

## **Examination Rules for Distance-Learning Bachelor Degree Courses**

Betriebswirtschaft  
Business Administration  
Finanzmanagement  
Marken- & Modemanagement  
Marketing & Kommunikation  
Wirtschaftspsychologie

as of April 6<sup>th</sup> 2021

including the modification articles as of June 20<sup>th</sup> 2023.

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### **Please note**

This is a translation of the original German "Prüfungsordnung für die Bachelor Fernstudiengänge Betriebswirtschaft, Business Administration, Finanzmanagement, Marken- & Modemanagement, Marketing & Kommunikation, Wirtschaftspsychologie vom 06.04.2021 in der Fassung gemäß der Ordnung zur Änderung der Prüfungsordnung für die Bachelor Studiengänge vom 20.06.2023 (ÄO Bachelor Fernstudium 01)". Should there be any discrepancies between the English translation and the original German version, the original text shall prevail.

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By reason of § 2 para 4 and § 64 para 1 of the Law on the Universities of the Land of North Rhine-Westphalia (Hochschulgesetz – HG) in the version of the Hochschulzukunftsgesetz (September 11<sup>th</sup> 2014) the ISM International School of Management has issued the following examination rules.

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## **Preamble**

Economic studies in the bachelor study courses at the ISM are a preparation for managerial activities in companies. They are intended to provide students with the technical skills, abilities and methods required for this. In order to cope with the challenges and changes in the professional world, the contents of the individual modules are conveyed in an application-oriented way on the basis of scientific findings.

Students will be qualified to analyze procedures and problems of management practice and work out economically based solutions while taking account of implications outside their field. Alongside the acquisition of technical and methodological abilities, the studies will foster the personal and social competence of students. Students acquire vocational competencies and are able to act in a responsible manner. They possess knowledge of international framework conditions.

Furthermore, students develop a critical awareness for the use of digital media, so that they are able to take part in well-founded and critical discussions within a knowledge-based society. This includes the self-regulated use of extensive digital information environments to gain new knowledge, the ability to consider and assess different opinions, to challenge one's own perspective, and to give one's own point of view based on facts.

Gender equality is respected in the structuring of the studies and their content.

## General

### § 1 Scope of Application, Commencement of Studies and Disadvantage Compensation

1. These bachelor examination rules apply to the completion of studies of all distance-learning bachelor degree courses:
  - The degree program **Betriebswirtschaftslehre** consists of 180 ECTS and its intended time-to-degree is six semesters (when studying full-time). There are also part-time versions. The main language of instruction is German.
  - The degree program **Business Administration** consists of 180 ECTS and its intended time-to-degree is six semesters (when studying full-time). There are also part-time versions. The language of instruction is English. Students have the opportunity to choose between three different tracks: Digital Track, On-Campus Track, Practical Track. The Digital Track is a completely distance learning course. In the On-Campus Track, a semester at an ISM campus is integrated into the curriculum. In the Practical Track, an internship semester is integrated into the curriculum (see course handbook and study plan).
  - The degree program **Finanzmanagement** consists of 180 ECTS and its intended time-to-degree is six semesters (when studying full-time). There are also part-time versions. The main language of instruction is German.
  - The degree program **Marken- & Modemanagement** consists of 180 ECTS and its intended time-to-degree is six semesters (when studying full-time). There are also part-time versions. The main language of instruction is German.
  - The degree program **Marketing & Kommunikation** consists of 180 ECTS and its intended time-to-degree is six semesters (when studying full-time). There are also part-time versions. The main language of instruction is German.
  - The degree program **Wirtschaftspsychologie** consists of 180 ECTS and its intended time-to-degree is six semesters (when studying full-time). There are also part-time versions. The main language of instruction is German.

Insofar as hereafter no explicit differentiation is made between the bachelor degree courses, the regulations apply jointly to all bachelor degree courses.

2. The general part of the examination rules for ISM distance-learning bachelor degree courses regulates the basic structures. The appendixes regulate the specializations of the bachelor degree programs. Adjustments and changes to the appendixes may be determined by the examination board.
3. The examination rules in their respectively valid version are an integral part of the study agreement.

4. Students can be admitted to the first semester of a distance-learning bachelor degree course any time during a winter or summer semester.
5. To ensure equality of opportunity for disabled students (within the meaning of § 2 para 1 of the Social Security Code IX) or for those with chronic illnesses, disadvantage compensations with regard to admission to bachelor degree courses, academic calendar and conditions as well as examination procedures and conditions are accorded which compensate for the disadvantages. Presentation of appropriate proofs may be required to substantiate a disability or chronic illness. In cases of dispute an authorized expert is to be involved in formulating the disadvantage compensation. Furthermore the statutory maternity periods, parental leave periods as well as inactive periods due to the care or provision of spouses, registered life partners or a direct relation or first-degree relation by marriage are to be observed if these are in need of care or provision.
6. While observing the requirements of the discipline and depending on the circumstances of the individual case, the following may for example be accorded:
  - Extension of the total period in which certain study and examination work is to be performed (examination period)
  - Changes in duration (including editing time, interruption of time-based study and examination work by individual recuperation periods which may not be counted against the editing time) and/or circumstance (splitting of examination work into work segments) of individual study and examination work
  - Extension of periods between individual pieces of study and examination work
  - Possibility of co-determination in setting examination dates (e.g. not immediately before or after particular therapeutic measures)
  - Performance of study and examination work in a form other than scheduled
  - Allowance of an individual instead of a group examination
  - Allowance of necessary aids (e.g. braille) and assistance services (e.g. sign language interpreter as well as provision of adapted (examination) documents (e.g. large print)
  - Taking an examination in a separate room

## § 2 Preconditions for Study

1. The precondition for taking up studies is a proof of a university of applied science entrance qualification or a general qualification for university entrance or a subject-linked qualification for university entrance or an entrance qualification recognized as equivalent by the competent government agencies or an entrance opportunity regulated by statutory ordinance according to § 49 para 4 of the Higher Education Act (HG). Details concerning nature, form and scope of a possible admission examination are specified in the admission rules for distance-learning bachelor degree courses of the ISM in the applicable version.
2. University applicants who have acquired skills and abilities necessary for a successful distance-learning bachelor degree course in a way other than by studying are entitled according to § 49

para 12 HG to take up studies in a section of the distance-learning bachelor degree course corresponding to the result of the assessment examination as long as regulations on the awarding of study places do not oppose this. Further details on the type, form and extent of the assessment examination are regulated by the ISM admission rules for distance-learning bachelor degree courses of the ISM in the applicable version.

3. Admission to studies will be mandatorily denied if the university applicant does not fulfill the admission requirements according to para 1 or para 2 or has definitively failed an examination required according to the examination rules in the chosen bachelor degree course at a university in the area of validity of the German Basic Law. This applies accordingly to related or comparable bachelor degree courses.
4. Further registration requirements are regulated by the ISM admission rules for distance-learning bachelor degree courses .
5. If the original proof of a university of applied science entrance qualification (see Admission Rules) has not been issued to the applicant by the start of the semester, the applicant can be provisionally admitted to the degree course (conditional admission). The missing proof has to be submitted no later than three months after the start of the semester. If the missing proof is not submitted within that timeframe, the student has to be de-registered (exmatriculated). Exams the student might have passed will not be certified.

### **§ 3 Structure and Content of the Bachelor Degree Courses**

1. The intended time-to-degree including all exams depending on the degree structure selected by the student is: 6 semesters (full-time: 30 ECTS credits per semester), 9 semesters (part-time fast: 20 ECTS credits per semester), or 12 semesters (part-time slow: 15 ECTS credits per semester).<sup>1</sup>
2. The workload is allocated through credit points according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). The workload includes attending lectures, preparation and follow-up, and preparation for and participation in examinations. The workload per year is about 1,800 hours. Per year 60 credit points should be acquired. Thus, a credit point is comprised of 30 hours of work. The part-time versions of the degree programs have a workload of 1,200 and 900 hours respectively; students are to acquire 40 and 30 credits per year respectively.<sup>2</sup>
3. The bachelor degree courses are structured in modules. The modules are usually worth 5 or 10 credit points, and the bachelor thesis is worth 10 credit points.
4. The contents of the degree courses are conceived in such a way that the course can be completed in the regular time-to-degree. The contents can be found in the course handbook (see appendix "Course Handbook").

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<sup>1</sup> The semester on campus in the on-campus track of the Business Administration program can only be completed full-time. Therefore, 11 semesters are required in this case in the second part-time model.

<sup>2</sup> For the academic year in which the semester on campus is completed, the workload for the part-time study models is 1,500 hours and 1,350 hours respectively.

5. The compulsory and elective modules are recorded in the study plan. The study plan is also a recommendation to students for an appropriate structure of their studies. The contents of the modules, type of exams, teaching methods, as well as workload in hours are defined by the module descriptions published in the course handbook.
6. Each module concludes with a module examination. Credit points are awarded for examinations that have been passed successfully.

## § 4 Course Guidance

1. General course guidance is provided by ISM staff members. It extends to questions of course suitability and the academic calendar as well as career planning. A confidential person is available for psychological support as is a representative for the concerns of students with a disability or chronic illness.
2. The program director is responsible for subject-specific guidance. Program directors are supported by study coaches as well as tutors. They provide support to students in particular regarding the content, structure, requirements, and techniques of the degree course.
3. A list of names for the contact persons mentioned above is provided digitally on the e-campus.
4. Making use of course guidance is especially recommended: at the beginning of studies, when transferring from degree course or university to another, on failing an exam, when the studies are interrupted and before dropping out of a degree course.

## Bachelor Examination

### § 5 General, Bachelor Degree

1. The bachelor examination forms the conclusion of a bachelor degree course that qualifies a student for a profession. The bachelor examination is intended to establish whether students have acquired the sound technical, methodological and key competences necessary for autonomous activity in a profession and are qualified to work independently on the basis of scientific findings and methods.
2. The requirements of the bachelor examination are fulfilled by acquiring credit points according to the study plan. Successful conclusion of a bachelor degree course requires the acquisition of 180 credit points (workload = 5,400 hours).
3. If the bachelor examination has been passed, the ISM confers the degree of "Bachelor of Arts" or "B.A." for short, in the bachelor degree courses of Marketing & Kommunikation, Marken- & Modemanagement and the degree of "Bachelor of Science" or "B.Sc." for short, in the bachelor degree courses of Betriebswirtschaft, Business Administration, Wirtschaftspsychologie and Finanzmanagement.

4. The bachelor examination consists of the module examinations and a thesis. The module examinations take place during the bachelor degree course at the times when each module in the bachelor degree course is scheduled according to the study plan (see appendix "Study Plan").

## § 6 Examination Board

1. The tasks assigned by these examination rules are the responsibility of the examination board for the faculty of economics, which – unless regulated otherwise – acts as the joint examination board for the bachelor degree courses in the faculty of economics. The examination board is an examining body of the ISM International School of Management. The composition of the examination board is regulated in the senate's rules of procedure.
2. The examination board supervises compliance with the examination rules and ensures the proper conduct of examinations. The board appoints examiners and observers and decides on the withdrawal of the appointment. It is in particular responsible for decisions on objections to decisions taken in examination procedures. The examination board reports to the faculty regularly, at least once a year, on the development of study periods and the allocation of grades for the parts of the bachelor examination and the overall grades. The examination board makes suggestions on reforming the examination rules and the study plan. As a rule the examination board can devolve the execution of its duties to the chair of the examination board.
3. The examination board is quorate if besides the chair, or in the event of his absence his deputy, at least two further professors as well as at least two further voting members are present. It makes decisions by a simple majority. In the case of a voting tie the vote of the chair, or if absent his deputy, has the casting vote. The student members of the examination board do not take part in consultation and decision-making on issues which concern the determination of examination tasks or their own examinations.
4. Meetings can also be conducted by video conference or by circulation in writing. In the circulation procedure decisions are taken by email vote if no more than two members object to this type of voting.
5. The members of the examination board have the right to be present during an examination. Exceptions to this are student members who are to submit to the same examination in the same examination period.
6. Meetings of the examination board are not public. The members of the examination board and their deputies are subject to confidentiality. They are to be bound to secrecy by the chair of the examination board.
7. Decisions of the examination board or its chair are to be communicated to the examinee via email. Negative decisions are to be send to the examinee by registered post without delay; these decisions are to be justified and supplemented with information on legal remedies. The examinee is to be given the opportunity to comment on the facts material to the decision prior to the decision. §2 para 3 No. 3 of the Administrative Procedure Act (VwVfG) of North Rhine-Westphalia remains



unaffected, in particular with respect to the exception to the duty to give a hearing and to give reasons in decisions of a scientific or artistic nature.

## **§ 7 Examiners and Observers**

1. Examiners and observers are appointed by the examination board. Only those who have taken at least one bachelor examination applicable to the subject or a comparable degree, in particular a diploma examination applicable to the subject, or have acquired a comparable qualification, may be appointed as examiners.
2. Unless compelling reasons require differently, the examiners should have exercised a relevant independent teaching activity in the study section to which the examination applies. If several examiners are to be appointed, at least one examiner should have taught in the relevant module.
3. The examiners are independent of instructions in their examination activities.
4. Only those who have taken at least one relevant bachelor examination or a comparable examination, in particular a relevant diploma examination, or have acquired a comparable qualification, may be appointed as observers.
5. The examinee is to be informed of the names of their examiners usually at least two weeks prior to the exam digitally on the e-campus.
6. Examiners and observers are bound to secrecy on examination matters.

## **§ 8 Recognition and Credit Transfer regarding Study Periods and Examination Credits**

1. Study and examination credits acquired in another ISM Bachelor degree course or a congeneric Bachelor degree course at another state or state-approved university or at another state or state-approved vocational academy or at a foreign state or state-approved universities can be transferred insofar that there is no significant difference in terms of competences, contents and as well as qualification level and/or profile (e.g. research or application-orientated) from those of the Bachelor degree course the recognition is applied for. At the same time an overall consideration should be undertaken with regard to the importance of the credits for achieving the objectives of the Bachelor degree course and the purpose of the examinations (see appendix "Course Handbook"). In this respect there is a significant difference if the applicant is likely to be hindered in successfully completing the Bachelor degree course. The burden of proof for asserting significant differences lies with the university.
2. The examination board makes decisions on the transfer of credits according to para 1. Responsible faculty representatives are to be consulted to arrive at a decision. The applicant must present the documents required for the transfer of credits. Applications for the transfer of credits are to be processed within three months.

3. In the case of a transfer of credits according to para 1, students will receive the number of credit points designated according to the appendix "Study Plan".
4. For the transfer of study and examination credits, the equivalence agreements approved by the Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) and the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) should be observed. Also to be observed are agreements which are part of university partnerships. In cases of doubt, the German "Zentralstelle für ausländisches Bildungswesen" is to be consulted.
5. Where there are differences in the grading system a grades conversion is to be undertaken according to the "modified Bavarian formula" of the Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (Agreement on the Determination of Overall Grades for Foreign University Entrance Certificates. Decision of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of 15<sup>th</sup> March 1991 in the version of 18<sup>th</sup> November 2004). Where grading systems are not comparable the remark "passed" will be adopted. The transfer of credits will be indicated in the diploma.
6. On request, skills and abilities attained in a manner other than through a higher education course, can be recognized on the basis of submitted documents (such as certificates, subject descriptions, curricula etc.), if the content and level of the study and examination credits that they shall replace are equivalent. The verification of whether the study and examination credits provided by the applicant are equivalent to the study and examination credits that they should replace is made in each individual case on the basis of documents submitted by the applicant. It is the applicant's responsibility to demonstrate the equivalence. If no decision can be taken on the basis of the provided documents, the recognition may be carried out through a placement test.
7. The decision regarding the recognition of knowledge and skills rests with the examination board according to para. 6. Applications for recognition are to be processed within three months. Knowledge and skills achieved outside of higher education institutions may be recognized as study and examination credits to a maximum of 50% of the total ECTS credits of the degree program. Credits acquired through recognition are recorded with the note "passed" in the diploma. They are not considered for the calculation of the overall grade.

## **§ 9 Examination Dates**

1. The exams take place online.
2. Participation in the first attempt at an examination must take place no later than three semesters after the semester in which the student took part in the module. Furthermore, repeat examinations must be passed no later than three semesters after participation in the first attempt. If this is not the case, the student loses the right to take the exam. Loss of the right to take an exam may result in a change to different or new examination rules or in the exmatriculation of the student.

## § 10 Assessment of Examination Performance

1. The examiners grade the individual exams. If exams are composed of more than one element, the assessment of the examination work consists of the weighted arithmetic mean of the grades of the different elements the exam consists of. At the beginning of the module, the examiner has to determine if failing in one of the elements means that the entire exam has been “failed” (5.0) or if the weighted arithmetic mean of the grades for the different elements defines the overall grade for the module.
2. The following grades are to be used to assess examination performance:

|   |                 |              |  |
|---|-----------------|--------------|--|
| 1 | sehr gut        | very good    | an excellent performance   |
| 2 | gut             | good         | a performance above average requirements                                     |
| 3 | befriedigend    | satisfactory | a performance in accordance with average requirements                        |
| 4 | ausreichend     | sufficient   | a performance that in spite of its faults still meets requirements           |
| 5 | nicht bestanden | failed       | a performance that because of considerable faults does not meet requirements |

For further differentiation of an assessment, grade figures decreased or increased by 0.3 may be used; grades 0.7, 4.3, 4.7 and 5.3 are not permissible. Only examination performances with a grade from 1.0 to 4.0 may be credited to the bachelor examination.

3. The assessments “passed” and “failed” are also permissible for module examinations. A module examination is regarded as “passed” if it meets the requirements. If a module examination is composed of several examinations, all examinations must be assessed as “passed” for the student to pass the overall module examination.
4. If several examiners are involved in an examination, they assess the overall examination performance jointly unless otherwise determined in the following. If their assessments do not agree, the grade will be the result of the arithmetic mean of the individual assessments.
5. If the arithmetic mean is used to calculate a grade, two decimal places are taken into account – all others decimal places are deleted. The assessment of grades calculated in this manner is defined in the following way:
  - Up to 1.50 „very good“
  - More than 1.50 to 2.50 „good“
  - More than 2.50 to 3.50 „satisfactory“
  - More than 3.50 to 4.0 „sufficient“
  - More than 4.0 „failed“

6. A module examination has been passed if it has been assessed at least as “sufficient” (4.0). If a module examination has been passed, this also means that the credit points assigned to that module in the appendix “Study Plan” have also been gained.

## **§ 11 Repetition of Examination Work, Failure of the Bachelor Examination**

1. If module examinations have been “failed” (5.0) they may be repeated twice. One time only a module examination may also be repeated three times (free trial examination to compensate for hardship cases). The bachelor examination has been “definitively failed” if the free trial examination or a second third attempt has been assessed as “failed” (5.0).
2. The free trial examination has to take the form of an “oral exam”. The free trial examination cannot be granted when an examination has been declared as “failed” (5.0) due to improper conduct, in particular an attempt at cheating. The oral exam takes place in a virtual class room or at one of ISM’s campuses. The exam will be conducted by two of ISM’s examiners or one of ISM’s examiners and an observer.
3. The thesis may be repeated once. The bachelor examination has been “definitively failed” if, when the bachelor thesis is repeated, it earns a “failed” (5.0) assessment.
4. If the examinee can definitively no longer be admitted to an examination or if they have “definitively failed” the bachelor examination, the examinee will receive a notification, together with information on legal remedies, of the associated compulsory exmatriculation. On request, the examination board will issue a certificate for the successfully achieved examination and study credits.

## **§ 12 Cheating and Breach of Regulations**

1. If the examinee attempts to influence the result of their exam by cheating, e.g. through the use of inadmissible aids or plagiarism, the corresponding exam will be graded as “failed” (5.0). The attempt at cheating is to be put on record by the respective examiner or proctor.
2. In the case of a first attempt the head of distance learning will issue a warning; in the case of a repeated or serious attempt at cheating the examinee may also be exmatriculated.
3. An examinee who interferes with the proper course of the examination may be excluded from continuing the examination, usually after a warning. In this case, the corresponding examination will be assessed as “failed” (5.0). The reasons for the exclusion are to be put on record.
4. The examinee may request that decisions according to para 1 and para 3 be reassessed by the examination board within 14 days after the decision. This is done with an informal written request.

## Module Examinations

### § 13 Objective, Number, Form and Extent of Module Examinations

1. According to the study plan (see appendix “Study Plan”) the degree course is divided into modules (compulsory modules and electives), each of which concludes with an exam. The examinations are intended to determine whether the examinee has mastered the contents and methods of the module (see appendix “Course Handbook”) in the essential relationships and whether they can apply the acquired skills and abilities on their own. The module exam usually consists of an examination at the end of the semester and/or examination work during the semester.
2. The specific number, form, extent and requirements of the examinations are listed in the course handbook. At the beginning of a semester the examination board may change the terms of the examinations in consultation with the examiners.
3. The following forms of module examination are provided for:
  - Report or term paper
  - Written exam
  - Partial examinations throughout the semester (E-Portfolio)
4. The extent and duration of module examinations is determined by the credit points assigned to them and defined in the course handbook.
5. If the module examination is carried out as an examination throughout the semester, all forms of examination are allowed which permit an individually recognizable study performance, in particular partial examinations during the course and term papers.

### § 14 Admission to Module Examinations

1. Only those who are registered (matriculated) in the relevant bachelor degree course at ISM and not in a break semester may be admitted to module examinations. Students who are in a break semester can however be admitted to module examinations that they have to repeat because of a failed attempt.
2. The examination board may request a registration procedure (application for admission) for admission to individual module examinations.
3. The examination board makes the decision regarding the admission. Generally, the decision regarding the admission will be announced two weeks prior to the examination date. The announcement is made electronically.
4. Admission will be denied if
  - the requirements named in paragraph 1 are not fulfilled or

- the deadlines have not been complied with or documents (paragraph 2) are incomplete and have not been completed by the deadline set by the examination board.

## § 15 Conduct of Module Examinations

1. Examination dates are set by the examination board. The examinees are informed about the examination dates in due time, usually two weeks prior to the respective exam. The announcement is made electronically.
2. On demand of the examiner or invigilator examinees are to identify themselves with ISM student identification or official photographic identification.
3. All examination procedures, such as number of participants, start of written exam, end of written exam, disturbances, early hand-ins (including in the preparation periods) are to be documented with a signed record, unless the exam is recorded electronically, e.g. online exams.
4. Lateness is the responsibility of the examinee.
5. A module examination is graded as “failed” (5.0) if the examinee does not appear at an examination appointment, withdraws from the examination after it has started, or if examination work is not completed within the prescribed time period. In the case of compelling reasons, such as illness of the examinee, or problems with the technical equipment or internet connection, the determining reasons for the absence are to be credibly reported to the examination board in writing within 5 days. Presentation of proofs, such as a doctor’s certificate, may be requested. If the examination board recognizes the reasons, the examination will be annulled and a record of the annulment will be made on the e-campus.

## § 16 Reports or Term Papers

1. Reports are a written, systematic review (sometimes summary) of an activity applicable to the subject (e.g., field trip, academic presentation) or a project (e.g., practice-oriented project with external partners, development of a concept) including a critical discussion of the contents.
2. Term papers are continuous texts created independently and according to scientific and subject-specific practice-oriented methods in written form on a given topic or a practice-orientated task or problem (case study) that has to be solved within a given time frame and number of pages.
3. Term papers can be produced as individual or group work. In the case of group work the individual contribution of each student must be recognizable, e.g. identified by an indication of sections, page numbers or other objective criteria.
4. The scope and time to complete the written exams are defined in the course handbook. To compensate for disadvantages such as long illnesses, serious technical or family problems, the examination board can grant extensions of deadlines.
5. The examinee must affirm in lieu of oath that they have prepared the work they hand in independently and without using other than the stated aids and that the ideas derived directly or in-

directly from outside sources are identified as such and that the present paper has not so far been presented in the same or similar form as for any other examination and has also not been published. The statutory declaration must state the number of words written in the paper.

6. Examinees must further declare that they agree to their paper being submitted to a plagiarism test, that the consent of the examiner is to be obtained before any publication of the paper, and that they have been informed that a violation of the statutory declaration (para 6) entails the threat of disallowance of the exam achievement as well as deception or fraud proceedings.
7. The examinee is to be notified of the assessment of the report or term paper no later than eight weeks after submission of the term paper. Notification is made electronically on the e-campus.
8. If a report or a term paper has definitively been graded as “failed” (5.0), the module as well as the examination is to be repeated with a new topic or a new research problem.

## **§ 17 Written Exams**

1. Written exams assess the development of solutions to specific problems as well as the treatment of topics within a limited timeframe and with limited aids with the use of methods that are common to the discipline.
2. Written exams are online exams; they are conducted digitally at a laptop or pc. The examinees are not supposed to be present at one of ISM’s campuses for the exam. After registering for the exam, the examinee receives a link that they can use to take the online exam.
3. Online exams can be monitored electronically. To this purpose, students install software on their computer which records the screen as well as the examinee via the examinee’s webcam. Before taking part in the online exam, the examinee identifies themselves with a suitable document (student identification or ID card). If an examinee is suspected of cheating or fraud, the examination board will instruct someone to examine the recording and document breaches of regulations.
4. The electronic monitoring of written exams will be conducted in accordance with the respective data protection regulations and students will be informed in detail about the data that will be recorded before the start of the online exam.
5. Alternatively, the online exam can be conducted at one of ISM’s campuses at a date determined by the examination board. These exams will be monitored electronically in the same manner as described above. However, ISM will provide hardware that has been configured accordingly. For this form of examination, examination fees may be collected in accordance with the terms of the study contract.
6. The examiner decides on the permissibility of aids. The examinee will be advised of the permitted aids electronically in due time before the examination.
7. The written exam is based on a catalogue of questions set by the person responsible for the module. The questions are assigned different levels of difficulty. Every examinee receives an individualized exam based on the catalogue of questions. The selection of question is made randomly. Each

exam consists of the same number of questions for the different levels of difficulty to ensure the comparability of the exams.

8. Multiple choice questions (MC questions) may constitute no more than 50 percent of the total number of points to be attained. MC questions must be posed in such a way that they can be answered unequivocally. Allowable MC questions consist of a question followed by a choice of, usually, four to five answers from which the right answers are to be chosen. MC questions are assessed by plus points for correct answers and minus points for incorrect answers, although less than 0 points cannot be given in an MC questionnaire. Plus and minus points have the same value.
9. Other types of questions aside from open questions may be used in written exams, e.g., arithmetic problems, where the examinees have to write down results and/or steps within their calculations, tasks, where students have to label illustrations or texts with blanks that have to be filled in by the examinees.
10. The examinee is to be notified of the assessment of a written exam no longer than eight weeks after the exam. They are notified electronically via the e-campus.

## **§ 18 Partial Examinations Throughout the Semester**

1. Partial examinations throughout the semester (e-portfolios) consist of written and/or oral tasks that have to be completed throughout the semesters as part of a module. They ensure a continuous documentation of the learning progress. Examples for partial examinations are: the development and delivery of an oral presentation, short essays or contributions to debates, the development of (partial) drafts or (partial) concepts.
2. The examinees are informed about the topics, number, scope, and dates of the partial examinations at the start of the module. The requirements regarding content and form are also determined at the start of the module
3. Students receive detailed feedback regarding the partial examinations from other participants of the module (peer feedback) and/or the instructor. The instructor makes sure that the feedback is substantiated and methodically understandable.
4. A module examination in the form of partial examinations throughout the semester is graded as "passed" when at least 80 % of the different partial examinations have been handed in and meet the requirements regarding content and form

## **§ 19 Internships and practical work experience in the Business Administration program (Practical Track)**

1. As part of the "Internship" module in the Practical Track of the Business Administration degree program, practical phases of 26 weeks must be completed full-time. The period is extended accordingly for part-time students.



2. The decision to take the Practical Track must be made no later than three semesters after the beginning of the study program.
3. Only practical phases with a minimum duration of four weeks per block are eligible for recognition.
4. The module "Internship" is considered as passed if each practice phase has been successfully demonstrated by a practical report. If it is determined on the basis of the practical report that the practical phase does not meet the requirements, the corresponding practical phase must be repeated. If, on the other hand, only the practical report does not meet the requirements, it can be repeated once. If the repeat attempt also does not meet the requirements, the corresponding practical phase is considered as failed.
5. More details on the design of the internships or the practical work experience, their recognition and the acknowledgement of relevant activities are specified by the guidelines on the organization of internships for the Practical Track of the Distance Learning Bachelor Degree Course "Business Administration".
6. During the practical phases, students continue to be enrolled at ISM. During this time, they have access to the learning platform and can take exams.

## **§ 20 On Campus semester at ISM in the Business Administration program (On-Campus Track)**

1. The on-campus track in the Business Administration program includes a semester at an ISM campus.
2. The decision to take the On-Campus Track must be made no later than three semesters after the beginning of the study program.
3. Students who have chosen the on-campus track attend the lectures of the 5th semester of the English-language on-campus study program B.Sc. International Management.
4. The semester on campus can only be studied full-time and takes place in the winter semester (lecture period September to December).
5. The semester on campus can be completed at the earliest three semesters after the start of the study program.
6. If one or more examinations of the semester on campus are not passed or if not all scheduled modules can be completed in the semester on campus, a substitute examination must be taken. The type, subject areas, scope and examinations of the substitute examinations are determined by the examination board together with the head of the study program.

## Bachelor Thesis

### § 21 Object

1. The thesis is a written final paper on a defined problem of economics, economic psychology or business law. It is intended to show that the examinee is capable of independently dealing within a set period with a practically orientated task from their subject area both in its technical details and in cross-subject relationships by scientific and technically practical methods.
2. During the development of the thesis, the students should take part in a live seminar which is led by an authorized ISM examiner. During the colloquium, the students present an exposé of their Bachelor thesis. In the colloquium, they also report regularly on the current status of their thesis, receive feedback and exchange ideas with other students. See the course handbook for further details.
3. The length of the thesis is between 10,000 and 12,000 words.
4. The thesis may be written in German or English. In the English-language Business Administration program, the thesis must be written in English.
5. The thesis may in principle be carried out in cooperation with an institution outside the ISM.
6. The thesis is supervised by an examiner (first assessor) appointed according to § 7(1).
7. The second examiner (second assessor) may be proposed by the examinee and is determined by the examination board. One of the two assessors must have a doctorate degree. In addition one of the examiners must be an ISM Professor.

### § 22 Admission to Bachelor Thesis and Application

1. Conditions for admission to a bachelor thesis are:
  - Fulfillment of admission requirements according to § 14
  - Proof of examination achievement of at least 100 ECTS credits.
2. The application for admission to a thesis is to be directed in writing to the chair of the examination board.
3. Until notification of the decision on the application, the application may be withdrawn in writing without being added to the number of possible examination attempts.
4. The application is to be accompanied by a declaration of the examiner (first assessor) on willingness to set and supervise the thesis.
5. Should the student not be able to name a first assessor, the examination board will assign them a topic and first assessor for the thesis.

6. If the bachelor thesis is to be carried out in cooperation with companies or organizations outside the university the application is to be accompanied by a short profile of the company or organization, an undertaking by the contact person there to ensure sufficient supervisory capacity as well as with regard to appointment as second examiner (second assessor) a declaration of will by the contact person there and proof of their qualification (§ 7 (1)).
7. The examination board makes the decision regarding the admission. Admission will be denied if
  - the assigned topic does not fulfill the requirements of § 22 or
  - the requirements named in paragraph 1 are not fulfilled or
  - there are doubts as to the feasibility of the thesis, in particular with regard to paragraph 6, or
  - documents are incomplete and have not been completed by the deadline set by the examination board.
8. Notification of admission is made electronically.

## **§ 23 Issuing and Editing of a Thesis**

1. The first examiner ensures that the topic and scope of the thesis are constituted in such a way that the thesis can be concluded within the prescribed period of time. The topic of the thesis is issued by an ISM professor.
2. The day on which the examinee is notified of the topic counts as the time of issue. The time of issue is to be put on record.
3. The editing time (period from starting to edit the thesis until its submission) is 12 weeks for students studying full-time and 24 weeks for students studying part-time. The examinee will be notified of the specific editing period in writing when the topic is issued.
4. In cases of incapacity to be examined due to illness the editing time of the thesis will be extended by the days of incapacity verified by a doctor's certificate, but by no longer than two months.
5. The topic of the thesis may be returned only once and only within the first two weeks of the editing time without giving reasons. In the case of repetition according to § 11 (4) return is only permissible if the examinee has not made use of this option in preparing their first thesis.

## **§ 24 Submission of a Thesis**

1. The thesis is to be delivered within the time stipulated electronically via upload to the e-campus to the examination board or a place named by it for this purpose. The time of submission is to be put on record. If the thesis is not delivered on schedule, it will be assessed as "failed" (5.0).
2. The examinee must affirm in lieu of oath that they have prepared their thesis independently and without using other than the stated aids and that the ideas derived directly or indirectly from outside sources are identified as such and that the present thesis has not so far been presented in the

same or similar form for an exam and has also not been published. The statutory declaration must state the number of words of the thesis.

3. Examinees must further declare that they agree to the present thesis being submitted to a plagiarism test, that the consent of the first assessor is to be obtained before any publication of the thesis and that they have been informed that a violation of the statutory declaration (para 2) entails the threat of disallowance of the examination work as well as deception or fraud proceedings.

## § 25 Assessment of a Thesis

1. The thesis is to be assessed by two examiners (assessors). If the examiners' assessments do not agree, the grade of the thesis is composed of the arithmetic mean of the individual assessments. If both individual assessments are "failed" (5.0), the bachelor thesis counts as failed.
2. If the difference between the two grades of the bachelor thesis is 2.0 or more, the examination board appoints a third assessor for the thesis. The grade of the thesis is the result of the arithmetic mean of the three individual assessments. The thesis can however only be assessed as "passed" (4.0) or better if at least two of the grades are "sufficient" (4.0) or better.
3. If only one examiner assesses the bachelor thesis as "failed" (5.0) the examination board appoints a third assessor for the thesis. If the individual assessment of the third assessor is "failed" (5.0), the bachelor thesis counts as failed. Otherwise the grade of the thesis is the result of the arithmetic mean of the three individual assessments.
4. All assessments are to be justified in writing. The examinee will be notified of their grade no later than eight weeks after submission of the thesis. Credit points are awarded for the thesis according to the appendix "Study Plan".

## Result of the Bachelor Examination

### § 26 Diploma

1. If the examinee has passed the bachelor examination, they will promptly receive a diploma on the results, if possible within four weeks after notification of the result of the last examination.
2. The diploma includes the designation of the degree attained, information on the bachelor degree course, the names of the modules, the grades of the module examinations, the topic and the grade of the thesis, the credit points gained and the overall grade of the bachelor examination. Examination credits from another university recognized according to § 8 are to be indicated as such.
3. The overall grade of the bachelor examination is composed of the arithmetic mean of the individual grades stated in para 1 according to § 10. Weighting of the individual grades is done proportionately to the credit points assigned to each of them.

4. The diploma is to be signed by the head of distance-learning and stamped with the seal of the university of applied sciences. It records the date of issue and the date of the day on which the last examination was taken (graduation).

## § 27 Bachelor Certificate

1. The examinee will receive a bachelor certificate by virtue of the bachelor examination they have passed. It certifies the award of the bachelor degree according to § 5.
2. The bachelor certificate carries the date of the final degree (§ 26) and the date of issue. It contains the name of the bachelor degree course. The bachelor certificate is signed by the president and by the head of the examination board and it is stamped with the seal of the university of applied sciences.

## § 28 Diploma Supplement and Transcript of Records

1. By virtue of the bachelor examination that has been passed, a diploma supplement in English is issued additionally.
2. The diploma supplement contains the university awarding the degree, additional information about the study program, the qualifications acquired with the degree, the topic and grade of the thesis, the final overall grade of the bachelor examination and the ECTS grade. It is signed by the head of distance-learning.
3. The ECTS grade is a relative grade which puts the overall grade of the bachelor examination in relation to a comparison group (ISM students in the same bachelor degree course). Classification is done according to the following table:

| ECTS Grade | Percentage of Students Receiving this Grade |
|------------|---|
| A          | 10  |
| B          | 25  |
| C          | 30  |
| D          | 25  |
| E          | 10  |

4. The transcript of records contains all the examination credits gained by the student. This includes the names of the modules, the grades and the allocated credit points of the module examinations, the topic and the grade of the thesis as well as the final overall grade of the bachelor examination. It is signed through the head of the examination office as a facsimile.

## § 29 Additional Modules

The examinee may undergo an examination in modules additional to the compulsory modules (additional modules). The result of these examinations is not considered for the calculation of the overall grade. The additional modules are listed on the diploma supplement unless the student declares to the examination board in writing that they do not wish the additional examination credits to be recorded on their diploma supplement.

## Final Provisions

### § 30 Inspection of Examination Files

1. The examinee can access examination results as well as the assessment of the examiner on the learning platform.
2. After conclusion of the bachelor examination, the examinee can inspect their written exam work, the associated assessments of the examiners and the examination records upon request.
3. Application for the inspection is to be made to the chair of the examination board within a month after issuing of the examination diploma or of the notification of the failed bachelor examination. § 32 of the Administrative Procedure Act for the Land of North Rhine-Westphalia on restoration to the former condition applies accordingly. The chair determines the place and time of the inspection as well as the person in whose presence the inspection is carried out.

### § 31 Invalidity of Examinations

1. If the examinee has cheated in an examination and if this fact becomes known only after issuing of the diploma according to § 26 (1, 2) or the diploma according to § 11 (4), the examination board may retrospectively adjust the grades for the examinations for which the examinee has cheated and declare the bachelor examination failed in whole or in part.
2. If the requirements for admission to an examination were not fulfilled although the examinee did not intend any deception in this, and if this fact becomes known only after issuing of the diploma according to § 26 (1, 2) or the diploma according to § 11 (4), this defect is remedied by the passing of the examination. If the examinee effected the admission wrongfully with intent, the examination board will decide on the legal consequences taking into account the Administrative Procedure Act for the Land of North Rhine-Westphalia.
3. The incorrect examination diploma according to § 26 (1, 2) or the diploma according to § 11 (4) is to be confiscated and if appropriate reissued. A decision according to paragraph 1 and paragraph 2 sentence 2 is excluded after expiry of a period of five years after issuing of the examination diploma according to § 26 (1, 2) or the diploma according to § 11 (4).

## **§ 32 Objection Procedure**

The examination board decides on an objection according to § 68 of the Administrative Court Procedures Code in the case of denunciations against the assessment of a piece of examination work on the basis of a response to be obtained from the persons involved in the assessment.

## **§ 33 Entry into Force**

These examination rules come into force with effect from September 1<sup>st</sup> 2021. They will first apply to those students who take up their studies in the six-semester bachelor degree course in the winter semester 2021/2022.

Issued by reason of the Senate resolutions of April 6<sup>th</sup> 2021 and June 20<sup>th</sup> 2023.

Dortmund, June 20<sup>th</sup> 2023

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