quality of their work. However, Section 33.2 of the Berlin Higher Education Act still applies.

(8) Provisions shall be made in the individual degree program and examination regulations to ensure the completion of the workload envisaged in the degree curriculum within the standard time to degree.

#### Section 5 Departmental Academic Advising

(1) Departmental academic advising is carried out by a professor and at least one student assistant. The department may call in other department members involved in teaching or student assistants for

student advising. Students are supported through subject-specific, individual advising, especially regarding the structure and implementation of their studies and on planning and carrying out studies abroad.

(2) For students who have chosen a bachelor's degree program relevant to teaching or a teacher-training master's degree program, the Center for Teacher Education of Freie Universität Berlin offers advising on the career-related aspects of the program, including advising on Teacher-Related Professional Studies (LBW).

(3) Before the last retake attempt of an examination according to Section 20.3 below, the student will be explicitly informed about options for individual counseling. This counseling is provided by the departmental academic advising services or by the Center for Academic Advising and Psychological Counseling.

## Section 6 Examination Board

(1) Organizational units that do not exclusively offer degree programs leading to a state degree shall establish at least one examination board. The examination board is responsible for determining proper academic performance, recognizing credits for academic performance, organizing the taking of examinations, appointing examiners and assessors, deciding on admission to examinations, and determining whether the required examinations have been completed for the degree in the respective degree program or for a secondary subject or module. The examination board ensures compliance with applicable legal provisions and works toward the appropriateness of the degree and examination requirements and the observance of academic standards.

(2) Applications and inquiries can always be addressed by students of modularized programs to the examination board responsible for the degree program, which, if necessary, will immediately forward them to the examination board responsible for these applications and inquiries and inform the student that they have forwarded the request. If several examination boards consider themselves responsible (or not responsible), or if the question of responsibility is otherwise unclear, then the university's executive board decides on which examination board is responsible, taking into account the various areas of expertise in a given subject

(3) The examination board shall be appointed by the responsible body and shall consist of seven members, four of whom shall be full-time university professors or university lecturers, one research staff member, one administrative staff member, and one student. An alternate shall be appointed for each member. The members of the examination board and their alternates are appointed by the members of the respective status group in the responsible body. The term of office of the members and their alternates is two years; for student members and their alternates, a one-year term of office is also possible upon request.

(4) The examination board shall appoint the chairperson and the deputy chairperson from among the university professors or university lecturers who serve on the examination board.

The examination board may delegate its decision-making authority for specific tasks to the chairperson, though the delegation of said authority may also be revoked. The specific tasks that may be delegated can be outlined in the respective examination regulations. In the case of an urgent matter, the chairperson may make the necessary decisions. They shall immediately report to the

examination board on any urgent decisions made. The authority of the examination board to make its own decisions still holds.

(5) The members of the examination board and their alternates shall have the right to attend examinations in an observing capacity and to obtain comprehensive information about required and completed examinations and about compliance with the applicable legal provisions.

(6) The meetings of the examination board are not public. Members and alternates are bound by confidentiality as part of their official professional obligations. If they are not public sector employees, they must be sworn to confidentiality in writing by the chairperson.

## Section 7 Recognition of Credits

(1) Coursework and examinations completed in courses of study at a university or a legally equivalent institution shall be recognized, insofar as there are no significant differences that would prevent such recognition. This is the case if the learning objectives to be achieved and skills and knowledge to be acquired through the respective academic work essentially correspond to studies at Freie Universität Berlin in terms of scope and requirements. This involves an overall consideration and assessment, not a schematic comparison. When credit is given for work performed 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 and the German Rectors' Conference, as well as any agreements within the framework of cooperation agreements, must be observed.

(2) Relevant practical work experience will be recognized for credit. Knowledge and skills acquired outside of higher education can count toward up to 50 percent of the credit points earned for the completion of a degree program as stipulated by the individual degree program and examination regulations.

(3) Credits for a final thesis, including an oral examination component, in a bachelor's or master's degree program or in another modularized degree program, insofar as it must be completed in connection with such a thesis, are not subject to recognition. Exceptions may be made, however, if the individual examination regulations include provisions that allow for recognizing credits for a final thesis, including an oral examination component, in a bachelor's or master's degree program or in another modularized degree program.

(4) In the event that credits are recognized for academic achievements, the grades – insofar as the grading systems are comparable – are to be adapted and included in the calculation of the overall grade. In the case of incomparable grading systems or modules without a module examination, the achievement shall remain ungraded and recorded as “passed”; achievements and credits that fall under this category may be recorded as recognized on the student's transcript or diploma supplement.

(5) If the requirements of paragraphs 1 and 2 are met, students are legally entitled to having those credits recognized. The recognition of achievements is done officially by the relevant examination board. Students must submit the appropriate documentation required for credit recognition.

## Section 8 Registration

(1) Students must register for modules and courses in order to complete modules, participate in courses, and take examinations. Unless access to courses is restricted according to the Statutes of Academic Affairs (*Satzung für Studienangelegenheiten*, or SfS), registration entitles the student to participate in the respective courses and to take the examinations. Registration for modules and for courses alone does not lead to a binding examination date. The examination board may set a binding examination date, in which case it must specify a deadline within which the student may withdraw without giving reasons. Said deadline shall be at the earliest two weeks before the binding examination date. In the event of a student's withdrawal, the examination board may decide how to proceed, and in this context may decide that the student must repeat a course in whole or in part before completing the assessment.

(2) The deadline for registering for modules and for courses begins no later than the first working day of the semester. The allocation of places in courses with limited capacity takes place on the last working day before the start of the lecture period from 12 noon; at the same time, the registration period for courses with limited capacity ends. The registration deadline for modules and courses with unlimited capacity is the third Friday after the start of the lecture period. For block courses or field trips/excursions, exceptions to this registration deadline may be determined by resolution of the individual examination board. Until the end of the registration period for courses with unlimited capacity, registration for said courses is possible without restrictions; beyond that, registration for courses with limited capacity is possible if there are still places available after allocation or if they become free. If the beginning or the end of the period falls on a public holiday, the preceding working day shall take its place. Saturday is not counted as a working day.

(3) If the first of the courses to be completed as part of a module begins more than six weeks after the start of the lecture period, a decision by the individual examination board may specify dates that deviate from those outlined in Section 8.2. Accordingly,

- registration must begin no later than the penultimate Monday before the start of the course,
- places must be allocated no later than 12 noon on the last Friday before the first date of the course,
- the period between the beginning of the registration period and the allocation of places in courses with limited capacity must be at least four days,
- the registration period must end in time so that the attendance quota according to Section 9.2 can still be met, but at the latest on the third Friday after the start of the course.

If an examination board decision regarding courses that begin more than six weeks after the start of the lecture period is not made at the latest four weeks before the beginning of the respective semester, Section 8.2 shall apply. The decision shall be announced to students in an appropriate form.

(4) The beginning and end of the attendance phases of courses must be announced by the individual examination board in a suitable manner no later than four weeks before the start of the registration period if said phases do not coincide with the beginning and end of the lecture period and are not already specified in the respective degree program or examination regulations.

(5) Exceptions can be made in cases where admission requirements are specified for a module in the examination regulations, when there is every indication that the student in question will be able to successfully complete the module based on their past academic performance. In such cases, certain admission requirements may be waived. The examination board makes this decision.

(6) Upon enrollment, the student receives a user account from ZEDAT, Freie Universität's Computing Service. With their user account, students can access the online examination administration system,

where they can register for modules, examinations, and courses. For this purpose, the Student Records and Registration Office sends the following data to ZEDAT:

- First and last name
- Gender
- Student identification number
- Address
- Student status
- Date of birth
- Place of birth
- Birth name

### Section 9 Course Participation

(1) There is no general attendance requirement for courses at Freie Universität Berlin; however, regular attendance is strongly recommended for students. If there is a requirement for regular attendance in one or more courses of a module, this must be regulated in the respective examination regulations. If regular participation in a course of a module is required by the examination regulations for a given program, students must regularly attend the relevant course in the module and participate in the course actively.

(2) Regular attendance – insofar as this is stipulated by an examination regulation – is deemed to have been achieved if at least 85% of the attendance time scheduled for the courses has been attained. However, a higher or lower attendance rate than 85% may be set. The attendance requirement must not be less than 75%.

(3) Active participation is deemed to have taken place if the requirements for active participation as stipulated in the module descriptions have been fulfilled.

(4) If a student does not achieve the required level of regular and active participation due to extenuating circumstances, the teacher involved and the student shall reach an agreement on an appropriate substitute assignment to make up the missed work in this individual case.

### Section 10 Credit Points

(1) Credit points indicate the student workload that is generally necessary to fulfill the respective requirements and achieve the respective learning objectives. In addition to regular and active participation in the courses belonging to a module, the workload also includes the entire preparation and follow-up of the course material, the preparation and elaboration of a student's own contributions, as well as the preparation for and completion of examinations.

(2) One credit point corresponds to an average of 30 hours of student work. In accordance with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), 30 credit points are generally allocated for a semester and 60 credit points for an academic year. A deviation in the course curriculum of up to 5 credit points per semester is permitted.



(3) Credit points are assigned to modules and the final thesis in a bachelor's or master's degree program or in another modularized degree program.

(4) The credit points are certified by the teacher responsible for the respective achievement, who records the results if the requirements according to Section 9 have been fulfilled and the necessary level of academic achievement have been obtained with at least the grade "sufficient" (4.0); modules that are not graded using the grading scale must have been assessed with "passed." For modules without a module examination, the prerequisites according to Section 9 must be fulfilled for the acquisition of credit points assigned to the respective module.

(5) As a rule, proof of academic performance must be documented immediately in a suitable form, if necessary also in electronic form, but at the latest within the penultimate week before the start of the lecture period of the following semester, insofar as this is necessary for an uninterrupted continuation of studies at Freie Universität Berlin or at another university, otherwise by June 15 for academic achievements in the winter semester and by December 15 for academic achievements in the summer semester.

(6) A certificate of completion must include:

- a) Contents and learning objectives of the module,
- b) Course types,
- c) Type and duration of attendance,
- d) Prerequisites for the module, if applicable,
- e) Types of examinations / documented work,
- f) Number of possible credit points,
- g) Grade and
- h) Completion date.

## Section 11 Services in the Event of Disabilities, Health Impairments and Familial Difficulties

(1) If a student provides a medical certificate showing that they are unable to complete all or part of their academic work in the prescribed form or within the prescribed time due to disabilities as defined in Section 2.1 of Book IX of the German Social Code (SGB IX) or due to long-term or permanent health impairments, the chairperson of the examination board shall allow the student to complete equivalent work in a different form, at a different time, or allow for extra time to complete the assignment.

(2) Insofar as the submission of academic work, the repetition of academic work, the reasons for missing work, and the observance of time allotted for the completion of academic work are concerned, the illness of a close relative in accordance with Section 7.3 of the Nursing Care Period Act (*Pflegezeitgesetz*) and the caregiving required for this (insofar as the student is the sole caregiver) shall be deemed equivalent to an illness of the student. The same applies to pregnant women and women who have recently given birth, based on the regulations in Sections 3 and 6 of the Maternity Protection Act (*Mutterschutzgesetz*).

(3) In order to take maternity or parental leave, a leave of absence or part-time study may be applied for in accordance with the Statutes of Academic Affairs (*Satzung für Studienangelegenheiten*, or SfS).

## Section 12 Electronic Work

(1) All coursework and examinations required by the respective degree program and examination regulations may be fulfilled in electronic or digital form (“electronic work”). In the case of electronic work, implementation and evaluation are carried out using digital technologies.

(2) Deviating or alternative formats to the type of module assessment defined in the degree program and examination regulations – especially digital written exams, take-home exams, term papers, or oral assessments conducted via video conference – are permitted if the module assessment cannot be conducted in the intended format due to extraordinary circumstances, the consequences of which cannot be compensated in any other way, or conducting the assessment would be unreasonable due to the disproportionate work involved, or doing so would be unreasonable for specific students. The examination committee will make the final decision on whether and in which format the module assessment should be conducted. The subject-specific requirements of the module assessment must be upheld. Students are to be immediately informed of any decisions made pursuant to Section 10.2 as well as the format and scope of the assessments to be undertaken, the time of the module assessment, and any submission deadlines.

(3) The authenticity of the author and the integrity of the examination results shall be ensured, taking into account confidentiality requirements. For this purpose, the examination results must be unambiguously identifiable and permanently assignable to the correct student in the digital system. It must be ensured that the electronic data are unchanged and complete for the purposes of grading and verifying the results.

(4) If an examination has been graded automatically via digital means, the student may request that an examiner verifies the result.

## Section 13 Multiple-Choice Examinations

(1) Multiple choice questions in an examination and any free response questions connected to the multiple choice questions must be set by two examiners.

(2) If it becomes clear during the grading of multiple-choice questions that certain questions do not fulfill their purpose of obtaining reliable examination results and do not sufficiently reflect the qualification objectives of the relevant module, the grading process must be adjusted so that the examination candidate is not put at a disadvantage in their examination result.

(3) An examination in the form of multiple-choice questions is deemed passed where the candidate has achieved at least 50 percent of the possible maximum points (absolute passing grade), or if the number of points achieved by the student does not fall more than 10 percent below the average number of points achieved by all candidates who participated in the examination (relative passing grade). If the relative passing grade is used, the candidate must still achieve at least 40 percent of the total possible points in order to pass the examination.

(4) Multiple-choice examinations must be graded as described below. Where the candidate has achieved the minimum number of points as defined above under Section 11.3, they will be graded according to the following criteria:

- “very good” for a number of points that totals at least 75 percent more than the minimum required number of points under Section 11.3;
- “good” for a number of points that totals at least 50 percent, but less than 75 percent, more than the minimum required number of points under Section 11.3;
- “satisfactory” for a number of points that totals at least 25 percent, but less than 50 percent, more than the minimum required number of points under Section 11.3;
- “sufficient” for a number of points up to 25 percent more than the minimum required number of points under Section 11.3.

(5) The grading requirements stipulated above under 11.3 and 11.4 will not be applied where

1. the examiners who set the questions as described in Section 11.1 are also the examiners responsible for grading the multiple-choice answers, or
2. the proportion of maximum points achievable in the multiple-choice section makes up no more than 25 percent of the examination as a whole, where the examination is only partly in multiple-choice format.

#### Section 14 Final Thesis in a Bachelor’s or Master’s Degree Program or in Another Modularized Degree Program

(1) Students shall be admitted to the final thesis in a bachelor’s or master’s degree program or in another modularized degree program upon request if

1. the admission requirements stipulated in the respective examination regulations have been met,
2. they were last enrolled in the corresponding degree program at Freie Universität Berlin, and
3. the completion of the degree is not prohibited due to factors outlined in Section 23.1.

(2) The request should be accompanied by a certificate from a teacher authorized to conduct examinations stating that they are willing to supervise the work referred to in Section 14.1. The relevant examination board reviews the request and issues a decision; if a thesis supervision agreement for said thesis is not submitted, the examination board appoints a supervisor.

(3) The examination board shall issue the topic of the thesis referred to in Section 14.1. The topic and assignment must be such that the work can be completed in the time allotted. The assignment and compliance with the submission deadline must be documented and kept on file. The date on which the topic is issued marks the beginning of the working period. When handing in the thesis, the student must certify in writing that they are the sole author of the thesis and have not used any sources or aids other than those indicated. The thesis shall be submitted in both printed and electronic form. In the process, data protection regulations must be observed and data security must be guaranteed. Submitted work may be subjected to electronic plagiarism checks; data protection and data security objectives must be ensured in this process. The examination board can decide that the thesis must be submitted electronically and only electronically, despite the aforementioned regulation about submitting the thesis in printed and electronic form.

(4) As a rule, the examination regulations provide that an assigned topic may be rejected once within a period to be specified. In this case, the thesis subject is considered not issued. The period of time referred to above may not exceed half of the time allotted to complete the assignment, or six weeks, whichever comes first.

(5) The thesis referred to in Section 14.1 shall be evaluated by at least two examiners.

(6) The evaluation of a bachelor's thesis must take place in a timely manner so that the bachelor's degree can be awarded no later than two months after submission of the bachelor's thesis, insofar as exceeding this deadline is not necessary for the completion of other coursework or examinations required by the examination regulations. The same applies to the assessment of a master's thesis with the exception that the deadline for the examiners is three months starting from the submission date of the master's thesis.

(7) If an oral examination component follows the thesis referred to in Section 14.1, the date for this will be communicated at the latest by the time the grade for the thesis is announced. This time frame must also take into account the deadlines in Section 14.6.

## Section 15 Oral Examinations

An oral examination component associated with a thesis in a bachelor's or master's degree program or in another modularized degree program must be conducted, and other oral examinations should be conducted, by at least two examiners or by one examiner in the presence of an expert assessor. Accreditation as an expert is obtained by the assessor if they have successfully passed the same examination or an equivalent examination in the past.

## Section 16 Submission Form for Written Examination Results

The individual examination regulations may stipulate that written examinations not taken under supervision should also be submitted in electronic form. Section 14.6 still applies. Section 14.3 is also applicable here, especially where it refers to data protection, plagiarism checks, and electronic submissions.

## Section 17 Obligation to Substantiate the Evaluation of Examinations

(1) Evaluations of written and electronic examinations shall be justified in writing and submitted in printed or electronic form. The justification for the evaluation must be explained.

(2) In the case of oral examinations, the main topics covered and the corresponding evaluations shall be recorded in the form of meeting minutes. The minutes must be written in such a way as to enable the examinee to conduct an appropriate legal review. Immediately following the oral examination performance, the examinee is entitled to an appropriate explanation of the evaluation of their examination.

## Section 18 Grading

(1) The following grades shall be used for the evaluation of examinations:

1 = very good – an outstanding performance

2 = good – a performance significantly above average

3 = satisfactory – performance that meets the average requirements

4 = sufficient – performance that, despite flaws, still meets the requirements

5 = insufficient / fail – performance that, due to significant problems, does not meet the requirements

(2) For a differentiated assessment of a student's performance, intermediate values between 1.0 and 4.0 can be formed by lowering or raising the grade numbers by 0.3. The following grades are allowed: 1.0; 1.3; 1.7; 2.0; 2.3; 2.7; 3.0; 3.3; 3.7; 4.0 and 5.0.

(3) If an examination is evaluated by several examiners, the grade is calculated as an arithmetic mean. Module grades will be included in the overall grade or another composite grade with the weight of credit points assigned to the module. The grade for a cross-module examination is included in the overall grade or another composite grade according to the sum of all credit points assigned to the respective modules. The respective examination regulations may provide for a weighting scheme that deviates from the ones just described for a final thesis in a bachelor's or master's degree program or in another modularized degree program or for individual modules. The weighting factor for a thesis in a bachelor's or master's degree program or in any other modularized program must be between 1.0 and 2.0, and that for individual modules must be between 0.5 and 1.5. To determine a composite grade for several examinations, the module grades, or the overall grade, the respective grades (based on the grading system outlined in Section 18.1 and 18.2) are multiplied by the number of credit points associated with the individual grades, then added together and divided by the sum of all credit points included in the calculation. Insofar as a separate weighting scheme is established in individual examination regulations for one or more examinations as mentioned just above, a composite grade is calculated as follows: The separately weighted grade or grades are each multiplied by the number of credit points and the weighting factor, added to the non-separately weighted grades, each multiplied only by the number of credit points, and then divided by the sum of the total credit points for the non-separately weighted grades plus the total credit points for the separately weighted grade or grades multiplied by the respective weighting factor. Only the first digit after the decimal point will be considered when reporting the grade value on a transcript or report card and when determining the overall grade or other composite grade; all other digits will be deleted without rounding.

(4) The possible grades resulting from the system described above in Section 18.3 are as follows:

- For an average of 1.0 up to and including 1.5 = very good

- For an average of over 1.5 up to and including 2.5 = good
- For an average of over 2.5 up to and including 3.5 = satisfactory
- For an average of over 3.5 up to and including 4.0 = sufficient
- For an average of over 4.0 = insufficient

The entire examination is passed if all examination components according to the regulations for the respective degree program have been completed and all examination components to be assessed with grades (based on the grading system outlined in Section 18.1 and 18.2) have been assessed with at least the grade “sufficient” (4.0) and all coursework not to be assessed with grades has been assessed with “passed.”

(5) The examination board shall determine the deadlines within which examinations are to be assessed by the respective examiners. Deadlines may only be exceeded upon written request and for compelling reasons. The assessment procedure for examinations shall not exceed four weeks. Section 14.6 still applies.

#### Section 19 Absence, Withdrawal, Fraud, Breach of Regulations, Invalidity of Decisions

(1) An examination shall be deemed to have been graded “insufficient / fail” (5.0) if the student misses an examination date that is binding without good reason, or if the student withdraws from the examination without good reason after having started it or after the deadline set by the examination board in accordance with Section 8.1.4 has elapsed. The same applies if the examination is not completed within the time allotted. The reason must be reported to the examination board in writing without delay and must be credible. In the case of an illness (of the student or of a close relative in the sole care of the student – as described in Section 11.2), a medical certificate must be submitted. In the case of extraordinary circumstances that are related to the examination and reduce a candidate’s ability to perform, the examination board may, upon request, permit withdrawal from a failed last possible examination, even after announcement of the examination result; this request and corresponding documentation to substantiate it must be submitted within three months after the announcement of the result of the failed last possible examination.

(2) If a student was prevented from completing a thesis in a bachelor’s or master’s degree program or in another modularized degree program on time due to a valid reason, the examination board may, upon request, extend the deadline for a period equal to the time during which the student was unable to complete the examination. Individual examination regulations may stipulate when the work should or must be redone. The examination shall be deemed not to have been undertaken in the event that the examination board requires it to be redone.

(3) If a student attempts to influence the result of an examination by deception, in particular by plagiarism, or by using unauthorized aids, threats, granting of advantages or bribery, the examination in question will be graded as “insufficient / fail” (5.0). The examination board may additionally determine that participation in courses must be repeated in whole or in part. In serious cases of misconduct in this context, which would justify retracting the person’s university degree, the examination board may determine that the entire examination has been definitively failed. The person may not pursue any further examinations that count toward obtaining the desired degree at Freie Universität Berlin.

(4) If someone disturbs the examination process, that person will be given an initial warning by the instructor administering the exam. If they continue to cause a disturbance, they will not be allowed to complete the exam themselves. Such a case will result in a grade of “insufficient / fail” (5.0).

(5) Decisions about the outcomes of individual examination components or the entire examination or even the granting of the final degree as a whole may be subsequently corrected or withdrawn by the examination board if it becomes known that they were obtained by deception, use of unauthorized aids, threat, granting of an advantage, or bribery as listed in Section 19.3. Incorrect or invalid certificates of completion and graduation documents (certificates of academic record, degree certificates, diploma supplements, and transcripts) will be confiscated.

(6) The student shall be given an opportunity to state their case prior to a negative decision in the context of misconduct described in Section 19.3 to Section 19.5. Mitigating circumstances shall be taken into account. The student must be notified in writing of any negative decisions and a justification for the decision must be provided.

(7) In order to verify the identity of a student in the course of completing an examination, the student may be required to present their identity card or, alternatively, another valid, official form of photo identification.

## Section 20 Retaking Exams

(1) A final thesis graded “insufficient” (above 4.0) in a bachelor’s or master’s degree program or in another modularized degree program may be redone once. This also applies to the accompanying oral examination if there is one.

(2) Work on the second attempt at the thesis mentioned in Section 20.1 shall begin within three months after the result of the first attempt has been announced.

(3) Other types of examinations that do not fall under the categories listed in Section 20.1 may be retaken at least twice and at most three times in the event of failure. If the number of possible retake attempts for the examinations is not regulated in the examination regulations, these examination performances may be repeated three times in case of failure. The last possible retake attempt shall be supervised by at least two examiners. If the last possible retake attempt is also unsuccessful, the examination has been “definitively failed.” If the student is unable to pass the examination, they will not be able to graduate in accordance with the respective examination regulations.

(4) It should be possible to complete the first retake attempt of a course-related examination in good time so that it is possible to continue a degree program without delay. At least one further retake attempt shall be offered in the second subsequent semester at the latest; however, the clause about the possibility of completing the retake in good time still applies. Retakes should be offered in such a way as to allow adequate preparation time, usually at least two weeks. In the case of written examinations, the date for the first retake examination should be announced together with the first examination date.

(5) Examinations that result in a grade of “sufficient” (4.0) or better may not be retaken. As an exception, the respective examination regulations may include provisions for a single retake in order to improve the grade of an examination passed in the first attempt; in this case, only the better grade will be factored into the student’s record.

## Section 21 Inspection of Records

(1) Within one year after notification of a decision on examination results, inspection of records shall be granted upon request. As a rule, it should take place in the examination office responsible for the records. The inspection of records may also be carried out by a person granted such authority in writing. The right to inspect records includes the right to obtain comprehensive knowledge of the contents of the records and to make handwritten notes. Photocopies of the contents of the file can be made and distributed upon payment of an administrative fee.

(2) The necessary documentation for the grading of academic performance in written or electronic form shall be retained until the decision regarding the entire examination has become final and, in the event of a legal dispute, until a binding decision has been made. Final theses in a bachelor's or master's degree program or in any other modularized degree program must also be retained for ten years. Thereafter, the documents referred to above shall be destroyed unless the student has requested that these documents be handed over; students shall be informed in good time of the possibility of handing over these documents.

## Section 22 Appeals Process

(1) The persons concerned may lodge a written objection against examination evaluations with the appropriate examination board.

(2) If the justification of results as described in Section 17.1 is not on file, said justification shall be provided immediately upon request. After receipt of this justification, the persons concerned may file an appeal with the examination board as mentioned in Section 22.1.

(3) The appeal shall be filed within three months of the announcement of the substantiated examination result.

(4) The examination board shall be responsible for the proper handling of the appeal procedure. The examination board shall forward the appeal to the examiners responsible for the decision that is being appealed. The examination board shall notify the persons concerned of the examiners' decision on the appeal.

(5) Generally, the examiners should make a decision on the appeal within one month. In making their decision, the relevant assessment results and the justifications provided for those results shall be reviewed. The outcome of this review, including the grade, shall be justified in accordance with Section 17.1.

(6) Sections 22.1 to 22.5 and Section 17 also apply by extension to appeal procedures related to doctoral and postdoctoral qualifications.

## Section 23 Degree Completion (Graduation)



(1) In order to graduate, the following prerequisites must be fulfilled:

1. The student has completed the coursework required according to the respective degree program and examination regulations.
2. The thesis has been completed in a bachelor's or master's degree program or in another modularized program at Freie Universität Berlin.
3. The student has provided assurance that there is no case involving incomplete or failed coursework/examinations or a pending examination procedure as detailed just below.

The degree is not awarded if the student has definitively failed to complete coursework or definitively failed to pass examinations at another university in the same degree program, in the same subject, or in a module that is identical or comparable to one of the modules completed in the respective degree program and that will be taken into account for the determination of the overall grade, or if the student is in a pending examination procedure. As an exception to the regulations listed here and in conjunction with Section 7.3, individual examination regulations may stipulate that the thesis requirement mentioned above may be completed outside of Freie Universität Berlin in order to fulfill the prerequisites for completing the degree. The decision on the fulfillment of the prerequisites outlined above is made by the respective examination board.

(2) Based on the successful completion of the examination, students receive a certificate of academic record, a degree certificate, and a diploma supplement (English and German version). In addition, a degree certificate supplement with details of the individual modules and their components (transcript) is prepared. English versions of the certificate and diploma will be provided upon request.

#### Section 24 Entry into Force, Expiration, Transitional Provisions

(1) These Framework Regulations for Degree Programs and Examinations enter into force on the day after their publication in the official bulletin of Freie Universität Berlin (*FU-Mitteilungen, Amtsblatt der Freien Universität Berlin*).

(2) At the same time, the Statutes for General Examination Matters (*Satzung für Allgemeine Prüfungsangelegenheiten*) of July 4, 2001 and April 17, 2002 (*FU-Mitteilungen* No. 15/2002), last amended on March 13, 2006 (*FU-Mitteilungen* No. 27/2006), for degree programs leading to a bachelor's or master's degree or a state examination, shall lapse. Insofar as examination regulations for degree programs leading to the bachelor's or master's degree or a state examination refer to the Statutes for General Examination Matters referred to here, these Framework Degree and Examination Regulations shall replace the Statutes for General Examination Matters.

(3) The Statutes for General Examination Matters in the version specified in Section 24.2 above shall apply to degree programs that do not conclude with the bachelor's or master's degree or a state examination. Sections 12, 13, 16, and 19 of these Framework Regulations for Degree Programs and Examinations shall, however, apply to such degree programs.

(4) The limits on retaking examinations set forth in Section 20.3 shall apply as of October 1, 2015. Unsuccessful examination attempts prior to this date shall not be taken into account in the calculation as outlined in Section 20.3.

(5) Individual provisions of these Framework Regulations for Degree Programs and Examinations may be deviated from on the basis of corresponding cooperation agreements in degree program and

examination regulations for degree programs offered and conducted jointly with institutions outside Freie Universität Berlin.