

# Exam Regulations for Online University Programmes for Continuing Education of the UAS BFI Vienna

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## 1. Applicability

- 1.1. The Online Exam Regulations determine and substantiate the principles and guidelines to ascertain academic achievements and competence-oriented assessment of learning results in all online university programmes for continuing education. The Exam Regulations for Online University Programmes for Continuing Education of the UAS BFI Vienna are based on the Universities of Applied Sciences Act (Federal Law Gazette 1993/340) as amended, and the current Guidelines and Regulations of the UAS BFI Vienna as applicable to the Exam Regulations.
- 1.2. Online university programmes for continuing education are non-degree studies pursuant to § 9 FHG (FHG=Universities of Applied Sciences Act). Students in online university programmes for continuing education are non-degree students.
- 1.3. For online university programmes for continuing education run jointly with other universities, the Academic Council (in agreement with the provider) can implement regulations differing from the present regulations if the basics of the Online Exam Regulations are observed.
- 1.4. The regulations for master theses and exams, academic theses, and final exams as well as final theses and final exams for other online university programmes for continuing education<sup>1</sup> are laid down in separate guidelines.
- 1.5. The present Online Exam Regulations will come into effect for newly enrolled students as of 1 July 2023.

## 2. Responsibilities

- 2.1 The Exam Regulations and any amendments to them will be passed by the UAS Academic Council in agreement with the provider.
- 2.2 Pursuant to § 10 (3) 8 FHG (FHG= Universities of Applied Sciences Act), the Academic Council must take care of regular quality assurance of exams. This includes the evaluation of the exam regulation in all UAS activity areas.
- 2.3 The Head of Online University Programmes for Continuing Education is in charge of implementing the present online exam regulations.

## 3. Competence orientation, performance evaluation, and quality of exams

- 3.1 The subject of competence-oriented exams are the learning results acquired by non-degree students in teaching/learning processes and shown through knowledge, skills, and competencies.
- 3.2 The learning objectives (= the learning results aimed for) of modules and courses are to be structured into levels of increasing complexity according to a learning taxonomy

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<sup>1</sup> Other online university programmes for continuing education are programmes that comprise less than 60 ECTS.

generally recognised in the European Higher Education Area, as detailed in the Didactics for Higher Education Draft.

- 3.3 Procedures and methods used for assessment and quality assurance must be devised in a way that safeguards a competence-oriented assessment of learning results, which is also differentiated according to learning objective levels.

#### 4. General exam modalities

- 4.1 The General Exam Modalities (according to §13 FHG as amended) apply.
- 4.2 Exams are module-related or course-related.
- 4.3 Exams must be held in the course language.
- 4.4 Exam modalities are to be set by the Head of Online University Programmes for Continuing Education.
- 4.5 The respective exam modalities (contents, methods, grading, and assessment criteria, permitted aids) and resit options must be communicated to the students at the start of the online university programme for continuing education in an appropriate manner on the learning platform.

#### 5. Assessment and grading; exam viewing

- 5.1 Assessments and exams must be oriented towards, focussed on, and differentiated according to learning objective levels.

Orientation: learning objective levels

Learning objective level (cognitive domain)	Knowledge, skills, competencies (selected)
Creating	design, develop, plan, optimize, transform...
Evaluating	judge, value, evaluate, decide...
Analysing	contrast, differentiate, compare, conclude...
Applying	execute, implement, solve, interpret...
Understanding	justify, explain, specify, distinguish...
Remembering	list, name, identify, repeat...

- 5.2 Online modules

An online module comprises two courses at least, finishing with a final multiple-choice exam each at course level plus a written paper (project work) based on the entire module.

### 5.3 Grading scheme

A module has been passed if each multiple-choice exam on the individual course belonging to the module has been successfully completed ( $\geq 50\%$  of the maximum points) and the project work at module level has been graded a pass.

For online university programmes for continuing education, the following grading scheme applies.

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Score (expressed in percentage points)</i>
Excellent (1)	100% - 87.50%
Good (2)	87.49% - 75.00%
Satisfactory (3)	74.99% - 62.50%
Sufficient (4)	62.49% - 50%
Fail (5)	49.99% - 0,00%

### 5.4 Exam viewing and copying of assessment documents

Exam viewing takes place pursuant to § 13 (6) FHG. Non-degree students are entitled to make photocopies of assessment documents. Closed questions, in particular multiple-choice questions, including the respective answer options, are excluded from the right to make copies.

## 6. Exam registration, exam dates, exam duration

6.1 Non-degree students can independently take exams regardless of time and place. With access to the contents of a course via the learning platform, the non-degree students are automatically activated for the set exam mode at course level.

After positive completion ( $\geq 50\%$  of the maximum points), the next course in this module is activated.

After positive completion of all course exams of a module, the instructions for the written project work at module level for this module as well as the course contents of the first course of the following module are activated for the student.

After uploading the written project work of the previous module, access to the course contents of the following module is activated. Access to the instructions for the next project work, however, is only activated when the previous project work is graded a pass.

These automated steps are carried out until the last course, with the exception of board exams.

6.2 If an exam cannot be taken for technical reasons for which the non-degree student is not responsible, there will be no consequences for the student. An exam attempt failed for technical reasons is invalid and shall not count towards the total number of permitted resits.

- 6.3 Final exams at course level can be multiple-choice exams. Multiple-choice exams last 25 minutes. Their assessment is automated, and the result is immediately communicated to the student in writing via the learning platform.
- 6.4 For final exams which are not multiple-choice exams (e.g. essays, presentations, case studies), the required scope of the exam will be communicated when the module is activated. The result will be communicated in writing within two weeks via the learning platform.
- 6.5 Project papers are between 15 and 35 pages long. The result is also communicated in writing via the learning platform within two weeks.
- 6.6 Non-degree students have the right to a different exam method according to § 13 (2) FHG if a disability is proven that makes it impossible to sit the exam in the prescribed method and the content and requirements of the exam are not affected by a different method.

## **7. Resits and board exams**

- 7.1 Final exams conclude the online courses and can be repeated twice, with the third examination being the board examination. Exams that have been passed cannot be repeated.
- 7.2 Project work that concludes a module as a whole may be repeated twice, with the third examination attempt constituting the board exam. Project work that has been positively assessed cannot be repeated.
- 7.3 Board exams shall be scheduled promptly, considering assessment and preparation times. A negative overall assessment of the second exam attempt shall lead to a board exam within a reasonable period of time, but no earlier than 14 days from the announcement of the assessment.
- 7.4 Information on board exams is provided to the non-degree students by the coordination of the university programme. Postponements of board exams are only possible twice if valid reasons are given.
- 7.5 Board exams shall be documented in writing. The subject of the exam, the place and time of the exam, the names of the examiners, the name of the non-degree student, the questions asked, the assessments given, the reasons for a negative assessment and any special incidents shall be recorded in the minutes. The result of oral exams shall be announced immediately after the examination.
- 7.6 The exam minutes shall be signed by the examiners and handed over to the university course coordination. The board exam shall be held by a three-member exam board to be appointed by the Head of Online University Programmes for Continuing Education, consisting of a subject examiner and two other qualified persons. Board exams can be held in writing or orally. The Head of Online University Programmes for Continuing Education determines the exam mode in consultation with the Head of University Programmes for Continuing Education. This is to be communicated to the non-degree student in good time, but at least 14 days before the exam.
- 7.7 If non-degree students are to sit several board exams, the dates shall, if possible, be set with at least two working days between the individual exam dates.

- 7.8 An assigned exam date for a board exam can only be postponed if there are serious reasons (in particular illness, accident, compulsory prevention from work) and with the approval of the Head of Online University Programmes for Continuing Education. A confirmation of this must be submitted to the university course coordination.
- 7.9 If the assessment documents (in particular reports, corrections of written examinations and examination papers) are not handed over to the extraordinary students, it shall be ensured that they are kept for at least six months from the announcement of the assessment. In addition, the statutory provisions shall apply to the retention period.
- 7.10 In the case of online university courses, a failure to appear for a board examination and a negative assessment of a board examination shall lead to the termination of the online university course.

## **8. Recognition of prior learning**

- 8.1 For the recognition of prior learning, the regulations according to § 12 FHG apply. These regulations do not apply to the recognition of courses completed during an exchange semester.
- 8.2 Formally acquired skills and competencies can be recognised if these result from prior university studies, and they can also be recognised for bachelor courses if skills have been acquired at secondary education level or corresponding levels of the European Qualification Framework (EQF) or of the National Qualification Framework (NQF). In addition, a recognition of skills acquired in non-formal settings (e.g. from job-relevant continuing education) or informally acquired skills (e.g. acquired on the job) is possible.
- 8.3 Students need to apply for the recognition of prior learning within the first two weeks of the respective module. For online university programmes for continuing education, recognition of prior learning is the responsibility of the Head of Online University Programmes for Continuing Education together with the Head of Programmes for Continuing Education.
- 8.4 Students also need to complete one form per course. As a rule, the decision on the application needs to be taken within two weeks after receipt of the form(s).
- 8.5 Competencies which have already been considered as an admission requirement cannot be recognised a second time during studies (no double recognition of competencies). Partial recognition is not possible, either.
- 8.6 On application by the non-degree student, the equivalent nature of formally acquired skills and competencies (i.e. equivalent to the competencies profile) needs to be stated regarding contents and scope of the course recognised. If the competencies are equivalent, the passed exams must be recognized. A knowledge test is not required in this case. If the competence levels differ from EQF/NQF, the equivalence needs to be checked separately.
- 8.7 The equivalent nature of non-formally or informally acquired skills and competencies (i.e., equivalent to the learning outcomes) needs to be stated in a validation process regarding contents, competence level, and scope of the course to be recognised. Appropriate proof of programme-relevant professional competencies are documents stating the job position, tasks, and duration (e.g., certificates of employment, references by employers, detailed account of duties). Non-degree students must provide evidence

in a portfolio that skills acquired correspond to the learning results and contents defined in the curriculum description. If necessary, a technical expert discussion can be held, which must be organised by the course lecturer.

## 9. Use of unauthorised aids, plagiarism

9.1 If unauthorised aids are used (e.g., cheat/crib sheets, cribbing from other students, using unauthorised calculators or computers, using mobile phones for the exams, texting during exams), the exam will be invalid. The exam attempt, however, shall count towards the total number of permitted exam attempts, according to §20 FHG. Should any unauthorised aids be detected during the exam, the exam is immediately terminated without prior notice.

9.2 Proctoring software is automatically activated during the multiple-choice exams. The software records two different videos during the multiple-choice exam:

- One video records the on-screen procedure (screencast), one video records the non-degree student via webcam and microphone.

The software checks the following criteria:

- The proctoring software must have access to the microphone and webcam during the entire exam duration.
- The non-degree students must not wear headphones during the entire exam time.
- No other software may be running in the background.
- No other apps may be started during the exam.
- The browser must be running in full-screen mode.
- The exam candidate may only look away from the monitor for a brief moment (eye movement control). If the student looks away for a longer period of time, the exam invigilator will be informed automatically.

Additionally, the proctoring software contains a face recognition function:

- To start the multiple-choice exam, a valid ID document with a photo is required for authentication.
- During the multiple-choice exam, the face of the non-degree student is automatically compared with the photo on the ID document. If the student cannot be recognised or if other/additional persons are recorded, the examination invigilator is automatically informed.

9.3 Plagiarism occurs when "texts, contents or ideas are taken over and passed off as one's own. This includes, in particular, the appropriation and use of text passages, theories, hypotheses, findings or data by direct, paraphrased or translated adoption without appropriate acknowledgement and citation of the source and the author". This definition also includes pictorial and linguistic works of all kinds (e.g., illustrations, tables, transcription or paraphrasing of podcasts).

9.4 In addition, pursuant to §20 FHG, it is not acceptable to obtain assessments through fabricated or invented research results (e.g., fabrication of surveys, statistics, and

observations) or through manipulating or forging data (falsification of the research process).

- 9.5 If an exam is declared invalid because of the use of unauthorised aids, because of plagiarism, or because of the fabrication and falsification of data, this is registered in the student's records. The examiner reports the infringement against any of the rules listed above to the Head of Online University Programmes for Continuing Education, who informs the student of the consequences.
- 9.6 A single infringement against the rules mentioned above leads to a formal reprimand of the student; the exam attempt counts towards the total number of permitted exam attempts. Continuous and repeated infringements can lead to the student's expulsion from their studies in the online university programme for continuing education, according to the education contract.

## **10. Maximum duration and interruption of studies**

- 10.1 In total, the regular study duration of online university programmes for continuing education pursuant to § 9 FHG (the regular study duration in each programme being three semesters) can be extended by a maximum of four semesters. However, this maximum extended duration does not include interruptions of studies of up to two semesters. The maximum study duration of three plus four semesters also applies if only the final oral master exam has to be passed to complete the online university programme for continuing education.
- 10.2 The application for an interruption of studies must be submitted by the non-degree student. The beginning and end of each interruption must be precisely determined and recorded in writing when it is approved. The facts and reasons for the approval or non-approval of the interruption must be sufficiently documented. An interruption may be granted for a maximum of one semester (six months). The interruption can be extended (after application in good time, i.e., two weeks before expiry of the extension at the latest) for a maximum of one additional semester (six months). During the interruption, no exams can be taken, and no access is granted to the learning platform. After the interruption, the non-degree student will return to student status with regard to exams under university regulations at the time before the interruption.