

This is a translation of the original German document. For all legal purposes, only the German version of the examination regulations shall be considered binding.

**Examination regulations  
for the Master's program in  
Web Science  
at Technische Hochschule Köln - University of Applied Sciences  
Gummersbach Campus**

**of March 18, 2011**

**As amended on July 23, 2017**

By virtue of section 2 (4) and section 64 (1) of the North Rhine-Westphalia Higher Education Act (*Gesetz über die Hochschulen des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen*) of September 16, 2014 (GV. NRW; p.547), last amended by the act of December 15, 2016 (GV.NRW; p. 1154), Technische Hochschule Köln – University of Applied Sciences has determined the following examination regulations by statute:

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## **I. General information**

### **Section 1 Applicability of the examination regulations; catalog of modules and curriculum**

(1) These examination regulations are to administer the studies and examinations in the Master's program in Web Science at Technische Hochschule Köln - University of Applied Sciences.

(2) Based on these examination regulations, Technische Hochschule Köln - University of Applied Sciences is to create a curriculum (see annex) and a catalog of modules. Taking into account developments in the fields of science and university teaching as well as profession-specific requirements, the catalog of modules is to outline the course contents and structure of the Master's program. The curriculum is to provide students with a guideline for adequately scheduling their studies.

### **Section 2 Objectives of the program; purpose of the examinations; degree conferred**

(1) By passing the Master's examination, graduates are awarded a university degree qualifying them to exercise professional work in the field relevant to the program and entitling them to admission to doctoral/PhD-level studies in accordance with section 67 (4) sentence 1 letter c) of the North-Rhine Westphalia Higher Education Act.

(2) Taking into account general study objectives (section 58 of the North Rhine-Westphalia Higher Education Act), the program leading to the Master's examination (section 4) is designed to teach application-oriented topics of the discipline on the basis of scientific findings. It shall also enable students to grasp the theoretical dimensions of these topics, to analyze subject-specific problems, and to define the corresponding tasks and develop solutions in and for the Web while taking into account different disciplines and perspectives. Moreover, the Master's program is designed to provide students with an opportunity to specialize in all Web-related matters and to give them greater insight into the technical, creative, legal and social perspectives of the Web.

(3) The language of instruction in the Master's program is to be English.

(4) With its combination of self-directed learning, online courses and on-site seminars, the Master's program in Web Science is directed at a selected group of students, who - building on their university degrees and several years of professional employment in Web-related fields - intend to expand and deepen their knowledge and aim to work in executive positions in the corporate world. By incorporating elements of distance learning, yet maintaining the practice-based approach distinctive for programs offered at universities of applied sciences, students are given the opportunity to pursue a degree parallel to professional employment.

(5) The Master's examination (section 5) is to determine whether the examinee has attained sound specialized knowledge required to exercise work in his/her profession independently and whether he/she is capable of independently exercising work and conducting research on the basis of scientific findings and methods.

(6) By passing the examinations listed in section 5, students will have completed a scientific degree program, allowing them to exercise work in the designated profession. Based on the successful completion of all examinations, Technische Hochschule Köln - University of Applied Sciences is to confer the academic degree Master of Science (M.Sc.) in accordance with the regulations stated hereinafter.

### **Section 3 Admission requirements; determination of eligibility**

- (1) Admission to the Master's program requires the successful completion of a university degree in one of the following disciplines: computer science, economics, social sciences, law, design, psychology, pedagogy. For graduates in disciplines other than the ones stated above, the examination board is to decide as to whether the program meets the criterion of pertaining to the field of Web Science pursuant to section 62 (3) sentence 1 of the North Rhine-Westphalia Higher Education Act.
- (2) Potential students are also required to attest to professional employment of at least one year duration in a suitable field prior to enrollment. In cases of doubt, the examination board is to decide on the qualification and suitability of the employment.
- (3) Courses in the Master's program are to be taught in English. Applicants therefor must have English language proficiency equivalent to:
  - a) TOEFL with at least 550 points on the paper-based test, 213 points on the computer-based test or 80 points on the internet-based test.
  - b) IELTS with 6.5 points.
  - c) An alternative language test with a test score equivalent to those of TOEFL or IELTS.
  - d) Prior enrollment of at least one year in a university program conducted entirely in English.
  - e) Prior schooling of at least one year conducted entirely in English.
  - f) English as a native language.
- (4) Admission is to be denied if the applicant has - within the jurisdiction of the German constitution - irreversibly failed a Bachelor's, Master's, Diplom or other final examination in a degree program in Web Science or has lost the right to take examinations in this program. Admission is also to be denied if the applicant has - within the jurisdiction of the German constitution - irreversibly failed a comparable examination in a different Master's program in the field of computer science or has lost the right to take examinations in this program.

### **Section 4 Standard program duration; scope of the program**

- (1) The Master's program comprises 8 modules and has a standard duration of five semesters. In compliance with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), students are awarded a total of 120 credits (section 12). In order to guarantee that students can complete their studies parallel to professional employment, 24 credits shall be awarded for each semester. This corresponds to a workload of 600 hours per semester. The catalog of modules provides a detailed overview of the number of credits awarded for the individual modules. The standard duration of the program includes the examination period. The curriculum is to be designed in a way that allows students to obtain their Master's degree within the standard program duration.
- (2) The program is segmented into individual modules. See section 23 and the curriculum (annex) for details on the program structure.

### **Section 5 Scope and structure of examinations; examination deadline**

- (1) A student's successful completion of the program is to be determined by the examinations taken throughout the program (module examinations) and a final examination (Master's thesis and final oral examination). Group examinations are admissible.

(2) Module examinations are to be held when the corresponding module has been concluded in accordance with the curriculum. The curriculum is to guarantee that the examinee can have taken all module examinations (excluding the final examination part) by the end of the fourth semester.

(3) In compliance with section 26, registration for the final part of the Master's examination is to be filed prior to the end of the penultimate semester of the program.

(3) The examinations are to make allowance for the legal provisions for maternity and parental leave periods as well as the leave for the nursing or care of spouses, registered partners, relatives in direct line of descent or brothers and sisters-in-law if they are in need of nursing or care.

(4) All examinations are to be held in the English language.

### **Section 6 Examination board**

(1) The Web Science program committee is to establish an examination board to be in charge of the organization of examinations and the arrangement of the duties entrusted to it by these examination regulations. The examination board is to be an independent body of the faculty.

(2) The examination board is to be elected by the Web Science program committee and is to be made up of seven persons:

1. chairperson and vice chairperson selected from the pool of faculty professors;
2. two additional members selected from the pool of faculty professors;
3. one member selected from the pool of research assistants or lecturers;
4. two members selected from the pool of students.

(3) Deputies are to be elected for all members of the examination board except for the chairperson and the vice-chairperson. The members of the board employed in full-time positions at the university and their deputies have tenure of two years; the student members and their deputies have tenure of one year. Re-election is permissible.

### **Section 7 Rights and duties of the examination board**

(1) The examination board is to be responsible for the organization of examinations. It is also to ensure that the examination regulations are complied with and that examinations are conducted properly. In particular, it is to rule on objections brought forward against decisions that were made in exam-related matters.

(2) Moreover, the board is to report to the faculty council on developments related to examinations and the duration of studies, if so requested. It is to give advice on potential reforms of the examination regulations, the catalog of modules and the curriculum. The examination board may transfer its regular duties to the chairperson of the examination board; this does not apply to decisions on objections.

(3) The members of the examination board and a representative of the President's Office have the right to be present during examinations. Exempt from this right are student members of the examination board who are to take the examination concerned on the very same date.

- (4) Sessions of the examination board are not open to the public.

### **Section 8 Decisions by the examination board**

(1) The examination board has a quorum if, in addition to the chairperson or vice-chairperson, a member from the pool of professors and at least two additional members eligible to vote are present. Decisions require a simple majority. In case of a tie, the chairperson is to have the casting vote. Student members and research assistants do not have a say in decisions on matters related to education and academics, particularly when it comes to the recognition or other evaluation of examinations and assessments or the appointment of examiners or co-examiners. Moreover, student members are not to participate in the debate and decision-making on matters related to examination topics or their own examinations.

(2) The members of the examination board, their deputies, the examiners as well as co-examiners are to be sworn to secrecy. If they are not employed in the German civil service, they are to be sworn to secrecy by the chairperson of the examination board.

(3) Incriminating decisions of the examination board or its chairperson are to be reported to the affected student immediately. Prior to any action, the affected student has to be granted the right to be heard.

### **Section 9 Examiners and co-examiners**

(1) The examination board is to appoint the examiners and co-examiners. A person may be appointed examiner if he or she holds at least the qualification that is to be determined by the examination or an equivalent qualification and – provided that no compelling reasons necessitate a divergence – has held an independent teaching position in the subject to be examined. A person may be appointed co-examiner if he or she has completed at least the corresponding Master's examination or a comparable examination or holds a comparable qualification (competent co-examiner).

Examiners are independent for examination purposes.

(2) The examinee may suggest one or more examiners for his or her oral examinations. He or she may also suggest an examiner to be his or her thesis adviser. If possible, a student's suggestion is to be taken into consideration.

(3) The examination board is to ensure that examination duties are split as evenly as possible amongst the examiners. It is also to ensure that the examinee will be informed about his or her examiner in time. This shall happen simultaneously to the registration for the examination, i.e. usually at least two weeks before the examination is held or before the topic of the Master's thesis is assigned. Posting the information on the corresponding bulletin board is deemed sufficient.

### **Section 10 Recognition of examinations and assessments**

(1) Examinations and assessments completed in degree programs within the jurisdiction of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region of April 11, 1997 (BGBl. II 2007; p. 712 - Lisbon Recognition Convention) are to be officially recognized upon request if it can be proven that they do not considerably differ from the

examinations and assessments required. If the recognition of such examinations and assessments is denied, the university is to issue a substantiated notification on this matter. If it has been proposed to reject the recognition request the President's Office may be called upon to review the decision.

(2) Examinations and assessments completed in degree programs outside the jurisdiction of the Lisbon Recognition Convention are to be recognized analogous to subsection 1 upon request.

(3) Achievements that are not part of a degree program may be recognized as examinations or assessments upon request if they are equivalent to the examinations and assessments required. Such achievements may only account for up to half of the total number of examinations and assessments required for the successful completion of the program.

(4) For examinations and assessments that have been recognized, students are awarded the number of ECTS credits stated in the curriculum (annex 1). Non-graded examinations taken at other universities or in other programs are to be recognized in accordance with subsections 1 and 2. They are to be identified accordingly on the examination certificate and are not accounted for in the calculation of the final grade.

(5) The chairperson of the examination board is the decision-making body in all cases laid out in subsections 1 to 4. In cases of doubt, it is to consult the examiners responsible for the individual courses.

### **Section 11 Evaluation of examinations**

(1) Examinations are to be evaluated in a differentiated and comprehensible manner by means of grades. Reasons for the evaluation are to be explained in writing upon request of the examination board. Grades for individual examinations are to be determined by the respective examiner.

(2) All module examinations of the Master's program are graded examinations pursuant to subsection 1.

(3) If several examiners participate in an examination, the examiners are to jointly evaluate the examination, provided that no other provisions are made hereinafter. Should the evaluations differ from one another, the grade is to be determined by the arithmetic mean of the individual grades.

(4) The following grades are to be used for the evaluation of examinations:

1.0/1.3	= excellent	= an excellent examination
1.7/2.0/2.3	= good	= an examination well above average requirements
2.7/3.0/3.3	= satisfactory	= an examination that meets average requirements
3.7/4.0	= sufficient	= an examination that meets the requirements despite its shortcomings
5	= insufficient	= an examination that does not meet the requirements due to substantial shortcomings

The grades 0.7, 4.3, 4.7 and 5.3 are invalid.



(5) Calculated grades that differ from the grades listed above are to be determined as follows.

Figures:		
up to 1.5	equal the grade	"excellent"
above 1.5 to 2.5	equal the grade	"good"
above 2.5 to 3.5	equal the grade	"satisfactory"
above 3.5 to 4.0	equal the grade	"sufficient"
above 4.0	equal the grade	"insufficient"

When it comes to the calculation of grades, only the first decimal is to be factored in; all other decimals are to be dropped without rounding.

(6) An examination is passed if the student's performance is deemed at least "sufficient". If the module examination is made up of several individual examinations, the module is passed if the arithmetic average of these individual examinations is at least 4.0 (weighted by the corresponding ECTS credits of the module components).

(7) The evaluation of examinations is to be completed within six weeks' time. Students are to be informed about the results. Publishing the results on the corresponding bulletin board or in an online medium with restricted access (currently PSSO) is deemed sufficient. The results of the Master's thesis are to be reported to the students within eight weeks.

## **Section 12 Credits in accordance with the ECTS (European Credit Transfer System)**

(1) Credits are to be assigned to every component of the Master's program, enabling recognition in accordance with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). The credits are a quantitative measure of the workload that averagely gifted students typically need to successfully complete a component of the program. This workload includes courses, preparation and follow-up work of a course, self-directed learning as well as examinations and preparation for examinations.

(2) The workload required to successfully complete the Master's program as laid down in the curriculum amounts to 48 credits per academic year. 1 credit corresponds to a workload of 25 hours.

(3) Students only receive credits if they have successfully completed a module. Pursuant to section 11 (2 and 6), this means that students are awarded the total number of credits for every graded module examination that has been passed with a grade of at least "sufficient", irrespective of the grade received for the examination. A total of 120 credits are required to successfully graduate in the Master's program.

(4) The curriculum (cf. annex) gives an overview of the number of credits assigned to the individual modules and to the Master's thesis. More detailed information can be found in the catalog of modules.

(5) Credits obtained in accordance with the ECTS at other universities within and outside the jurisdiction of the German constitution are to be recognized with at most the number of credits designated in the current program, provided that the underlying examinations and assessments are deemed equivalent. For all other relevant matters, the regulations set down in section 10 apply.

### **Section 13 Evaluation of examinations in accordance with the ECTS grading scheme**

The certificate awarded to graduates in accordance with section 31 (1) is to indicate the relative position of the final grade according to the ECTS grading table. The reference group are the students enrolled in the program. All final grades awarded to members of the reference group over a course of at least two years are documented and the grade distribution in terms of percentage is calculated. According to section 31 (7), the grade distribution table is part of the Diploma Supplement.

### **Section 14 Retaking examinations; compensation; supplementary oral examination**

(1) Students may retake module examinations if they do not pass them or if the examinations are considered “not passed”. If a written module examination is not passed, all examinations and exam components of this module are to be retaken, even if one or more of them were passed. Students are required to retake an examination in the examination period that follows the failed attempt. If the examination is not retaken within one year after the failed attempt, students will lose the right to take this examination attempt. A second retake of the examination is to take place in the examination period that follows the first retake. If the second retake of the examination does not take place within one year after the failed second attempt, students will irreversibly lose the right to take examinations. Sentences 3 and 5 are rendered invalid if students provide evidence that they are not responsible for having exceeded the stipulated period of time.

(2) If a student does not pass the Master’s thesis or the final oral examination, he/she may retake each examination once. Module examinations may be retaken twice.

(3) An examination graded at least “sufficient” may not be retaken.

### **Section 15 Absence; withdrawal from examinations; cheating**

(1) An examination is deemed “insufficient” (5.0) if the examinee does not appear for an examination and is not able to present a good reason for his/her absence. An examination is also deemed “insufficient” if the student withdraws from it without good reason after the examination has begun or if he/she does not submit the examination by the time stipulated. The provisions stated above also apply if the student fails to submit his/her Master’s thesis in due time.

(2) The reasons stated for missing or withdrawing from an examination are to be immediately reported to the examination board, to be documented in writing and to be substantiated by the student. In case of sickness, students are required to submit a comprehensible medical certificate attesting to their incapability of taking the examination. If the examination board accepts the reasons given, the examinee is to be notified that he/she may again file a request to be admitted to the examination concerned.

(3) If a student attempts to manipulate the result of his/her examination by cheating or by using non-permissible means, the examination concerned is to be graded “insufficient” (5.0). An examinee who disrupts the proper course of an examination may be expelled from the examination by the examiner or the invigilator after having been given prior warning; in such a case, the examination concerned is to be graded “insufficient” (5.0). The reasons for the expulsion are to be put on record. If the examinee is barred from retaking the examination, he/she may request the examination board to review this decision. This also applies to the decisions made by an examiner or an invigilator, such as the ones laid down in sentence 1. Possible penalties as set down in section 63 (5) of the North Rhine-Westphalia Higher Education Act are to be acknowledged.

(4) Non-permissible means are all documents and resources not explicitly allowed to the examination concerned. Students are required to indicate other people's intellectual property (text passages, images, statistics, etc. by other authors from offline or online sources) adopted in their written papers or examinations as quotations. In cases of extreme plagiarism (complete adoption of longer passages not indicated as quotations) or in cases of multiple attempts of cheating or other attempts of serious cheating, the examination board may determine that the examination will be deemed irreversibly failed.

(5) Examinees may be asked to submit a declaration in lieu of an oath that they completed the examination independently and without any other person's help or assistance (section 63 (5) sentence 1 of the North Rhine-Westphalia Higher Education Act).

## **II. Module examination**

### **Section 16 Objectives, length and types of module examinations**

(1) The Master's program is divided into individual modules, each of which concludes with an examination. The content of a module may be taught in one or more courses with different methods of teaching and study. A module normally takes place for the duration of one semester (or, if need be, for the duration of two semesters at the most). A module examination may be subdivided into several individual examinations with the same or differing types of examination pursuant to sections 19 to 22. The examinations are to determine whether students are proficient in the essential topics and methods taught in the modules and whether they are capable of independently applying the knowledge and skills acquired.

(2) The examination requirements are to be aligned with the objectives and contents of the courses offered in the catalog of modules. Students may be required to be familiar with relevant contents of previous modules.

(3) A module's type of examination depends on the requirements of the individual module. Admissible types of examination are written examinations (sections 19 and 20), oral examinations (section 21) of 15 to 45 minutes duration per examinee and other types of examination (section 22) as well as combinations of the aforementioned types of examination. A student's total workload for module examinations made up of a combination of several types of examination is not to exceed the typical workload that a single type of examination would generate.

(4) After consultation with the examiners concerned and in observance of the module outline and the feasibility to complete the program within the allotted time frame, the examination board is to determine the type and modalities of examination for every module at the beginning of each semester.

If an examination within a module comprises several components or a combination of different types of examination, the examination board is also to specify how to weigh the individual components. At the suggestion of the examiners concerned, the examination board normally determines the examination period for written and oral examinations two months prior to the examination period for all students who intend to take the module examination concerned. The examination board's decision is to be uniform and binding. For scheduled examination dates, the regulations stipulated in section 18 (2) apply.

(5) If other types of examination have been determined, the examiner is to determine the schedule of examinations in the first quarter of the course concerned and is to notify the examination board.

### **Section 17 Admission to module examinations**

(1) Students are to register for examinations within the registration period stipulated by the examination board via the electronic registration/deregistration process provided by the Office of Student and Examination Services. Under specific circumstances, students may alternatively file a written registration with the Office of Student and Examination Services. Students are required to verify that their registration was properly recorded by consulting the appropriate registration lists. Only registered students may take part in an examination.

(2) Students may only be admitted to an examination if they

1. are enrolled or registered at Technische Hochschule Köln - University of Applied Sciences as current students
2. are cross-registered students at Technische Hochschule Köln - University of Applied Sciences pursuant to section 52 (1 and 2) of the North Rhine-Westphalia Higher Education Act and have neither taken an examination in the subject concerned as regular students at another university nor have they registered for one.

(3) Students may be required to pass other module examinations in order for them to be admitted to a module examination; see section 24 and the curriculum (annex) for detailed information.

(4) The optional required modules (*Wahlpflichtmodule*) in which the student intends to taken an examination and which are stated in the examination registration become binding with the registration. For all other relevant matters, the regulations set down in subsection 6 apply.

(5) Students are required to include the following documents with the registration or hand them in by a date set by the examination board, unless they have already done so previously:

1. proof of having met the admission requirements stated in subsections 2 and 3
2. a statement on previous relevant examination attempts as well as on previous endeavors to take the Master's examination or another final examination in the same program
3. a statement on whether the examinee objects to the presence of an audience during oral examinations.

If the examinee cannot duly submit one of the documents required according to sentence 1, the examination board may allow him/her to provide the corresponding proof in a different manner.

(6) Students may revoke the registration for a module examination in writing with the Office of Student and Examination Services or - if activated - via the electronic registration/deregistration process provided by the Office of Student and Examination Services up until one week prior to the set examination date. By doing so, students will not lose an examination attempt.

(7) Admission to a module examination is to be decided upon by the chairperson of the examination board and, in cases of doubt, the examination board itself.

- (8) Admission is to be denied if
- a) the examinee does not meet the requirements stated in subsections 2 to 4, or
  - b) the documents are incomplete and the examinee does not submit the remaining ones by the date set by the examination board, or
  - c) the examinee has irreversibly failed a corresponding examination in a comparable program or has irreversibly failed a Master's or other type of final examination in the same program within the jurisdiction of the German constitution, or
  - d) the examinee has – within the jurisdiction of the German constitution – lost the right to take an examination deemed required by the examination regulations.

### **Section 18 Conduct of module examinations**

- (1) For the module examinations specified in sections 19 and 20, normally one examination date per semester is to be scheduled. The examinations are to be held within the examination periods stipulated by the examination board and to be announced at the beginning of the semester or towards the end of the previous semester. No courses are to be held during the examination period.
- (2) Students are to be informed about the individual examination dates and about their admission to the examinations at least four weeks prior to the examination concerned. Posting the information on the corresponding bulletin board is deemed sufficient.
- (3) Upon request, students are obliged to identify themselves with an official photo ID.
- (4) If the examinee – by submitting a medical certificate or in a different manner - substantiates that he/she is not capable of completely or partly taking the examination or assessment in its intended form due to a permanent physical disability or chronic disease pursuant to section 3 of the German Act on Equal Opportunities for Disabled Persons (*Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz*), the chairperson of the examination board may extend the time frame allotted for writing an examination or the deadline for taking an examination. The chairperson may also allow the student to take an equivalent examination in a different form. If several equivalent ways of offsetting a disabled person's disadvantage come into question, the chairperson of the examination board is to decide on the type, date and duration of the examination at his/her discretion after having duly considered all circumstances. This provision also applies to assessments and admission tests. In exceptional cases, sentences 1 to 3 also apply to persons with temporary health impairments.

### **Section 19 Written examinations**

- (1) In written examinations, the examinee is to prove that – within a limited time frame and with limited resources – he/she is capable of identifying and correctly solving problems stemming from areas covered by the module by means of common scientific methods of his/her subject field.
- (2) A written examination is to be held under supervision. It is the examiner's responsibility to decide as to whether students may use additional resources. For a module comprising 12 ECTS credits, the time frame for writing an examination may not exceed 180 minutes.
- (3) A written examination is normally drawn up by one examiner only. In specific cases, especially when a module examination covers several subject fields, the examination may also be drawn up by more than one examiner. In such a case, the examiners prior to the examination jointly determine how the individual elements of the examination shall be weighted.

(4) If the examination is drawn up by more than one examiner, the examiners prior to the examination jointly determine how the individual components of the examination shall be weighted; each examiner is to evaluate the entire written examination irrespective of the individual components and their weighting. Due to the special character of a subject field, the examination board may alternatively determine that an examiner shall only evaluate the part of a written examination that corresponds to his/her subject field. In such a case, the examination is to be evaluated based on the previously determined weighting of the individual components.

(5) Examinations which conclude a program and examinations whose passing is a prerequisite for continuing a program are to be evaluated by a minimum of two examiners. If the second evaluation of the written examination differs from the first one, the grade is determined by the arithmetic mean of both grades.

## **Section 20 Written multiple-choice examinations**

(1) Written examinations may be completely or partly held as multiple-choice examinations. In multiple-choice examinations, students are asked to answer questions in writing and under supervision by selecting the correct answers from a list of suggested solutions. Multiple-choice examinations may be held in modules suitable for this type of examination upon request by the examiners and with approval of the examination board.

(2) The questions asked in multiple-choice examinations are to be geared to the knowledge and skills taught in the module concerned and need to ensure reliable examination results.

(3) It is the examiners' responsibility to determine the examination questions and the suggested solutions (examination exercises). It is to be recorded in writing which of the suggested solutions are to be accepted as correct answers.

(4) The evaluation of a written multiple-choice examination is to include the following information:

1. the number of questions asked and the number of questions answered correctly by the examinee;
2. the minimum number of questions required to be answered correctly in order to pass the examination;
3. in case the examination has been passed, the percentage by which the number of correctly answered questions exceeds the minimum requirements;
4. the grade obtained by the student.

(5) When correcting the examinations, examiners are to pay attention as to whether a frequent occurrence of wrong answers to a specific question might indicate that the question was worded incorrectly. If it is determined after the examination that individual questions or possible solutions are erroneous, the examination exercises concerned will not be factored in. As a consequence, the number of examination exercises is to be reduced. This reduced number of exercises is to form the basis of the evaluation. Reducing the examination exercises may not put students at a disadvantage.

(6) Examinations held by means of electronic equipment are to be treated like written examinations.

## **Section 21 Oral Examinations**

- (1) Oral examinations are to be held in the presence of an examiner and a competent co-examiner (section 9 (1)) or in the presence of several examiners (panel examination) as group examinations or individual examinations. An oral examination is to last at least 15 minutes and at most 45 minutes per examinee.
- (2) If an examination covers several subject fields, every examinee will on principle be examined by only one examiner in each subject field. Prior to grading the examination, the examiner is required to consult with the co-examiner or the other examiners.
- (3) Minutes are to be kept about the essential topics and the results of the examination, in particular about facts that are essential for the grading of the examination. The grade is to be reported to the students after the examination.
- (4) Students who intend to take the same examination in a different examination period may be present at the examination as audience, provided that there is enough space and that no examinee did object to this provision when he/she registered for the examination. Students may neither be present during the examiners' consultation nor during the announcement of examination results.

## **Section 22 Other types of examination**

- (1) Besides written and oral examinations, other types of examination may be applicable for module examinations, in particular term papers, reports and project work.
- (2) Other types of examination are normally evaluated by one examiner only, unless one of the provisions set down in section 19 (4) applies.
- (3) A term paper (e.g. a case study or research paper) is to determine whether the examinee is capable of independently completing a written assignment within a given time frame of normally 4 weeks, using scientific and subject-related methods. In a term paper, examinees are to prove that they have grasped a module's contexts in the respective subject and that they are capable of associating specific questions with these contexts and of solving stringently subject-related problems. The topic and length (e.g. number of pages of the main body) of the term paper are to be determined by the examiner at the beginning of the semester. The scheduled date of submission is to be noted on the assignment sheet. The time of submission of a term paper is to be put on record. If the paper is submitted by mail, the decisive criterion is the point of time at which the thesis is submitted to the postal service.
- (4) Reports are made up of a written outline and an oral presentation of up to 45 minutes duration. Subsection 3 applies to the written outline unless stipulated otherwise at a later point in time. The presentation is to prove whether students are capable of presenting the assigned topic and its solution in front of an audience in a structured and comprehensible manner and of convincingly explaining their position on the subject. When it comes to the evaluation of the report, the written outline and the oral presentation are to be factored in with 50 percent each.
- (5) Term paper and report may also be completed as part of a joint team project if the individual student's contribution to be evaluated as examination is clearly distinguishable and can be assessed separately.

(6) The project work is normally completed as a joint team project. The results of the project work are to be documented by a written project report and an oral presentation. Subsection 3 applies to the written project report unless stipulated otherwise at a later point in time. By completing the project work, students demonstrate their team skills and in particular their ability to develop, carry out and present concepts. The purpose of the project work is to teach students how to define objectives for a large practice-based assignment and to find interdisciplinary approaches and concepts. The project report and the oral presentation are to be evaluated separately for each team member. Each student's written and oral contribution to be evaluated as examination must be clearly distinguishable and need to be assessed accordingly.

(7) The date of submission for the papers to be submitted for the report and project work is to be scheduled in a way that allows for the documents to be available one week prior to the oral presentation.

(8) The grade for the term paper is to be announced to the examinee four weeks after its submission at the latest. The evaluation of the report and project work is to be reported to the examinee three weeks after the oral presentation at the latest.

### III. Curriculum

#### Section 23 Modules and completion of the program; additional modules

(1) In all compulsory modules (required and optional required modules), module examinations pursuant to the types of examination stipulated in sections 19 – 22 are to be held. The program's modules are listed in section 24; the corresponding types of examination can be found in the catalog of modules, unless individually determined by the examination board (section 16 (4) sentence 1). Information on electing modules and courses in the advanced section of the program can be found in the curriculum and is further explained in the catalog of modules.

(2) The examinee may take examinations in more courses than the ones required to gain the mandatory number of credits (additional courses). The results of these additional examinations may be listed on the examination certificate upon request of the examinee. Additional courses will not be accounted for in the calculation of the final cumulative grade.

#### Section 24 Module examinations

(1) Students are required to take module examinations in the following subjects (as part of the Master's examination):

1. Foundations and Principles I (Web Elements)	12 ECTS credits
2. Foundations and Principles II (Strategy & Marketing)	12 ECTS credits
3. Web Project Development	12 ECTS credits
4. Master's thesis	24 ECTS credits
(Master's thesis 20 ECTS credits + final oral examination 4 ECTS credits)	
Subtotal:	<b><u>60 ECTS credits</u></b>



(2) In addition, students are required to select at least 5 of the modules stated below:

1. Web Trust and Security	12 ECTS credits
2. Decision & Management	12 ECTS credits
3. Web and Society	12 ECTS credits
4. Web and Cooperation	12 ECTS credits
5. Design	12 ECTS credits

Subtotal of the 5 selected modules: **60 ECTS credits**

Total: **120 ECTS credits**

#### **IV. Master's thesis and final oral examination (*Kolloquium*)**

##### **Section 25 Master's thesis; purpose; topic; examiners**

(1) The Master's thesis is to be submitted as a written paper. It is to provide evidence that the examinee is capable of independently completing an assignment on a subject pertaining to his/her field of study within a given time frame by elaborating on subject-related specifics as well as on interdisciplinary contexts and by making use of scientific and subject-related methods. When writing their Master's thesis, students should take an interdisciplinary collaboration into consideration.

(2) The topic of the Master's thesis may be determined by any examiner who is appointed as such in accordance with section 9 (1). This examiner may also function as thesis adviser. Upon request of the examinee, the examination board may also name an honorary professor or a qualified adjunct lecturer as thesis adviser in accordance with section 9 (1) if it has been determined that no professor of the faculty is able to function as thesis adviser for the intended topic of the Master's thesis. Students may write their Master's thesis at an institution outside the university if this institution provides sufficient assistance and advice. Students are to be given an opportunity to make suggestions about the topic of their Master's thesis. Examiners from other faculties may be chosen as thesis advisers if the topic of the thesis so allows.

(3) Upon request, the chairperson of the examination board is to ensure that an examinee is provided with a topic for the Master's thesis in time.

(4) A Master's thesis may also be written as part of a joint team project if the individual student's contribution to be evaluated as examination is clearly distinguishable and can be assessed accordingly and if it complies with the requirements stated in subsection 1. In order to verify a student's contribution, aspects such as passages, page numbers or other objective criteria allowing for a clear distinction are to be indicated.

(5) The Master's thesis is to be written in the English language.

## **Section 26 Admission to Master's thesis**

(1) Students are admitted to the Master's thesis if they meet the admission requirements stated in section 17 (2 and 5) and have passed all of the examinations required (Master's thesis excluded) pursuant to section 24.

(2) The registration for the Master's thesis is to be addressed in writing to the chairperson of the examination board and to be submitted to the Office of Student and Examination Services. Students are required to submit the following documents with their registration, unless they have already done so:

1. proof of having met the admission requirements stated in subsection 1
2. statement on previous endeavors to write a Master's thesis or another final thesis and on taking a Master's examination and, if applicable, a Master's examination in a joint Master's program in Commercial Law, or in a corresponding program at a different university of applied sciences which incorporates periods of self-directed learning and courses with mandatory attendance
3. statement on which examiner is willing and able to prepare the topic of the Master's thesis and to function as thesis adviser
4. suggested topic of the Master's thesis

(3) Students may revoke the registration for the Master's thesis in writing up until the day the decision on admission is announced. By complying with this provision, students will not lose an attempt to write the Master's thesis.

(4) Admission to the Master's thesis is to be granted by the chairperson of the examination board and, in cases of doubt, the examination board itself. Admission is to be denied if

- a) the student does not meet the requirements stated in subsection 1, or
- b) the documents to be submitted are incomplete, or
- c) within the jurisdiction of the German constitution, a final thesis written by the student has been evaluated as "insufficient" and may not be written again, or if the student has irreversibly failed one of the examinations stated in subsection 2 sentence 2 no. 2.

In all other cases, admission is only to be denied if the examinee has, within the jurisdiction of the German constitution, lost the right to take examinations in the same program (e.g. by having failed to meet a deadline for retaking examinations).

## **Section 27 Assignment of the topic; completion of the Master's thesis**

(1) The topic of the Master's thesis is to be assigned by the chairperson of the examination board. The time of assignment is to be the day on which the chairperson of the examination board informs the student about the topic of the Master's thesis suggested by the thesis adviser; the time of assignment is to be put on record.

(2) Students have five months to write the Master's thesis (starting with the time of assignment to the day of submission). The topic and assignment must be designed in a way that allows for the Master's thesis to be completed within the allocated time frame. In exceptional cases, the chairperson of the examination board may extend the deadline of submission by up to four weeks if the student concerned submits a request prior to the deadline, in which he/she is to justify the reasons for extending the deadline. The thesis adviser is to be consulted on the request. The main part of the Master's thesis is not to exceed 100 pages (35 lines per page).

(3) Students may withdraw from a topic of their Master's thesis only once and may only do so within the first month of the assigned time frame, without stating their reasons for doing so. If a student undertakes a second attempt to write a Master's thesis in compliance with section 14 (2), the student is only permitted to withdraw from the thesis if he/she did not do so during the writing of his/her first Master's thesis.

(4) If a student is physically disabled, the regulations set down in section 18 (4) apply.

### **Section 28 Submission and evaluation of the Master's thesis**

(1) Students are to submit one hardcover copy of their Master's thesis (as well as one copy as a PDF document) to the chairperson of the examination board or at a location determined by the chairperson by the deadline of submission. Submitting the thesis via means of telecommunication is not permitted. The time of submission is to be put on record; if the thesis is submitted by mail, the decisive criterion is the point of time at which the thesis is submitted to the postal service. When submitting the thesis, the student is required to declare in writing that he/she has independently written the thesis – in case of a joint team project, his/her part of the thesis, which has been marked accordingly – and has used no other than the sources and means indicated and stated in quotations. When submitting the thesis, the student is also required to assent to the use of plagiarism detection software to search his/her thesis for adapted passages or other sources that may not have been indicated. Moreover, the regulations on cheating as stated in section 15 (3) apply.

(2) The Master's thesis is to be evaluated by two examiners. One of the examiners is to be the thesis adviser. The other examiner is to be determined by the examination board. If section 25 (2) sentence 3 applies, he/she must be a professor. If the examiners' evaluations differ from each other and the divergence of both grades is less than 2.0, the grade for the Master's thesis is calculated by the arithmetic mean of both individual grades. If there is a divergence of 2.0 or greater, the examination board is to determine a third examiner. In this case, the grade for the Master's thesis is calculated by the arithmetic mean of the two better individual grades. However, the Master's thesis can only be graded "sufficient" or better if at least two of the grades are "sufficient" or better.

### **Section 29 Final oral examination (*Kolloquium*)**

(1) The final oral examination complements the Master's thesis. It is to be evaluated as an independent examination and is to be held within six weeks after the submission of the Master's thesis. It is to determine whether the examinee is capable of orally presenting and independently justifying

- the findings of the Master's thesis
- its scientific and methodological fundamentals
- inter- and multidisciplinary contexts

and of assessing the thesis' significance for practice.

(2) Students may only be admitted to the final oral examination if they

1. have passed all module examinations
2. are enrolled or admitted as students or auditors in compliance with section 52 (2) of the North Rhine-Westphalia Higher Education Act and
3. have received a grade of at least "sufficient" for their Master's thesis.

- (3) Students are required to file a written registration for the final oral examination with the examination board. They are also required to submit proof of having met the admission requirements stated in subsection 2, unless the examination board is already in possession of such proof. In accordance with section 26, students may register for the final oral examination when they apply for admission to the Master's thesis; in this case, students are admitted to the final oral examination as soon as all required proof and documents have been submitted to the Office of Student and Examination Services.
- (4) The final oral examination is normally to be held and evaluated by the examiners of the Master's thesis. If section 28 (2) applies, the final oral examination is to be held by those examiners whose individual evaluations were used to calculate the grade for the Master's thesis.
- (5) The final oral examination is to last at least 30 and at most 45 minutes. The provisions laid down for oral examinations (section 21) apply accordingly.
- (6) The final oral examination may be retaken once.
- (7) In accordance with section 12, students are awarded 20 credits for passing the Master's thesis. A total of 24 credits are awarded for passing the Master's thesis and the final oral examination in accordance with section 12.

### **Section 30 Results of the Master's examination**

- (1) The examinee has passed the Master's examination if he/she has obtained 120 credits. This requires students to have passed all module examinations required and to have obtained a grade of at least "sufficient" for the Master's thesis and the final oral examination.
- (2) The examinee has failed the Master's examination if one of the examinations stated in subsection 1 has been irreversibly evaluated as "insufficient" or is irreversibly deemed "insufficient". Examinees are to be notified if they have failed the Master's examination. This notification is to include information on legal remedies. After the student's removal from the register of students, the chairperson of the examination board will upon request issue a certified document, listing the examinations and assessments taken by the student and their respective grades, as well as the examinations missing in order for the student to complete the Master's examination. This certification must include a statement that the student has irreversibly failed the Master's examination. Upon request, the chairperson of the examination board will issue a document listing only the completed examinations and assessments and their respective grades.

### **Section 31 Examination certificate; final cumulative grade; diploma supplement**

- (1) The final cumulative grade for the Master's examination is to be determined by the arithmetic mean of the individual grades for the module examinations stipulated by these examination regulations, for the Master's thesis and for the final oral examination, which have been weighted by the credits awarded for the corresponding examination.
- (2) Graduates are to receive a certificate on the passed Master's examination promptly, if possible within four weeks after the last examination. This examination certificate is to include the grades and credits for all module examinations, the topic of the Master's thesis, the grades and credits for the Master's thesis and the final oral examination, the final cumulative grade for the

Master's examination and - for transferred grades or recognized assessments from other universities - the locations at which these assessments were completed.

(3) The examination certificate is to be signed by the chairperson of the examination board and is to bear the date of the day on which the last examination was completed.

(4) Graduates are to be handed out their Master's certificate along with the examination certificate, bearing the date stated on the latter. This certificate is to attest to the conferral of the Master's degree in compliance with section 2 (6).

(5) The Master's certificate is to be signed by the dean of the Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering Science and the chairperson of the examination board and is to bear the seal of Technische Hochschule Köln - University of Applied Sciences.

(6) Alongside the Master's and examination certificate, graduates are to receive an English-language diploma supplement, which corresponds to the guidelines and agreements of the German Rectors' Conference.

## **VI. Final provisions**

### **Section 32 Inspection of examination papers**

After having taken a module examination or having completed the Master's thesis and the final oral examination, the examinee is upon request to be granted an inspection of the written examination concerned, of – if available – the examiners' records related to the written examination and of the examination records of an oral examination. The inspection of a Master's thesis that was graded at least "sufficient" is to be granted only after completion of the corresponding final oral examination. The inspection is to be requested with the chairperson of the examination board within one month after the grade for the module examination was published or within one month after the examination certificate or the certification on irreversibly failing the Master's examination were issued. The chairperson is to determine time and place of the inspection.

### **Section 33 Invalidity of examinations**

(1) If a student cheated during an examination and the cheating was detected only after the certificate and the certifications mentioned in section 30 (2) sentences 4 and 5, and section 31 (1/6) were issued, the examination board is entitled to retroactively correct the grades for those examinations during which the student cheated and to render the Master's examination failed or partially failed.

(2) If the requirements for admission to an examination were not met but the student did not attempt to cheat, and if this matter was detected only after the certificate or the certification mentioned in section 30 (2) sentences 4 and 5, and section 31 (1/6) were issued, this shortcoming is offset by the student's passing of the examination. If the student deliberately effected a wrongful admission, the examination board is to decide on the legal consequences with due regard to the Administrative Procedures Act (*Verwaltungsverfahrensgesetz*) of North Rhine-Westphalia.

(3) The incorrect examination certificate or the incorrect certification mentioned in section 30 (2) sentences 4 and 5, and section 31 (1/6) are to be taken back and reissued if need be. A decision pursuant to subsection 1 is to be ruled out after ten years have passed since the examination certificate or certification mentioned in section 30 (2) sentences 4 and 5, and section 31 (1/6) were issued.

### **Section 34 Entry into force; transitional provisions\***

(1) The examination regulations for the Master's program in Web Science enter into force as of September 1, 2011 and are to be published in Technische Hochschule Köln's - University of Applied Sciences official communication (*Amtliche Mitteilungen*).

(2) These examination regulations apply to all students who will enroll in the Master's program in Web Science at Technische Hochschule Köln - University of Applied Sciences, as of winter semester 2011/12.

(3) The examination regulations are published on the basis of the resolution of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering Science at Technische Hochschule Köln - University of Applied Sciences of March 30, 2011 and after legal review by the President's Office of Technische Hochschule Köln - University of Applied Sciences on April 12, 2011.

Cologne, April 15, 2011

The President  
of Technische Hochschule Köln

Prof. Dr. phil. J. Metzner

\*Section 34 refers to the initial version of the examination regulations.

The following paragraphs refer to the amendments of June 23, 2017:

(1) These amendments enter into force as of September 1, 2017 and are to be published in Technische Hochschule Köln's official communication (*Amtliche Mitteilungen*). They apply to all students and applicants who will enroll in or will apply to the Master's program in Web Science at the Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering Science at Technische Hochschule Köln (University of Applied Sciences) on or after September 1, 2017.

(2) The amended examination regulations are published on the basis of the resolution of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering Science at Technische Hochschule Köln - University of Applied Sciences of May 3, 2017 and after legal review by the President's Office on May 31, 2017.

Cologne, June 23, 2017

The President  
of Technische Hochschule Köln  
p.p.

(Prof. Dr.-Ing. Klaus Becker)

Translated on November 14, 2011 by Jan Hendrik Müller (Translator, M.A.), Translator at the Department of Academic Affairs at TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences.

Amendments added on March 6, 2017 by Michèle Lohr (Conference Interpreter, M.A.), Translator at the Department of Academic Affairs at TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences.

Amendments added on March 14, 2017 by Janina Höck, Translator at the Department of Academic Affairs at TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences.

Amendments added on July 20, 2017 by Janina Höck, Translator at the Department of Academic Affairs at TH Köln – University of Applied Sciences.

For all legal purposes, only the German version of the examination regulations shall be considered binding.