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# **Examination regulations for the master's program in imAGEin - Genetics and Biology of Aging and Regeneration at the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences at the University of Cologne from 15.09.2025**

On the basis of §§ 2 (4) sentence 1 and 64 (1) sentence 1 of Higher Education Act on the Universities of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (Hochschulgesetz – HG) in the version of the Higher Education Future Act (HZG NRW) of September 16, 2014 (GV. NRW. p. 547), last amended by Article 2 of the Act on Strengthening Bochum as a Center of Higher Education in the Field of Health Care and Amending Other Higher Education Regulations of December 19, 2024 (GV. NRW. p. 1222), the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences at the University of Cologne issues the following examination regulations:

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## § 1

### Regulatory scope

<sup>1</sup>The international integrated cooperative degree program International Master on the Biology of Aging (hereinafter referred to as imAGEin) is offered in cooperation with Université Côte d'Azur, Sorbonne Université, Universidad de Sevilla, and Universidade de Coimbra. <sup>2</sup>These examination regulations govern the course of study, the examination procedure, and the academic degree to be awarded for the part of imAGEin offered by the University of Cologne. <sup>3</sup>The content and requirements of the modules offered by the University of Cologne as part of this program are set out in the appendix. <sup>4</sup>The appendix is part of these examination regulations. <sup>5</sup>The regulations of the Université Côte d'Azur, Sorbonne Université, Universidad de Sevilla, and Universidade de Coimbra apply to the modules offered by these institutions.

## § 2

### Aim of study

(1) <sup>1</sup>Taking into account the requirements and changes in the professional world and interdisciplinary connections, teaching and study impart the necessary specialist knowledge, skills, and methods to students in accordance with the degree program in such a way that they are enabled to carry out scientific work, apply scientific findings and methods in professional practice, critically evaluate scientific findings, and act responsibly.<sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup>The imAGEin aims to train the future generation of outstanding researchers and entrepreneurs to address key challenges and issues in the biology of aging through an interdisciplinary, research-oriented, and internationally cooperative approach. <sup>3</sup>The program is characterized by the collaboration between the University of Cologne and four other European universities, as well as its multi-

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<sup>1</sup> Students acquire the necessary knowledge and competencies that enable them to exercise good scientific practice and to act responsibly in science in accordance with the University of Cologne's "Guidelines for Good Scientific Practice and for Dealing with Scientific Misconduct" (Official Notices of the University of Cologne 04/2024), as amended.

perspective approach to the biology of aging. <sup>4</sup>This focus opens up a wide range of career opportunities for graduates in various interdisciplinary and internationally competitive academic and private-sector environments.

(2) <sup>1</sup>imAGEin is an international integrated cooperative degree program that participates in the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's Program. <sup>2</sup>The University of Cologne is a member of the imAGEin consortium. <sup>3</sup>The degree program is offered in cooperation with the following participating partner universities:

- a) Université Côte d'Azur (UCA), Nice, France,
- b) the University of Seville (USE), Seville, Spain,
- c) the Universidade de Coimbra (UC), Coimbra, Portugal, and
- d) Sorbonne University (SU), Paris, France.

### **§ 3**

#### **Academic degree**

<sup>1</sup>Upon successful completion of the program, the University of Cologne will award the academic degree Master of Science, M.Sc. in imAGEin – Genetics and Biology of Aging and Regeneration as a double degree. <sup>2</sup>The partner university at which the student has successfully completed parts of the required coursework and examinations will also award the following degree:

- a) Master in Biomedical and Computational Sciences in Ageing
  - b) Master in Biomedical Research or in Molecular Genetics and Biotechnology from USE
  - c) Master's in Cellular and Molecular Biology from UC
  - d) Master's degree in Integrative Biology and Physiology from SU
- as a double degree.

<sup>3</sup>Each of the partner universities shall issue a certificate for the degree awarded by it. <sup>4</sup>The certificates shall contain wording indicating that both certificates relate to each other and have been obtained as a double degree within the framework of the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's Program "International Master on the Biology of Aging." <sup>5</sup>The University of Cologne shall issue its certificate in accordance with § 27 (1).

### **§ 4**

#### **Access to studies, start of studies, standard period of study, study organization**

(1) <sup>1</sup>Access to the program is granted to students who are admitted to the "Biomedical and Computational Sciences in Ageing" program at UCA. <sup>2</sup>Access and admission to the program are regulated in a separate UCA regulation.

(2) <sup>1</sup>The program can only be started in the winter semester. <sup>2</sup>The standard period of study is four semesters.

(3) <sup>1</sup>The course of study is organized by the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences at the University of Cologne in such a way that the program can be completed within the standard period of study. <sup>2</sup>The Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences at the University of Cologne ensures that students receive appropriate support in organizing their studies, including through program-specific advising and measures to evaluate and ensure the quality of teaching.

(4) <sup>1</sup>A study plan is drawn up and made available in a suitable form. <sup>2</sup>This study plan is not part of the examination regulations.

(5) The program is offered in English.

(6) <sup>1</sup>Mandatory mobility between the first and second years of study is required. <sup>2</sup>The second year of study must be completed at one of the cooperating partner universities located in a country other than the one where the student began their studies. <sup>3</sup>Both the first and second years of study can be completed at the University of Cologne, provided that there are free places available within the admission quotas set by the Ministry of Culture and Science of the State Northrhine-Westfalia. <sup>4</sup>In addition, students are free to choose the universities for the first and second years of study and must make their choice before beginning their studies. <sup>5</sup>Sorbonne University can only be chosen for the second year of study, but not for the first year. <sup>6</sup>60 CP must be earned at each of the two partner universities.

(7) <sup>1</sup>A total of 15 possible combinations (so-called "study tracks") are available within the framework of the imAGEin. <sup>2</sup>Each study track is assigned to one of three qualification profiles: 1) Fundamental research, 2) Applied biomedical research, or 3) Innovation and biotechnology. <sup>3</sup>Of the total of 15 study tracks, the University of Cologne is involved in 7, which are listed in the appendix.

## **§ 5**

### **Design and structure of the program**

(1) A total of 120 credit points (CP) must be earned in accordance with § 7.

(2) <sup>1</sup>Examination and coursework are completed at two partner universities of the imAGEin consortium. <sup>2</sup>Modules worth 60 CP are completed at the University of Cologne.

<sup>3</sup>If the program is completed at the University of Cologne in the first year, it comprises 7 modules in accordance with § 6. <sup>4</sup>Specifically, it includes:

- a) four basic modules, each worth 6 CP,
- b) two advanced modules, each worth 12 CP, and
- c) one supplementary module worth 12 CP.

<sup>5</sup>If the program is completed at the University of Cologne in the second year, it comprises 3 modules in accordance with § 6. <sup>6</sup>Specifically, it includes:

- a) two specialization modules, each worth 12 CP, and

b) the master's thesis module comprising 30 CP and the associated defense comprising 6 CP.

(3) The part of the program for which the University of Cologne is responsible is completed in accordance with the respective provisions in the appendix to these examination regulations.

(4) <sup>1</sup>The number and scope of the individual modules offered by the cooperating partner universities are regulated in the respective examination regulations of the partner universities. <sup>2</sup>Only the regulations of the respective university apply to these modules. <sup>3</sup>A tabular overview of the modules offered by the partner universities can be found in the appendix.

## **§ 6**

### **Modules**

(1) <sup>1</sup>The study program for which the University of Cologne is responsible is structured in modules.

(2) <sup>1</sup>Modularization is the combination of subject areas into thematically and temporally related, self-contained teaching units that are assigned credit points. <sup>2</sup>The content of a module must be designed so that it can generally be taught within one semester or within two semesters. <sup>3</sup>In particularly justified cases, a module may also extend over more than two semesters.

(3) <sup>1</sup>Modules usually have a scope of 6, 9, 12, 15, or 18 credit points. <sup>2</sup>Modules with 6 credit points can usually be completed in one semester, while the others can usually be completed in a maximum of two semesters.

(4) A distinction is made between the following module types:

- a) Basic modules serve to impart basic knowledge,
- b) Advanced modules build on the basic modules and serve to deepen the knowledge and skills acquired.
- c) Specialization modules serve to define one's own focus through specialization.
- d) Supplementary modules are not firmly anchored in the course of study and serve to round off the individual's studies.

(5) Modules can be offered as compulsory modules or elective modules:

- a) Compulsory modules must be studied; they are listed as such in the appendix.
- b) Elective modules must be selected from a specified list and are compulsory in accordance with the provisions in the appendix; they are identified as such in the appendix.

(6) <sup>1</sup>Regulations governing the individual modules and the examinations concluding them are specified in the appendix. <sup>2</sup>These include in particular:

- a) the module identification number,
- b) Title of the module,

- c) Module participation requirements,
- d) Start of the module,
- e) Frequency of the module,
- f) Duration of the module in semesters,
- g) Course types of the module and attendance requirements,
- h) Examination admission requirements,
- i) Type of examination, form and duration of the module examination, examination elements (if applicable) and the conditions for passing and repeating them,
- j) Examination language,
- k) Examination restrictions,
- l) designation as a compulsory or compulsory elective module,
- m) Credit points for the module,
- n) Requirements for the award of credit points,
- o) for elective modules: proportion of the module's credit points to the credit points in the relevant elective area,
- p) Weighting of the module grade for the overall grade.

(7) <sup>1</sup>The awarding of credit points requires the completion of the respective module. <sup>2</sup>Modules can be completed by passing a module final examination and/or by completing other assignments. <sup>3</sup>The provisions of § 12 apply to module examinations.

(8) <sup>1</sup>Participation in modules or elements of modules may be subject to prerequisites. <sup>2</sup>The prerequisites are listed in the appendix.

## § 7

### Credit point system and general criteria for the award of credit points

(1) <sup>1</sup>Successful completion of modules is certified by the awarding of credit points. <sup>2</sup>Credit points are calculated based on the estimated amount of work required of students and are a quantitative measure of the overall workload of students. <sup>3</sup>They include the time required to attend classes, prepare for and review the course material (classroom and self-study), prepare for exams, and complete exams, including final theses and student research projects, as well as internships, if applicable. <sup>4</sup>Credit points are equivalent to credits under the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System. <sup>5</sup>One credit point corresponds to an average workload of approximately 30 hours. <sup>6</sup>As a rule, 60 credit points are earned per academic year. <sup>7</sup>The requirements for the successful completion of a module are listed in the appendix. <sup>8</sup>The requirements may include examinations and/or coursework as well as other evidence of competence. <sup>9</sup>According to § 63 (1) HG, examinations are graded performances that determine academic success and are generally included in the overall grade for the degree program. <sup>10</sup>They are conducted in the forms specified in § 12 and the appendices. <sup>11</sup>In contrast, coursework serves to assess the learning progress of teachers and learners, can be repeated an unlimited number of times, and is not included in the calculation of the grade. <sup>12</sup>Coursework

is generally provided in the following formats: electronic learning assessments, essays, exercises, homework, short presentations, minutes, reviews, written exams, thesis papers, and similar formats. <sup>13</sup>If coursework requires attendance at a course for which regular participation is not required in accordance with § 9 (4), the examination board shall, in justified exceptional cases, allow students to complete alternative coursework that does not require attendance at the course, provided that this is suitable for promoting the acquisition of skills and for assessing learning progress in a comparable manner.

(2) <sup>1</sup>Credit points are awarded when the coursework and/or examinations required in the respective module have been completed or passed. <sup>2</sup>Paragraph 48 (5) HG applies to the acquisition of credit points during leaves of absence. <sup>3</sup>Coursework and examinations from uncompleted modules can be shown in the transcript of records.

## **§ 8**

### **Unoccupied**

## **§ 9**

### **Courses**

(1) <sup>1</sup>Courses are generally offered in the following forms:

- a) Lecture: Coherent presentation and teaching of basic and specialized scientific knowledge and methodological skills, usually in individual courses spread out over a semester.
- b) Seminar: Discursive examination of fundamental or advanced issues.
- c) Exercise: Course accompanying a lecture or seminar. Discussion of specified exercises and consolidation of learning content through independent study or acquisition and consolidation of knowledge by working on tasks or conducting experiments.
- d) Internship: Acquisition and deepening of knowledge through practical tasks or experiments. An internship can be carried out at the university (e.g., laboratory internship) or outside the university (e.g., field, company, or school internship).
- e) Excursion: Course outside the university for the purpose of observation. Students recognize subject-specific aspects in reality, identify relevant factors/structures based on observations, and practice applying the knowledge they have acquired or develop scientific conclusions.
- f) Language course: Course designed to help students learn and/or improve their foreign language skills.
- g) Project: Action-oriented, independent work on a complex task or problem in successive phases (planning, implementation, presentation of results), usually within a predetermined time frame.
- h) Tutorial: Usually a course accompanying basic courses. Working techniques are practiced and basic knowledge is deepened in small groups; the complex content of

the main course is explained to students or the theoretical content is illustrated using practical examples.

(2) The types of courses referred to in paragraph 1 may be offered in combination.

(3) <sup>1</sup>If, due to the nature or purpose of a course or for other reasons related to research or teaching, it is necessary to limit the number of participants and the number of applicants exceeds the capacity, the number of participants may be limited in accordance with § 59 (2) HG. <sup>2</sup>In this case, priority shall be given to students who are required to attend a course at this point in their studies. <sup>3</sup>The faculty shall regulate the details, in particular the criteria for prioritization, in its own regulations. <sup>4</sup> Within the limits of the available resources, it shall be ensured that the restrictions on the number of participants do not cause any loss of time for the students.

(4) <sup>1</sup>Admission to an examination or the awarding of credit points may require regular attendance at courses in modules and their assessment. <sup>2</sup>The relevant provisions are set out in the appendix. <sup>3</sup>Requiring regular attendance is only permissible if it is proportionate and the learning objective can only be achieved through regular attendance. <sup>4</sup>This is generally the case if at least one of the following reasons applies:

- a) The obligation to demonstrate regular attendance at modules or courses arises from the initiation and practice of academic discourse, which is the primary and defining element and essential learning objective of the module or course. Scientific discourse is characterized by the presentation of scientific questions and arguments and the expression of one's own position, as well as critical reflection and mutual exchange on what has been presented.
- b) The obligation to demonstrate regular participation in modules or courses arises from the didactic design of the course, which, in order to achieve the learning objective, provides for permanently participatory, interactive, and cooperative teaching and learning formats, as well as reflection on the content and results under guidance.
- c) The obligation to provide evidence of regular participation in modules or courses is stipulated by legal provisions.
- d) The obligation to demonstrate regular participation in modules or courses is mandatory for reasons of occupational health and safety and laboratory safety.
- e) The obligation to participate regularly in modules or courses in a verifiable manner arises from the need to acquire practical skills and abilities that cannot be acquired in any other way, as well as to test, practice, and reflect on them under supervision.
- f) The obligation to demonstrate regular participation in modules or courses arises from the need to practice sign language or oral or written language skills and abilities, as well as their practical linguistic execution and reflection in the context of communicative and personal interaction under supervision.
- g) The obligation to participate regularly in modules or courses in a verifiable manner arises from the need to examine content-relevant subjects and contexts in situations and to acquire practical or professionally relevant skills and abilities in a location- and situation-dependent manner, including non-university learning locations.

<sup>5</sup>Regular attendance can generally be verified if absences do not exceed 20%.

<sup>6</sup>Exceptions to this rule may be made, particularly in the case of internships and excursions.

<sup>7</sup>Corresponding regulations are set out in the appendices. <sup>8</sup>If attendance is compulsory, absences cannot be compensated for by other achievements. <sup>9</sup>§ 17 (2) to (4) remains



unaffected. <sup>10</sup>Regular participation in the courses and their preparation and follow-up is recommended.

## **§ 10**

### **Study counselling, subject-specific counselling, exam counselling**

(1) <sup>1</sup>The provisions in this section apply to all students enrolled in the imAGEin for the duration of their studies at the University of Cologne. <sup>2</sup>Legally binding information on examination requirements and examination performance at the University of Cologne is provided by the chair of the joint examination board for the master's programs of the Department of Biology at the University of Cologne, his or her deputy, the head of the respective examination office, and his or her deputy.

(2) <sup>1</sup>The Central Student Advisory Service of the University of Cologne is available for general study advice, in particular on study options and study requirements. <sup>2</sup>Faculty-wide advisory services are available for interdisciplinary study advice. <sup>3</sup>The Center for Teacher Training is also available for interdisciplinary advice on teacher training programs.

(3) <sup>1</sup>Academic advising is provided by university lecturers and academic staff involved in teaching this degree program during office hours. <sup>2</sup>Office hours are announced on notice boards in the institutes and on the Internet. <sup>3</sup>Individual academic advising is recommended.

(4) The General Student Committee (AStA) and the Biology Student Council offer advice on general questions regarding the organization of studies.

(5) Department 9: International Affairs at the University of Cologne and the Centers for International Relations (ZiB) at the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences at the University of Cologne offer counselling for specific questions from international students and for preparing to study abroad.

(6) In the event of personal difficulties related to your studies, you can seek assistance from the Cologne Student Union's psychosocial counselling service.

(7) Students with disabilities or chronic or mental illnesses can seek advice from the university administration (Service Center for Inclusion) and the representative for students with disabilities or chronic illnesses.

(8) The international coordination office of the consortium, which belongs to the Université Côte d'Azur, is also available to answer cross-university organizational questions about the degree program and offers an online handbook to guide students.

(9) <sup>1</sup>As part of the imAGEin, each student is assigned an academic mentor from one of the partner universities, if possible, from one of the two universities where the students will be studying during their program. <sup>2</sup>The academic mentors provide students with advice and support to help them achieve their desired academic and professional goals in the best possible way.

## **§ 11a**

### **Recognition of credits**

(1) For the purposes of these regulations, the term "recognition" means the recognition of university achievements within the meaning of § 63a (1) HG.

(2) <sup>1</sup>Credits earned in degree programs at other state or state-recognized universities, at state or state-recognized vocational academies, or in degree programs at foreign state or state-recognized universities, or in another degree program at the same university, shall be recognized upon request, provided that there is no significant difference in the skills acquired compared to the credits being replaced; no examination of equivalence shall take place. <sup>2</sup>The same applies to degrees with which degree programs within the meaning of sentence 1 have been completed.

(3) <sup>1</sup>If credits are recognized, the grades shall be transferred and included in the calculation of the overall grade, provided that the grading systems are comparable. <sup>2</sup>If the grading systems are incomparable, the notation "passed" shall be included. <sup>3</sup>Recognition shall be indicated in the certificates of credits earned.

(4) <sup>1</sup>The recognition of a credit earned elsewhere is excluded if this credit has already been earned at the University of Cologne. <sup>2</sup>This also applies if this credit has not yet been graded.

(5) <sup>1</sup>Students must submit the documents required for recognition in electronic form. <sup>2</sup>If there are doubts about the authenticity of the documents submitted electronically, the chair of the examination board may request that the original documents or certified copies be submitted. <sup>3</sup>Applications for recognition must be submitted in writing or electronically. <sup>4</sup>The chair of the examination board shall decide on recognition. <sup>5</sup>As a rule, subject representatives shall be consulted during the recognition procedure. <sup>6</sup>The decision shall generally be made within three months and communicated to the applicant without delay by entering the recognition information in the campus management system; reasons for rejecting a recognition request must be provided in writing or electronically. <sup>7</sup>If the recognition requested on the basis of an application within the meaning of paragraph 2 is refused, the applicant may, irrespective of the procedural or legal deadlines, request a review of the decision by the Rectorate. <sup>8</sup>The Rectorate shall make a recommendation to the chair of the examination board for the further processing of the application.

(6) <sup>1</sup>In the case of stays abroad as part of their studies, students may conclude an agreement with the relevant authorities on the credits to be recognized (learning agreement). <sup>2</sup>A learning agreement confirms that there is no significant difference within the meaning of paragraph 2 between the credits to be earned at the foreign university and the specified credits at the University of Cologne. <sup>3</sup>The agreed credits shall be recognized upon written or electronic application by the student, provided that the other requirements for recognition are met at the time of application.

## **§ 11b**

### **Transfer of credits**

(1) For the purposes of these regulations, the term "credit transfer" means the recognition of non-university credits within the meaning of § 63a (7) HG.

(2) <sup>1</sup>Upon request, knowledge and qualifications acquired in ways other than through study may be credited on the basis of submitted documentation if this knowledge and these qualifications are equivalent in content and level to the achievements they are intended to

replace. <sup>2</sup>Such non-university credits may not be credited for more than half of the credits to be earned at the University of Cologne.

(3) <sup>1</sup>If credits are transferred, the grades shall be adopted and included in the calculation of the overall grade, provided that the grading systems are comparable. <sup>2</sup>In the case of incomparable grading systems, the note "passed" shall be included. <sup>3</sup>The transfer of credits shall be indicated in the certificates of credits earned.

(4) <sup>1</sup>Credits for work completed elsewhere cannot be transferred if this work has already been completed at the University of Cologne. <sup>2</sup>This also applies if this work has not yet been assessed.

(5) <sup>1</sup>Students must submit the documents required for credit transfer. <sup>2</sup>If there are doubts about the authenticity of the documents submitted electronically, the chair of the examination board may request the submission of the original documents or certified copies. <sup>3</sup>Applications for credit transfer must be submitted in writing or electronically. <sup>4</sup>The chair of the examination board shall decide on the credit transfer. <sup>5</sup>During the credit transfer procedure, subject representatives shall generally be consulted. <sup>6</sup>The decision shall generally be made within three months and communicated to the applicant without delay by entering the credit transfer information in the campus management system; reasons for rejecting a credit transfer request must be provided in writing or electronically.

## **§ 12**

### **Types of examinations**

(1) <sup>1</sup>As a rule, modules are completed with only one module examination. <sup>2</sup>Module examinations can be taken in written, oral, practical, or combined form. <sup>3</sup>The form of examination must be suitable for testing the learning objectives and learning outcomes taught in the module and for demonstrating that the examinees have mastered the content and methods of the module in their essential contexts and can apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired. <sup>4</sup>For modules worth 6 credit points, the module examination consists of only one examination element. <sup>5</sup>For modules worth 9 credit points, the module examination may consist of a maximum of two examination elements. <sup>6</sup>For modules worth 12, 15, or 18 credit points, the module examination may consist of a maximum of three examination elements. <sup>7</sup>If a module examination consists of several examination elements, these usually represent different forms of examination or variations of examination forms in accordance with paragraphs 2 to 6. <sup>8</sup>The form and duration or workload of the respective examination are specified in detail in the appendix. <sup>9</sup>For serious reasons, the chair of the Examination Board of the University of Cologne may, upon written or electronic request, specify a different form of examination. <sup>10</sup>Individual modules may also be completed without an examination by performing other tasks. <sup>11</sup>The relevant regulations are listed in the appendix.

(2) The written examination formats are generally as follows:

- a) Written examination: A written examination is a test to be completed under personal supervision or electronic supervision (video supervision), in which specified tasks are to be completed alone and independently using only the permitted aids. The duration of a written examination is usually at least 45 and at most 180 minutes and is specified for the respective examination in the appendix. Written examinations can be conducted in written or electronic form. For written examinations in electronic form, the regulations in paragraph 7 apply in addition. Written examinations can also be

conducted in whole or in part in the form of a multiple-choice procedure in accordance with § 13.

- b) Term paper: A term paper is an independent written paper on a given topic. The duration and scope of the term paper are determined by the workload specified in the course description, which is listed in the appendix. It must be submitted in written form or in an electronic format specified by the examiner. The term paper must be accompanied by a statement with the following wording: "I hereby certify that I have written this paper independently and without the use of any resources other than those specified. All passages taken verbatim or in substance from published and unpublished external sources, including content generated by AI tools, are identified as such. "If both an electronic and a paper version are submitted, the following sentence must be added: "I certify that the printed version submitted is completely identical to the electronic version submitted."
  - c) A take-home exam is the independent written completion of one or more exam tasks within a specified exam period. A take-home exam can be conducted in written or electronic form. The duration and scope of the take-home exam are determined by the workload specified in the appendix.
  - d) An internship report is a written presentation and analysis of the tasks completed during an internship within or outside the university. An internship report can be written in written or electronic form. The duration and scope of the internship report are determined by the workload specified in the appendix.
  - e) A portfolio consists of several tasks of different types to be completed independently and successively without examination supervision and consists of a compilation of individual documents to be prepared by the examinees. The portfolio serves to document and reflect on the learning process, reflects this process, and is evaluated in summary form. The portfolio is usually divided into an introduction, a collection of documents from the study of the relevant module, and a concluding reflection. Exams and term papers within the meaning of paragraph 2 (a) and (b) cannot be part of a portfolio. A portfolio can be kept in written or electronic form. The duration and scope of the portfolio are determined by the workload specified in the appendix.
- (3) Oral examinations are usually conducted in the following forms:
- a) Oral examinations: In oral examinations, candidates must demonstrate that they understand the interrelationships within the examination area and are able to classify specific questions within these interrelationships. Oral examinations are conducted by at least two examiners or by one examiner in the presence of a knowledgeable assessor. An oral examination usually lasts at least 20 and at most 45 minutes per examinee and may be conducted in whole or in part via electronic communication. The duration, essential course, subjects, and results must be recorded in a protocol. Upon request, candidates from the same degree program should be allowed to attend oral examinations as listeners, unless a candidate objects. The examiner decides on the request depending on the number of available seats. Attendance does not extend to the consultation and announcement of the examination results.
  - b) Presentation: A presentation serves to present a given topic or subject matter within a limited time. The examination takes place within the framework of a course with the aid of suitable presentation techniques. A presentation may be conducted in whole or in part via electronic communication. The scope is determined by the workload specified in the appendix.

- c) Lecture: A lecture is used to present independently developed aspects or perspectives of a topic within a limited time frame with the aid of suitable presentation techniques. A lecture may be conducted entirely or partially via electronic communication. The scope is determined by the workload specified in the appendix.
- (4) Practical examinations usually take the form of: setting up and conducting experiments, and examinations in which a non-textual product is created.
- (5) <sup>1</sup>Combined examinations are uniform examinations whose parts consist of different forms of examination. <sup>2</sup>The parts of the examination must be suitable for testing the acquisition of different types of skills and must be related to each other in terms of content. <sup>3</sup>The combined examination format usually takes the following forms: presentation with written elaboration, written examination with presentation, term paper with presentation, term paper with preparatory and/or reflective discussion, term paper and oral examination or written examination and oral examination or portfolio and oral examination, paper with presentation, poster presentation, workplace-based assessment, simulation, business game, project work, whereby the following applies:
- a) In the case of a presentation with written elaboration of the presentation content, the presentation is the focus of the examination. The requirements of paragraph 3 (b) must be observed. The presentation with written elaboration may be conducted in whole or in part via electronic communication. The duration and scope of the examination are determined by the workload of the module and are specified in the appendix.
  - b) In the case of a written exam with a presentation, the presentation serves to communicate and reflect on the skills documented in the written exam and the knowledge gained in an oral presentation format. The requirements of paragraph 2 letter a) must be observed. The written exam with presentation may be conducted in whole or in part via electronic communication. The duration and scope of the examination are determined by the workload of the module and are specified in the appendix.
  - c) In the case of a term paper with presentation, the examination focuses on the in-depth study of a topic. The requirements of paragraph 2(b) must be observed. The presentation serves as a summary of the topic of the term paper. The term paper with presentation may be conducted entirely or partially via electronic communication. The duration and scope of the examination are determined by the workload of the module and are specified in the appendix.
  - d) In the case of a term paper with a preparatory and/or reflective discussion, a term paper in accordance with paragraph 2 letter b is accompanied by a preparatory discussion to clarify questions of content and structure or by a reflective discussion to review structural aspects, clarify content, and discuss specific aspects of the work process. The examination may be conducted in whole or in part via electronic communication. The duration and scope of the examination are determined by the workload of the module and are specified in the appendix.
  - e) In the case of a term paper in accordance with paragraph 2 letter b, a written exam in accordance with paragraph 2 letter a, or a portfolio in accordance with paragraph 2 letter e with an oral exam component, the purpose of the oral exam is to reflect on the skills documented in the written exam and to communicate the insights gained in an oral presentation. The examination may be conducted in whole or in part via electronic communication. The duration and scope of the examination are determined by the workload of the module and are specified in the appendix.

- f) In the case of a paper with a presentation, the examination focuses on the in-depth elaboration of a topic, including in particular the critical analysis of current specialist literature, the reflective use of theoretical approaches, and the ability to argue scientifically. The paper is a condensed written elaboration in which the topic is presented in a summarized and structured manner. The presentation serves to summarize the findings of the paper in a limited amount of time with the aid of appropriate presentation techniques. The requirements of paragraph 3(c) must be observed. The paper with presentation may be conducted in whole or in part via electronic communication. The duration and scope of the examination are determined by the workload of the module and are specified in the appendix.
- g) A poster presentation is a condensed, large-format textual and/or pictorial representation of scientific research results, methods, and findings on a scientific question and can be carried out in written or electronic form. It serves to document and reflect on the learning process and is accompanied by an oral presentation of results and findings, which may be conducted in whole or in part via electronic communication. The duration and scope of the poster presentation are determined by the workload, which is specified in the appendix.
- h) A workplace-based assessment is an incomplete collection of assessment tools that are suitable for observing behavior (procedures, communication, etc.) in vivo and providing qualified feedback. The assessment instruments are mostly used formatively. To this end, participants work together in groups that are assigned different goals or interests. The specific implementation of the assessment and the criteria for evaluation are explained to the participants in advance. The scope is determined by the workload specified in the appendix.
- i) A simulation is an examination of complex, realistic competencies, abilities, and skills in vivo, carried out using suitable models or actors. The examinations can be conducted as individual examinations or in series (as so-called objectively structured examinations). The examination performance is documented on special documentation sheets (so-called checklists) by one examiner per station. The duration of the examination is determined by the workload specified in the appendix.
- j) A simulation game is a complex scenario of varying length with realistic and at the same time open-ended problems that must be solved. Simulation games can be competitive (implementation of a solution by a group) or cooperative (joint solution finding). In addition to knowledge, simulation games test planning, strategic, and communication skills in dealing with and using specialist knowledge in application scenarios. The solutions are not defined in advance, but are the result of planning, negotiations, strategies, tactics, and decisions. The scope is determined by the workload specified in the appendix.
- k) A project assignment is the independent completion of a task or problem in a group or by an individual, from planning and implementation to documentation of the results in written, oral, electronic, or other form. The processing time and scope are determined by the workload specified in the appendix.

(6) In appropriate cases, examinations may also be conducted as group work or as oral group examinations at the discretion of the examiner, provided that the individual contribution of each group member is clearly recognizable, clearly distinguishable, and assessable.

(7)<sup>1</sup>When announcing the examination date in accordance with § 15 (5), the examiners shall determine whether the examination will be conducted in person or in electronic form and whether the examination in electronic form will be accompanied by video surveillance.<sup>2</sup>If there are serious reasons, a different form of examination (electronic or in person) may be

determined after the examination date has been announced in consultation with the responsible examination board, provided that this does not disadvantage the examinees when taking their examinations. <sup>3</sup>In the case of an examination conducted in electronic form, the examination candidates shall be given sufficient opportunity before the examination to familiarize themselves with the electronic information and communication systems used in the respective examination. <sup>4</sup>With regard to data protection regulations and the implementation of video surveillance, the provisions of the University of Cologne's regulations on online examinations and video surveillance, as amended, shall apply, with the exception of § 5 (4) sentences 1 and 2.

(8) <sup>1</sup>Any disruptions to the examination process must be reported immediately to the chair of the examination board or the responsible examiner in writing or electronically. <sup>2</sup>The claim shall be excluded at the latest if more than three working days have elapsed since the examination was taken.

## **§ 13**

### **Multiple-choice examinations**

(1) <sup>1</sup>An examination using a multiple-choice procedure is one in which the minimum performance required for the candidate to pass the examination can be achieved solely by marking or assigning the given answers. <sup>2</sup>Multiple-choice examinations or examination questions are only permissible if they are suitable for proving that the examination candidate has mastered the content and methods of the module in the essential contexts and can apply the knowledge and skills acquired.

(2) <sup>1</sup>The exam questions must be unambiguously understandable, consistent, clearly answerable, and suitable for assessing the knowledge of the examinees to be tested in accordance with paragraph 1, sentence 2. <sup>2</sup>Iterations of the same exam questions (including the answer options) are permitted. <sup>3</sup>The deduction of points within an examination task is not permitted.

(3) If, according to the faculty- or program-specific design of the specific multiple-choice procedure, the examiner is not also the person who sets the questions, but the examination activity is transferred from the examiner responsible according to the examination regulations to another person who sets the questions, the following paragraphs 4 to 9 shall also apply.

(4) <sup>1</sup>The examiner selects the exam material, formulates the questions, determines the possible answers, and creates the assessment rules and assessment scheme in accordance with paragraph 6. <sup>2</sup>The requirements for passing the examination shall be specified in advance. <sup>3</sup>Prior to the examination, the examiner shall conduct a review process in which the content and form of the questions are checked by a second examiner.

(5) <sup>1</sup>The examiner may also create a pool of equivalent exam questions from which the exam candidates receive different exam questions to answer. <sup>2</sup>The assignment is done by random selection. <sup>3</sup>The equivalence of the exam questions must be ensured.

(6) <sup>1</sup>The examination is passed if the candidate has achieved at least 60 percent of the total points available. <sup>2</sup>If the overall average of the points achieved in an examination, minus 12 percent of the overall mean, is less than 60 percent but more than 50 percent of the total points available, the pass mark is calculated according to this sliding scale. <sup>3</sup>A grading scheme that sets only an absolute pass mark is not permitted.

(7) <sup>1</sup>Examination performance shall be graded as follows: If the minimum number of points required to pass the examination has been achieved, the grade shall be

"very good"	if at least 75 percent,
"good"	if at least 50 but less than 75 percent,
"satisfactory"	if at least 25 but less than 50 percent,
"adequate"	if no or less than 25 percent

of the points available were achieved. <sup>2</sup>When calculating the scores, 0.5 values are interpreted in favor of the examination candidate. <sup>3</sup>If the minimum number of points required to pass the examination has not been achieved, the grade is "unsatisfactory (5.0)".

(8) <sup>1</sup>If, during the evaluation of examination performance, a noticeable accumulation of errors in the answers to individual examination questions becomes apparent, the examiner shall immediately review the relevant examination questions before the examination results are announced to determine whether they are incorrect in relation to the requirements set out in paragraph 2, sentence 1. <sup>2</sup>The questions shall be analyzed post hoc. <sup>3</sup>The difficulty index, discrimination index, reliability, and distractor analysis provide information on the quality of the questions asked. <sup>4</sup>If the review reveals that individual exam questions are flawed, they shall be re-evaluated or not taken into account when determining the exam result. <sup>5</sup>The number of exam tasks to be taken into account for determining the exam result is reduced accordingly. <sup>6</sup>The reduction in the number of exam tasks after the results have been published must not be to the disadvantage of any exam candidate. <sup>7</sup>If the number of points attributable to the examination tasks to be eliminated exceeds 20 percent of the total number of points available, the examination must be repeated in its entirety. <sup>8</sup>This also applies if only part of an examination is to be completed using the multiple-choice method.

(9) If an examination performance consists only partially of examination tasks in the multiple-choice procedure, this paragraph shall apply, with the exception of paragraph 8, sentences 7 and 8, only to the part of the examination completed in the multiple-choice procedure.

## **§ 14**

### **Examination language**

Examinations are conducted in English.

## **§ 15**

### **Registration and admission to examinations**

(1) <sup>1</sup>Before admission to a module examination, it shall be verified whether the candidate is entitled to take the examination. <sup>2</sup>Admission to and sitting of a module examination shall be granted if the examination candidate is enrolled at the University of Cologne in the relevant degree program or is admitted as a guest student, has registered for the respective module examination in accordance with paragraph 4 within the specified time limit, and, if applicable, fulfils any further requirements in accordance with paragraph 2, and there are no grounds for



refusal in accordance with paragraph 3. <sup>3</sup>Deviating regulations in accordance with the cooperation agreements remain unaffected.

(2) <sup>1</sup>Admission to a module examination may be subject to the fulfilment of certain requirements. <sup>2</sup>The respective requirements for admission to a module examination are listed in the appendix.

(3) <sup>1</sup>Admission to a module examination shall be refused if the requirements under paragraph 1 or paragraph 2 are not met, if the module examination has already been passed in the same or an equivalent module at the University of Cologne, or if a repeat period has been missed. <sup>2</sup>Admission to a module examination shall also be refused if the examination candidate has definitively failed an examination required by the examination regulations in the chosen degree program at a university within the scope of the Basic Law or has lost the right to take the examination; this applies accordingly to degree programs that are very similar in content to the previous degree program. <sup>3</sup>In addition, admission to an examination shall be refused if an examination candidate is on leave of absence pursuant to § 48 (5) HG, unless one of the exceptional cases specified in § 48 (5) sentences 4 and 5 HG applies.

(4) <sup>1</sup>Registration in the campus management system is required for each module examination; without registration, there is no entitlement to participate in or be assessed for the examination. <sup>2</sup>Registration for a module examination must generally take place no later than six weeks before the examination date. <sup>3</sup>Notwithstanding this, § 20 (8) applies.

(5) <sup>1</sup>The examination dates must be announced at the beginning of the lecture period, but no later than nine weeks before the examination date, by posting a notice or in a suitable form on the Internet. <sup>2</sup>Notwithstanding this, the following applies: In the case of oral module examinations, the examination periods must be announced at the beginning of the lecture period and the specific date must be announced no later than two weeks before the module examination. <sup>3</sup>Students who are admitted to a module examination are entitled to take an announced examination date, except in cases of force majeure. <sup>4</sup>Notwithstanding this, § 20 (8) applies.

(6) At least two examination dates close together shall be offered for the completion of an examination.

(7) Students who are enrolled in several degree programs at the same time and wish to take a module examination that is part of more than one of these degree programs must specify in which degree program they will take the module examination when registering for this module examination.

## **§ 16**

### **Deregistration, absence, and withdrawal from examinations**

(1) <sup>1</sup>The deadlines for withdrawing from module examinations shall be announced by the chair of the examination board at least nine weeks before the examination date by means of a notice or in a suitable form on the Internet. <sup>2</sup>As a rule, an examination candidate may withdraw from the module examination without giving reasons no later than two weeks before the respective examination date.

(2) <sup>1</sup>If an examination candidate does not participate in a module examination at a specified time and location without good reason, or if he or she withdraws from the module examination after it has begun without good reason, the examination performance shall be

graded as "unsatisfactory (5.0)" or "fail." <sup>2</sup>The same applies if an examination performance is not completed within the specified time limit. <sup>3</sup>If an examination is conducted electronically, the examination performance is only considered to have been completed if the electronic transmission to the responsible office has been completed in full by the end of the time limit.

(3) <sup>1</sup>If an examination candidate fails to attend a module examination or withdraws from the module examination after it has begun, the chair of the examination board may, for valid reasons, refrain from grading the examination performance as "unsatisfactory (5.0)" or "fail." <sup>2</sup>The same applies if an examination performance is not completed within the specified processing time. <sup>3</sup>The reasons given for the absence or withdrawal must be reported to the chair of the examination board immediately in writing or electronically and must be substantiated. <sup>4</sup>In the event of illness, a medical certificate must be submitted. <sup>5</sup>In cases of doubt, a medical certificate from a medical examiner may be required; the costs shall be borne by the university. <sup>6</sup>The same applies in the case of proven illness of a child to be cared for by an examination candidate, or a spouse, registered partner, or relative in the direct line or first degree of kinship who requires care.

## **§ 17**

### **Compensation for disadvantages and protective provisions**

(1) The special needs of students with disabilities, chronic or mental illnesses, and students who are subject to maternity protection provisions must be taken into account in order to ensure equal opportunities.

(2) <sup>1</sup>If an examination candidate can credibly demonstrate that he or she is unable to take an examination in the prescribed form or to the prescribed extent due to a prolonged or permanent illness or disability, he or she shall be granted compensation for disadvantages upon written or electronic application to the chair of the examination board. <sup>2</sup>The submission of a medical certificate from a specialist may be required for this purpose. <sup>3</sup>This applies accordingly with regard to deadlines and dates, as well as obligations to attend courses and complete coursework.

(3) <sup>1</sup>The protective provisions in accordance with the provisions of maternity protection law and in accordance with the deadlines of the Federal Parental Allowance and Parental Leave Act in its currently valid version shall be made available upon request; in these cases, it shall be possible to take examinations despite being on leave. <sup>2</sup>If an examination candidate can credibly demonstrate that she is unable to take an examination in the prescribed form or to the prescribed extent due to maternity protection provisions, she shall be granted compensation for disadvantages upon written or electronic application to the chair of the examination board. <sup>3</sup>The submission of a medical certificate from a specialist may be required for this purpose. <sup>4</sup>This applies accordingly with regard to deadlines and dates, as well as attendance requirements for courses and academic achievements to be completed. <sup>5</sup>The application must be submitted immediately after the conditions have been met.

(4) <sup>1</sup>Special circumstances arising from the need to care for or provide for a spouse, registered partner, a direct relative, or a first-degree relative by marriage shall be taken into account appropriately, in particular with regard to deadlines and dates as well as attendance requirements for courses. <sup>2</sup>The application must be submitted immediately after the conditions are met.

(5) <sup>1</sup>Applications pursuant to paragraphs 2 to 4 must be comprehensively justified by the examination candidate, who must provide appropriate evidence. <sup>2</sup>Applications must be

submitted to the chair of the examination board within a reasonable period of time before the performance is to be rendered. <sup>3</sup>Unless a change in the nature of the illness or disability is to be expected, the compensation for disadvantages shall extend to all examinations to be taken in the course of the program of study and to the acquisition of participation requirements.

## **§ 18**

### **Assessment of examination performance**

(1) <sup>1</sup>Examination performance shall be graded by the examiners or assessed as "pass" or "fail." <sup>2</sup>The following grades shall be used:

1 = very good: an excellent performance;

2 = good: performance significantly above average requirements;

3 = satisfactory: performance that meets average requirements;

4 = adequate: performance that still meets the requirements despite its shortcomings;

5 = poor: performance that no longer meets the requirements due to significant shortcomings.

<sup>3</sup>Intermediate values for differentiated assessment are formed by lowering or raising the individual grades by 0.3. <sup>4</sup>The grades 0.7, 4.3, 4.7, and 5.3 are excluded. <sup>5</sup>An examination performance is passed if it is graded "sufficient (4.0)" or better or is assessed as "passed." <sup>6</sup>These grades are reported with one decimal place and are used in this form for further calculations; all further decimal places are deleted without rounding. <sup>7</sup>Grades for examinations taken at cooperating partner universities are assessed according to the grading system used there. <sup>8</sup>A conversion table, which is included in the appendix to these examination regulations, is used to convert grades from partner universities.

(2) <sup>1</sup>The master's thesis and the associated colloquium, as well as examinations for which there is no possibility of compensation in the event of final failure, are assessed by two examiners; the appointment is made by the chair of the examination board. <sup>2</sup>If a graded examination is assessed by two examiners, the grade for the examination is calculated as the arithmetic mean of the two individual assessments. <sup>3</sup>If, in the case of written examinations based on the two-examiner principle, the difference between the individual assessments is more than 1.0 grade points, or if only one of the two individual assessments is "unsatisfactory (5.0)", the chair of the examination board shall appoint a third examiner. <sup>4</sup>In this case, the grade is calculated as the arithmetic mean of the three individual assessments. <sup>5</sup>If the mean value is lower than "sufficient (4.0)", the examination performance shall be graded as "sufficient (4.0)" in deviation from the arithmetic mean if two individual grades are "sufficient (4.0)" or better. <sup>6</sup>If two individual assessments are "poor (5.0)", the examination performance shall be graded as "poor (5.0)," deviating from the arithmetic mean.

(3) If a written examination performance that is graded as "pass" or "fail" is assessed by two examiners, and the two examiners' assessments differ, the chair of the examination board shall appoint a third examiner to determine the final assessment.

(4) <sup>1</sup>In the case of combined forms of examination in accordance with § 12 (5), an overall assessment of the examination performance shall be made. <sup>2</sup>In the case of grading, the grade shall be reported in accordance with paragraph 1.

(5) <sup>1</sup>If a module examination consists of several examination elements, the following pass or repeat option applies: All examination elements must be graded "pass" or "sufficient (4.0)" or better. <sup>2</sup>All examination elements of the module examination that are graded "unsatisfactory (5.0)" or "failed" must be repeated. <sup>3</sup>Paragraphs 1 to 4 apply accordingly to examination elements.

(6) <sup>1</sup>The overall grade for the part of the program offered by the University of Cologne is calculated as the weighted arithmetic mean of the module grades and the grade for the master's thesis in accordance with the weighting specified in the appendix. <sup>2</sup>The preliminary overall grade for the part of the program offered by the University of Cologne is calculated as the weighted arithmetic mean of the existing grades for the successfully completed or recognized modules. <sup>3</sup>If more modules are completed than specified in these examination regulations, the passed examination results from the compulsory modules and the passed examination results from the compulsory elective and elective modules are used to calculate the overall grade in chronological order according to the examination date stored in the campus management system. <sup>4</sup>The remaining elective and optional modules that have been passed are listed as additional examinations on the transcript of records.

(7) <sup>1</sup>Grades for examinations at the University of Cologne are shown with one decimal place and are used in this form for further calculations; all further decimal places are deleted without rounding. <sup>2</sup>The transcript of records shows the overall grade for the degree program with one decimal place. <sup>3</sup>All further decimal places are deleted without rounding.

(8) Grades at the University of Cologne that are calculated as average values are as follows:

from 1.0 to 1.5 = very good;

from 1.6 to 2.5 = good;

from 2.6 to 3.5 = satisfactory;

from 3.6 to 4.0 = satisfactory;

above 4.0 = poor.

(9) If all grades at the University of Cologne are at least "very good" (1.3) in accordance with paragraph 8, the overall grade "with distinction" will be awarded.

## **§ 19**

### **Announcement of examination results**

(1) <sup>1</sup>The assessment of examination performance at the University of Cologne is usually announced to the examination candidates within eight weeks by entering the assessment information into the campus management system. <sup>2</sup>If there is a deviation from this rule, the reasons must be recorded. <sup>3</sup>The results of oral examinations shall be communicated to the examination candidate immediately after the examination.

(2) The decision on the final failure of an examination taken at the University of Cologne or a failed, master's thesis written at the University of Cologne shall be formally sent to the examination candidate at the postal address stored in the campus management system or sent electronically, together with information on the right of appeal.

## § 20

### Repeating module examinations

(1) <sup>1</sup>Failed module examinations may be repeated. <sup>2</sup>Notwithstanding the provisions of § 21 (11), the number of examination attempts per module may be limited to three. <sup>3</sup>Further details are set out in the provisions in the appendix. <sup>4</sup>Throughout the entire course of study, a maximum of one additional examination attempt may be granted in addition to the number of examination attempts normally available for all modules of the master's program offered at the University of Cologne in which the number of examination attempts is limited to three, whereby failed attempts are not taken into account. <sup>5</sup>In addition, a further failed attempt will not be taken into account if the examination candidates have already acquired at least 45 credit points at the time of the decision. <sup>6</sup>The additional examination attempts granted by disregarding failed attempts may be used for a single module or for different modules. <sup>7</sup>Failed attempts according to sentences 4 and 5 will only be disregarded if, at the time of the decision, taking into account all remaining regular and additional examination attempts, a successful completion of the program is still possible. <sup>8</sup>If an examination has not been passed after all regular and additional examination attempts have been exhausted, the course of study is definitively failed, resulting in de-registration from the degree program. <sup>9</sup>Sentences 4 and 5 do not apply to the Master's thesis module.

(2) <sup>1</sup>If an examination candidate has failed a module examination for which the number of examination attempts is limited to three in accordance with paragraph 1, sentence 2, for the third time, the chair of the examination board shall notify the candidate in writing or electronically whether additional examination attempts will be granted in accordance with paragraph 1, sentences 4 and 5. <sup>2</sup>If the examination candidate can subsequently be granted a further additional examination attempt in accordance with paragraph 1, sentence 5, he or she shall receive separate notification of this. <sup>3</sup>In the case of additional examination attempts, the module examination must be successfully completed no later than two years after receipt of the notification in accordance with sentence 1 or sentence 2. <sup>4</sup>If this module examination is not offered at least twice during this period, the deadline shall be extended by a further year. <sup>5</sup>If the deadline is missed for reasons for which the examination candidate is responsible, the module examination shall be deemed to have been definitively failed, resulting in de-registration from the degree program.

(3) The following applies to additional examination attempts granted in accordance with paragraph 1, sentences 4 and 5 in elective modules: If an examination candidate has failed a module examination in an elective module for the third time, in which the number of examination attempts is limited to three in accordance with paragraph 1, sentence 2, additional examination attempts will only be granted for the same elective module.

(4) Additional examination attempts may only be granted for a module examination if none of the examination attempts in the module in question were failed due to cheating or a breach of order in accordance with § 24.

(5) <sup>1</sup>Before taking a first additional examination attempt granted in accordance with paragraph 1, it is strongly recommended that the candidate take advantage of counselling opportunities. <sup>2</sup>For this purpose, the examination candidate shall receive a written or electronic invitation to counselling, which shall also provide information about the counselling options available.

(6) <sup>1</sup>If a module examination consists of several examination elements, the repeat options pursuant to § 18 paragraph 5 shall apply.

(7) In the case of repeat examinations, the chair of the examination board may, at the request of the examiner, specify a different form of examination or different characteristics of the respective form of examination.

(8) In justified cases, the deadlines specified in § 15 (4) and (5) may be deviated from for repeat examinations.

(9) The repetition of a master's thesis shall be carried out in accordance with § 21 (11).

(10) Repetition of passed module examinations is not permitted.

## **§ 21**

### **Master thesis module**

(1) <sup>1</sup>The master's thesis is an examination in the form of an independently written paper, which is intended to demonstrate that the examination candidate is able to scientifically address and reflect on a thematically limited problem from the subject area of the degree program using the necessary methods within a specified period of time. <sup>2</sup>The master's thesis is only completed by students at the University of Cologne who are spending their second year of study at the University of Cologne.

(2) <sup>1</sup>The master's thesis is written during the course of study. <sup>2</sup>Thirty credit points are awarded for the master's thesis. <sup>3</sup>The requirements for admission to the master's thesis are listed in the appendix.

(3) Unassigned

(4) <sup>1</sup>In accordance with § 23 (3), the chair of the examination board shall appoint an examiner to set the topic of the master's thesis (topic setter) and shall appoint another examiner to conduct a second assessment (second examiner). <sup>2</sup>Members of the cooperating partner universities may also be appointed as second examiners, provided that the student has completed part of their studies at the university to which the second examiner belongs; second examiners from a partner university must meet the requirements of § 65 (1) HG. <sup>3</sup>In exceptional cases justified on academic grounds, in particular in the case of master's theses carried out externally, the chair of the examination board may, at the request of the student, appoint a third examiner, provided that he or she fulfils the requirements of § 65 (1) HG. <sup>4</sup>The examination candidate has the right to make suggestions regarding the topic and the choice of supervisor. <sup>5</sup>The topic shall be communicated to the examination candidate by the chair of the examination board in writing or electronically, stating the deadline by which the master's thesis must be submitted. <sup>6</sup>The date on which the topic is issued shall be recorded. <sup>7</sup>The topic may be returned once within two weeks of being issued.

(5) <sup>1</sup>The processing time for the master's thesis at the University of Cologne is a maximum of 6 months, beginning with the assignment of the topic. <sup>2</sup>The content and scope of the master's thesis must be such that it can be completed within the period specified in sentence 1. <sup>3</sup>Upon justified written or electronic request, the chair of the examination board may grant an extension of up to four weeks; the request must be submitted to the examination office before the deadline expires. <sup>4</sup>Such an individual case is to be assumed in particular if there is a significant, examination-relevant limitation of performance, which must be proven, or in the event of circumstances that significantly impede the candidate in taking the examination. if there is a significant limitation of performance that is relevant to examination law, which must be proven, or in the case of circumstances that significantly impair the examination candidate

in taking the examination, for which he or she is not responsible and which are directly related to the content of the master's thesis. <sup>5</sup>The decision on whether a justified individual case exists is the responsibility of the chair of the examination board. <sup>6</sup>In the case of a decision pursuant to sentence 5, last half-sentence, he or she shall hear the person who proposed the topic before making a decision.

(6) The master's thesis must be written in English.

(7) <sup>1</sup>The provisions of good scientific practice apply to the preparation of the master's thesis. <sup>2</sup>The master's thesis may not have been submitted in the same or a similar form as part of another examination, including at one of the cooperating partner universities. <sup>3</sup>If this provision is violated, the thesis shall be graded as "unsatisfactory (5.0)." <sup>4</sup>The decision shall be made by the examination board.

(8) <sup>1</sup>The master's thesis shall contain a list of the resources used. <sup>2</sup>In addition, it must be accompanied by a declaration with the following wording: "I hereby declare that I have written this thesis [*title of the thesis*] independently and without the use of any resources other than those specified. <sup>3</sup>All passages taken verbatim or in substance from published and unpublished external sources, including content generated by AI tools, are identified as such. <sup>4</sup>The thesis has not been submitted in the same or a similar form as part of another examination. <sup>5</sup>If, in addition to the electronic version, a paper version is submitted in accordance with paragraph 9, sentence 3, the following sentence must be added: "I certify that the printed version submitted corresponds completely to the electronic version submitted." <sup>6</sup>If the affidavit has been made incorrectly, the legal consequences pursuant to § 63 (5) HG may apply.

(9) <sup>1</sup>The master's thesis must be submitted in electronic form (PDF/A only) to the relevant examination office by the deadline; the date of submission must be recorded. <sup>2</sup>When submitting the master's thesis, the examination candidate must be enrolled in the relevant degree program or admitted as a guest student.

(10) <sup>1</sup>The candidate will generally be notified of the grade for the master's thesis within eight weeks of submission by posting the grade information in the campus management system. <sup>2</sup> If there is a deviation from this rule, the reasons must be recorded.

(11) <sup>1</sup>A master's thesis that has been graded "fail (5.0)" or is considered to be a fail may be repeated once with a new topic. <sup>2</sup>Registration for the repeat must take place within 6 months. If an examination candidate misses this deadline, the examination is definitively failed, unless he or she can prove that he or she is not responsible for missing the deadline. The deadline is extended for valid reasons in accordance with § 64 (3a) HG. § 17 remains unaffected. <sup>3</sup>A second retake of a failed master's thesis is not permitted. <sup>4</sup>If a master's thesis is failed after a single retake, the degree program is definitively failed. <sup>5</sup>A retake of a passed master's thesis is not permitted.

(12) <sup>1</sup>The decision regarding the failure of the master's thesis shall be formally delivered to the examination candidate by the chair of the examination board to the postal address stored in the campus management system or electronically. <sup>2</sup>The decision shall be accompanied by information on the right of appeal.

(13) <sup>1</sup> The second part of the "Master's thesis" module is a final colloquium. <sup>2</sup>Six credit points are awarded for the final colloquium. <sup>3</sup>As a rule, the candidate's thesis supervisor and second examiner participate in the candidate's final colloquium as examiners, along with a knowledgeable assessor who acts as recording secretary. <sup>4</sup>If a third reviewer has been appointed, he or she may participate in the final colloquium. <sup>5</sup>Students from the same degree program may be admitted as listeners at the request of the examination candidate. <sup>6</sup>Members of the institute where the master's thesis was written and members of the Faculty of

Mathematics and Natural Sciences may be admitted as observers at the request of the examiners, provided that the examination candidate does not object. <sup>7</sup>The participation of listeners does not extend to the consultation and announcement of the examination results. <sup>8</sup>The final colloquium may take place at the earliest 2 working days after receipt of the reviews for the master's thesis by the Examination Office and only if the master's thesis has been graded at least "sufficient (4.0)". <sup>9</sup>As a rule, it should take place no later than two weeks after completion of the master's thesis evaluation process. <sup>10</sup>The final colloquium lasts at least 45 minutes and no more than one hour. <sup>11</sup>It begins with a 20-minute presentation by the candidate in English on the most important results of his or her master's thesis. <sup>12</sup>This is followed by a discussion between the examiners and the candidate about the scientific and methodological-technical context of the master's thesis and its place in the broader context. <sup>13</sup>Each examiner proposes a grade. <sup>14</sup>The overall grade is calculated as the arithmetic mean of the proposed grades. <sup>15</sup>Only the first decimal place is taken into account. <sup>16</sup>Minutes shall be taken of the main content of the final colloquium and the examination result. <sup>17</sup>A failed final colloquium may be repeated once. <sup>18</sup>If the repeat is also failed, the course of study is definitively failed. <sup>19</sup>The final colloquium usually takes place in person. <sup>20</sup>It may be conducted entirely or partially via electronic communication with the consent of all parties involved. <sup>21</sup>In the case of a final colloquium conducted in electronic form, examination candidates shall be given sufficient opportunity prior to the final colloquium to familiarize themselves with the electronic information and communication systems used in the respective examination. <sup>22</sup>With regard to data protection regulations and the implementation of video surveillance, the provisions of the University of Cologne's regulations governing online examinations and video surveillance, as amended, shall apply, with the exception of § 5 (4) sentences 1 and 2. <sup>23</sup>The master's thesis and the final colloquium are combined into a single overall grade. <sup>24</sup>The master's thesis accounts for 75% and the final colloquium for 25%.

## § 22

### Examination Board

(1) <sup>1</sup>The joint examination board for the master's programs of the Department of Biology, which is elected by the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, is responsible for the imAGEin modules offered by the University of Cologne. <sup>2</sup>The examination board is responsible for all modules governed by these regulations. <sup>3</sup>In the case of polyvalent modules, it takes into account the regulations of the faculty offering the module.

(2) <sup>1</sup>The examination board shall ensure that the provisions of these regulations, including the appendix, are complied with. <sup>2</sup>In particular, it shall decide on admissions to examinations, the proper conduct of examinations, the appointment of examiners and assessors, withdrawal from examinations, cheating and misconduct, appeals against examination results, decisions on compensation for disadvantages and protective provisions, the invalidity of examination results, and the revocation of degrees. <sup>3</sup>It reports to the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences of the University of Cologne on the development of the examination system in the degree program as required and, if necessary, makes suggestions for amendments to these regulations within the framework of quality assurance. <sup>4</sup>Provisions of these regulations regarding the responsibilities of the chair of the examination board remain unaffected by this.

(3) The composition of the examination board is regulated in the examination regulations for the master's programs MSc. in Genetics and Biology of Aging and Regeneration, MSc. in Computational Biology, MSc. in Ecology, Evolution, and Environment, MSc. in Molecular Plant and Microbial Sciences, and MSc. in Neuroscience of the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences at the University of Cologne, as amended.



(4) The chairperson may invite additional persons, in particular deputy members, to attend the meetings of the examination board, provided that this appears appropriate and is not opposed by a majority of the voting members present.

(5) <sup>1</sup>The examination board has a quorum if the chairperson or his or her deputy and at least 5 other voting members are present. <sup>2</sup>If the deputy chairperson chairs a meeting because the chairperson is unable to attend, his or her deputy shall participate in the meeting as a voting member. <sup>3</sup>The examination board shall decide by a simple majority of the voting members present. <sup>4</sup>In the event of a tie, the chairperson shall have the casting vote. <sup>5</sup>Members of the Examination Board from the group of technical and administrative staff shall only have voting rights in matters relating to teaching if they perform corresponding functions at the university and have special experience in the respective field; such experience shall be assumed in particular if employees fulfil the requirements of examiners pursuant to § 65 (1) sentence 2 HG. <sup>6</sup>The chairperson shall decide on the fulfilment of these requirements at the beginning of the member's term of office and, in cases of doubt, the rectorate shall decide. <sup>7</sup>Members from the group of students shall only vote on pedagogical and scientific decisions, in particular on the recognition of examination achievements and on appeals, if they fulfil the requirements for examiners pursuant to § 65 (1) sentence 2 HG.

(6) <sup>1</sup>The meetings of the examination board are not open to the public and generally take place in person. <sup>2</sup>The chairperson may decide that the meeting shall take place via electronic communication. <sup>3</sup>The decision shall become invalid if half of the members of the examination board object to it before the meeting. <sup>4</sup>In the case of meetings held via electronic communication, the chairperson may also decide that resolutions shall be passed via electronic communication; this may be deviated from by a resolution of the committee passed by circular letter. <sup>5</sup>Paragraph 5, sentence 1 shall apply to meetings held via electronic communication, with the proviso that "present" means participation in the meeting. <sup>6</sup>Resolutions may also be passed by circular resolution, provided that no member objects. <sup>7</sup>The members and their deputies are subject to official secrecy. <sup>8</sup>Unless they are in public service, they shall be bound to secrecy by the chairperson.

(7) <sup>1</sup>The members of the examination board and their deputies have the right to be present at examinations. <sup>2</sup>The right to be present does not extend to the discussion of the examination results.

(8) The examination office of the Department of Biology of the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences is available to the examination board for the organizational handling of the examination procedures.

(9) <sup>1</sup>The chairperson of the examination board, or in his or her absence his or her deputy, represents the examination board, convenes and chairs the meetings of the examination board, and implements the decisions taken there. <sup>2</sup>The examination board may delegate the performance of its duties to the chairperson in all standard cases. <sup>3</sup>In urgent cases, the chairperson may conduct a vote by circular resolution. <sup>4</sup>He or she may make decisions that cannot be postponed on behalf of the Examination Board; the Examination Board must be notified of this immediately; the Examination Board may overturn the decision; any rights of third parties that have already arisen remain unaffected. <sup>5</sup>Decisions on appeals are reserved for the Examination Board. <sup>6</sup>Minutes shall be taken at each meeting of the Examination Board.

(10) The chair of the Examination Board shall publish orders, dates and deadlines set by the University of Cologne, as well as other announcements by the Examination Board that do not only affect individual persons, with legally binding effect on the faculty website, via the campus management system or by other suitable means.

## § 23

### Examiners and assessors

(1) <sup>1</sup>Examiners for the examinations offered at the University of Cologne shall be appointed from the group of university teachers and independent group leaders<sup>2</sup> as well as from the circle of members and affiliates of the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Cologne, the Max Planck Institutes for Plant Breeding Research, Biology of Aging and Metabolism Research, and the Jülich Research Center in accordance with § 65 (1) HG. <sup>2</sup>Examination performances may only be assessed by persons who themselves possess at least the qualification to be determined by the examination or an equivalent qualification. <sup>3</sup>Retired examiners may be reappointed as examiners for a period of one year after the end of the semester in which they left the University of Cologne. <sup>4</sup>Only persons who have obtained a relevant degree at a university at least at master's level or an equivalent qualification may be appointed as assessors.

(2) <sup>1</sup>The examination board appoints the examiners and assessors. <sup>2</sup>It may delegate the appointment to the chairperson. <sup>3</sup>The appointment of examiners and assessors must be recorded. <sup>4</sup>Notwithstanding the provision in sentence 1, a lecturer is an examiner for the course for which he or she is responsible and which he or she teaches, unless the examination board appoints a different examiner.

(3) <sup>1</sup>The chair of the examination board appoints the examiners with the relevant subject expertise for the master's thesis from among the professors, adjunct professors, honorary professors, junior professors, and private lecturers; Independent group leaders may be appointed as competent examiners. <sup>2</sup>In justified exceptional cases, the examination board shall decide on the appointment of additional examiners who meet the requirements of § 65 (1) HG. <sup>3</sup>It may delegate the appointment to the chair. <sup>4</sup>Exiting examiners may be reappointed as examiners for master's theses for a period of one year after the end of the semester in which they left the University of Cologne. <sup>5</sup>The examination board may extend this period upon justified request. <sup>6</sup>It may delegate this decision to the chairperson. <sup>7</sup>University lecturers from a university affiliated through a partnership or cooperation agreement may be appointed as thesis supervisors for a master's thesis upon justified request by the university lecturers representing the subject. <sup>8</sup>In special cases, the chair of the examination board may, upon justified request by the examiner who set the topic, appoint members of another university with which no partnership agreement exists as second examiners for the master's thesis. <sup>9</sup>The appointment of examiners for the master's thesis must be recorded in the files.

(4) <sup>1</sup>The examiners shall specify the work materials and aids permitted for the examinations they conduct and shall announce these in a suitable manner in good time, at the latest when the date of the respective examination is announced. <sup>2</sup>If no agreement can be reached, the examination board shall decide.

(5) <sup>1</sup>Examiners shall be independent of instructions in their examination activities. <sup>2</sup>They and, where applicable, the assessors shall be subject to official secrecy. <sup>3</sup>Unless they are civil servants, they shall be bound to secrecy by the chair of the examination board.

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<sup>2</sup> An independent group leader is employed full-time at a scientific institution, conducts independent research, and heads his or her own research group. He or she has personnel responsibility, budget responsibility, and the necessary basic equipment or access to infrastructure and all necessary resources. He or she has been selected in a competitive process and is in the process of qualifying for scientific leadership positions, especially for appointment to a professorship.

## **§ 24**

### **Deception, breach of regulations**

(1) <sup>1</sup>If an examination candidate attempts to influence the assessment of an examination performance by deception for their own or another person's benefit, brings aids that are not permitted in the examination, or commits scientific misconduct while performing the examination, they are committing an act of deception. <sup>2</sup>Unauthorized aids may be confiscated by the invigilators after the examination has been completed, which the examinee is entitled to do, with the consent of the examinee, in order to preserve evidence, or secured in an appropriate manner.

(2) <sup>1</sup>Depending on the severity of the act of deception referred to in paragraph 1, the examination board shall impose one of the following sanctions on the examinee:

- a) a warning;
- b) the examination candidate shall be required to repeat the examination to which the act of deception relates;
- c) the examination to which the act of deception relates shall be graded as "unsatisfactory (5.0)" or "fail";
- d) the examination to which the act of deception relates is declared definitively failed;
- e) the candidate is excluded from taking further examinations, thereby forfeiting their right to take examinations in the degree program.

<sup>2</sup>A serious violation is considered to be, in particular, the use of unauthorized aids, the (attempted) influencing of the examiner, or, in cases of plagiarism, the deliberate concealment of sources by rephrasing the original texts, changing the syntax, or using synonyms. <sup>3</sup>A particularly serious case is considered to be, in particular, the extensive use of technical aids such as internet-enabled mobile phones, repeated acts of deception in various examinations, the organized cooperation of several persons, the adoption of an entire third-party work as one's own achievement, the falsification of scientific work, or the sabotage of examination papers and the research activities of others. <sup>4</sup>The sanction chosen shall be noted in the examination file. <sup>5</sup>In the case of combined, inter-faculty, or inter-university degree programs, other examination offices, faculties, or universities may be informed of this.

(3) <sup>1</sup>If there is initial suspicion of plagiarism in a course or examination, the examination board may, even without the express consent of the examination candidates, have further checks carried out, in particular with the aid of plagiarism detection software. <sup>2</sup>For this purpose, an electronic version of the work may also be requested retrospectively. <sup>3</sup>Storage in databases of plagiarism detection software beyond the end of the respective assessment procedure requires the express consent of the students. <sup>4</sup>Consent must be given voluntarily and is not a prerequisite for exam registration, submission, or assessment. <sup>5</sup>The result of the review shall be stored as part of the examination file. <sup>6</sup>Notwithstanding sentence 1, plagiarism detection software shall be used to review all final theses as a rule. <sup>7</sup>The examination board may additionally review randomly selected samples. <sup>8</sup>The method of sample selection must be documented.

(4) As a consequence of an act of deception pursuant to paragraph 1, the academic achievement in question shall be deemed not to have been achieved.

(5) <sup>1</sup>Anyone who disrupts the conduct of an examination may be warned by the respective examiners or invigilators. <sup>2</sup>If the warnings are ineffective or if the disruption is serious, the examination candidate may be excluded from further participation in the examination. <sup>3</sup>In this case, the examination board may grade the examination as "unsatisfactory (5.0)" or "fail." <sup>4</sup>The reasons for the exclusion must be recorded.

(6) <sup>1</sup>Before the examination board makes a decision, the examinee must be given the right to be heard. <sup>2</sup>The decision must be communicated to the examinee without delay in writing or electronically, stating the reasons and providing information on the right of appeal.

(7) <sup>1</sup>In addition, administrative offense proceedings may be initiated in accordance with Section 63 (5) HG. <sup>2</sup>Anyone who intentionally attempts to influence the result of an examination for the benefit of another person is also guilty of an administrative offense.

## **§ 25**

### **Invalidity of examination results, revocation of the Master degree**

(1) <sup>1</sup>If the requirements for admission to an examination were not met without the candidate intending to deceive, and this fact only becomes known after the certificate has been issued, this deficiency shall be remedied by passing the examination. <sup>2</sup>If the examination candidate has intentionally obtained admission under false pretences, the examination board shall decide on the legal consequences in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (VwVfG NRW).

(2) If an examination candidate has cheated in an examination and this fact only becomes known after the certificate has been issued, the examination board may subsequently withdraw the assessment for the examination in which the candidate cheated, subject to the conditions of § 48 VwVfG NRW, and impose a sanction appropriate to the severity of the cheating in accordance with § 24.

(3) The master's degree may be revoked if it transpires that it was obtained by deception or if essential requirements for its award were mistakenly considered to have been met.

(4) <sup>1</sup>The examination candidate shall be given the opportunity to comment before a decision is made in accordance with paragraphs 1 to 3. <sup>2</sup>The examination board shall be responsible for the decision, which it shall make in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (VwVfG NRW). <sup>(3)</sup> A decision shall be excluded after a period of five years from the date of the certificate.

(5) <sup>1</sup> The incorrect certificate and all incorrect attachments shall be withdrawn and, if necessary, reissued. <sup>2</sup> If the entire course of study has been declared failed, the academic degree shall be revoked by the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences of the University of Cologne and the master's certificate shall be withdrawn.

## **§ 26**

### **Examination files, access to files**

(1) <sup>1</sup>The University of Cologne and its partner universities keep separate examination records. <sup>2</sup>The following regulations apply to the University of Cologne. <sup>3</sup>The rules of the

cooperating partner universities apply to their examination files. <sup>4</sup>An examination file is kept by the Examination Board at the University of Cologne for each examination candidate who completes part of their studies at the University of Cologne. <sup>5</sup>The examination file documents, in particular, the examination attempts, the examination papers, the examiners' reports, the examination records, the examination results, grade calculations, and copies of certificates and documents. <sup>6</sup>The examination file is kept in writing or electronically, in whole or in part.

(2) Examination candidates may obtain information about the status of their examination results at any time, within the limits of organizational possibilities.

(3) <sup>1</sup>After the announcement of an examination result at the University of Cologne, each examination candidate or a corresponding authorized representative shall be granted electronic or physical access to his or her written work in this examination and the related expert opinions and correction notes of the examiners, as well as to the minutes of oral examinations, upon written or electronic request. <sup>2</sup>An examination candidate or their authorized representative shall be entitled to make copies or photographs of the documents free of charge or to request them within the scope of the inspection of files. <sup>3</sup>The examination board shall regulate the procedure for inspection with discussion of the assessment, including reasonable deadlines for the inspection request. <sup>4</sup>After the specified deadlines have expired, inspection with discussion of the assessment is generally only possible if an examination candidate can prove that they were not responsible for missing the deadline. <sup>5</sup>Data protection provisions remain unaffected.

(4) <sup>1</sup>With the exception of the provisions in sentence 2, the examination files kept at the University of Cologne shall be retained until the end of the fifth year following de-registration from this degree program and then offered to the responsible archive; if the archive refuses to accept them, they must be destroyed. <sup>2</sup>Written examination documents, including associated assessment documents, shall be offered to the archive two years after the assessment has been announced, provided that no legal dispute is pending; this shall apply mutatis mutandis to electronic versions; if the archive refuses to accept them, they must be destroyed. <sup>3</sup>The academic degrees awarded and a catalogued collection of the certificates and documents issued may be kept in a register until the end of the fiftieth year following the completion of the course of study; the second half of sentence 1 shall apply mutatis mutandis.

(5) <sup>1</sup>Examination questions, correction notes, and expert opinions from examiners that become known to a student may not be passed on to third parties or published if they are protected by copyright. <sup>2</sup>The thesis written by a student may only be published with the corresponding consent if a blocking note has been agreed upon. <sup>3</sup>Notwithstanding this, legitimate legal interests remain unaffected, for example in the form of disclosure to a commissioned lawyer.

## **§ 27**

### **Degree and graduation documents**

(1) <sup>1</sup>The degree program is successfully completed when all required examinations have been passed and the credit points pursuant to § 5 as well as the necessary credit points at the respective partner university have been earned. <sup>2</sup>A certificate will be issued for the part of the degree program completed and passed at the University of Cologne. <sup>3</sup>The certificate shall be signed by the chair of the examination board and shall contain the following information for the part of the degree program completed at the University of Cologne

a) the name of the degree program,

- b) the grades for all modules,
- c) the topic of the master's thesis, if applicable,
- d) the overall grade.

<sup>4</sup>Grades are given in words and numerically. <sup>5</sup>The certificate is issued on the date on which the last examination was taken or recognized. <sup>6</sup>The transcript shall indicate whether the credits were earned as part of the degree program at the University of Cologne or at cooperating partner universities, recognized in accordance with § 11a, or credited in accordance with § 11b. <sup>7</sup>An English translation of the transcript shall also be issued. <sup>8</sup>The German version is legally binding.

(2) <sup>1</sup>Together with the transcript, the student will receive a master's degree certificate as a double degree, which certifies the award of the degree in accordance with § 3; this certificate bears the date of the transcript. <sup>2</sup>The master's degree certificate shall be signed by the dean of the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences and by the chair of the examination board and shall bear the seal of the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences. <sup>3</sup>The cooperating partner universities issue their own master's degree certificate and their own master's degree transcript. <sup>4</sup>The master's degree transcripts contain a statement indicating that both certificates are related to each other and were obtained as part of the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's Program "International Master on the Biology of Aging."

(3) <sup>1</sup>Together with the transcript and the master's degree certificate, a diploma supplement in English and German shall be issued, providing information on the subject profile of the completed program and the academic and professional qualifications acquired with the degree. <sup>2</sup>Upon written request, a transcript of grades will also be provided, which allows the relative classification of the overall grade in the examination results for the degree program. <sup>3</sup>The transcript of grades is based on the overall grades for a final semester and includes the grades used from the best to the weakest passing grade; the number of passing grades awarded in the reference group; percentage per grade level in relation to the total number of passing grades awarded, and the cumulative proportion of passing grades awarded. <sup>4</sup>The Diploma Supplement also describes the degree program completed and provides information about the faculty. <sup>5</sup>The Transcript of Records is part of the Diploma Supplement.

(4) <sup>1</sup>If a student has not passed or has definitively failed or discontinued their studies, or if they are transferring to another university, they will be issued, upon request, with a certificate (Transcript of Records) detailing the examinations taken, supplementary studies and achievements, grades, and credit points earned. <sup>2</sup>If applicable, it must indicate that the student has failed or definitively failed to pass the program. <sup>3</sup>Each partner university issues the transcript of records independently and autonomously.

## **§ 28**

### **Unoccupied**

## **§ 29**

### **Publication and entry into force**

(1) These regulations shall be published in the Official Notices of the University of Cologne.

(2) These regulations shall enter into force on September 15, 2025.

Issued on the basis of the decision of the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences on July 10, 2025, and after review of its legality by the Rectorate on September 9, 2025.

Cologne, September 15, 2025

The Dean  
of the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences  
of the University of Cologne  
University Professor Dr. Georg Bareth

## Appendix 1.1

### Specific provisions for the part of the Master of Science in imAGEin - Genetics and Biology of Aging and Regeneration offered by the University of Cologne in the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences in the 1st year of study

**Explanation:** The following applies to students who are completing their studies in the 1st year at the University of Cologne: In the 1st semester, four basic modules, each worth 6 credit points, must be completed (three lecture modules and one seminar module; two of the lecture modules are compulsory elective modules). In the second semester, two advanced modules (subject modules), each worth 12 credit points, follow. Upon request, a subject module can be replaced by a laboratory module (subject module [type 4]). In addition, a supplementary module (joint events) worth 12 credit points must be completed.

Module identification number	Module title	Module participation requirements	Start   Frequency   Duration of the module	Course types and attendance requirements (TP)	Examination requirements	Examination elements   Type of examination (and weighting)   Duration   Language of the module examination   Requirements for the award of credit points	Experiment restrictions	Elective module (WP), compulsory module (P)	Credit points for the module	Total number of credits in the elective area	Weighting of modules in the overall grade
MN-B-GA 1	Lecture Principles of Molecular Genetics, Development and Aging [Basic module]	None	<b>Start:</b> Winter semester <b>Frequency:</b> annually <b>Duration:</b> 15 weeks	Lecture	None	<b>Examination elements:</b> 1 <b>Examination type:</b> Written exam <b>Duration:</b> 2 hours <b>Language:</b> English <b>LP allocation:</b> Passing the exam element	None	P	6 LP		7.5/100
MN-B-A 2	Seminar Modern Techniques and Approaches in Genetics, Aging, and Regenerative	None	<b>Start:</b> Winter semester <b>Frequency:</b> annually	Seminar (TP, 20%) <sup>1</sup> with exercises (TP, 20%) <sup>2</sup>	none	<b>Examination elements:</b> 1 <b>Examination type:</b> Poster presentation <b>Duration:</b> 20-30 minutes <b>Language:</b> English	3	P	6 LP		7.5/100



	Research [Basic Module]		<b>Duration</b> 15 weeks			<b>LP allocation:</b> Passing the examination element					
MN-B-B 1	Lecture Advanced Biochemistry and Molecular Medicine [Basic module]	None	<b>Start:</b> Winter semester <b>Frequency:</b> annually <b>Duration</b> 15 weeks	Lecture	None	<b>Examination elements:</b> 1 <b>Examination type:</b> Written exam <b>Duration:</b> 2 hours <b>Language:</b> English <b>LP allocation:</b> Passing the exam element	None	WP	6	12 LP	7.5/100
MN-B-C 1	Lecture Computational Biology [Basic module]	None	<b>Start:</b> Winter semester <b>Frequency:</b> annually <b>Duration</b> 15 weeks	Lecture	None	<b>Examination elements:</b> 1 <b>Examination type:</b> Written exam <b>Duration:</b> 2 hours <b>Language:</b> English <b>LP allocation:</b> Passing the exam element	None	WP	6 LP		7.5/100
MN-B-E 1	Lecture Ecology, Evolution, and Environment [Basic Module]	None	<b>Start:</b> Winter semester <b>Frequency:</b> annually <b>Duration</b> 15 weeks	Lecture	None	<b>Examination elements:</b> 1 <b>Examination type:</b> Written exam <b>Duration:</b> 2 hours <b>Language:</b> English <b>LP allocation:</b> Passing the exam element	None	WP	6 LP		7.5/100
MN-B-N 1	Lecture Neuroscience [Basic module]	None	<b>Start:</b> Winter semester <b>Frequency:</b> annually <b>Duration:</b> 15 weeks	Lecture	None	<b>Examination elements:</b> 1 <b>Examination type:</b> Written exam <b>Duration:</b> 2 hours <b>Language:</b> English <b>LP allocation:</b> Passing the exam element	None	WP	6 LP		7.5/100
MN-B-P 1	Lecture Molecular Plant and Microbial Sciences [Basic module]	None	<b>Start:</b> Winter semester <b>Frequency:</b> annually <b>Duration</b> 15 weeks	Lecture	None	<b>Examination elements:</b> 1 <b>Examination type:</b> Written exam <b>Duration:</b> 2 hours <b>Language:</b> English <b>LP allocation:</b> Passing the exam element	None	WP	6 LP		7.5/100

MN-B-SM (Type 1)	Subject module (type 1) [advanced module]	None	<b>Start:</b> Summer semester <b>Frequency:</b> annually <b>Duration:</b> 7 weeks <sup>4</sup>	Lecture; project and/or exercise (TP, 20%) <sup>2,3</sup> ; seminar (TP, 20%) <sup>1</sup>	None	<b>Examination elements:</b> 2 <b>Examination type:</b> Written exam (50%), presentation (50%) <b>Duration:</b> 1-2 hours (written exam), 20-30 min (presentation) <b>Language:</b> English <b>LP allocation:</b> Passing all exam elements	3	WP	12	24	12/100
MN-B-SM (Type 2)	Subject Module (Type 2) [Advanced Module]	None	<b>Start:</b> Summer semester <b>Frequency:</b> annually <b>Duration:</b> 7 weeks <sup>4</sup>	Lecture; project and/or exercise (TP, 20%) <sup>2,3</sup> ; seminar (TP, 20%) <sup>1</sup>	None	<b>Examination elements:</b> 2 <b>Examination type:</b> Presentation (50%), internship report (50%) <b>Duration:</b> 20-30 min (presentation), 1 week (internship report) <b>Language:</b> English <b>Credit allocation:</b> Passing all exam components	3	WP	12 LP		12/100
MN-B-SM (Type 3)	Subject Module (Type 3) [Advanced Module]	None	<b>Start:</b> Summer semester <b>Frequency:</b> annually <b>Duration:</b> 7 weeks <sup>4</sup>	Lecture; project and/or exercise (TP, 20%) <sup>2,3</sup> ; seminar (TP, 20%) <sup>1</sup>	None	<b>Examination elements:</b> 2 <b>Examination type:</b> Oral examination (50%), internship report (50%) <b>Duration:</b> 20-30 min (oral exam), 1 week (internship report) <b>Language:</b> English <b>LP allocation:</b> Passing all examination elements	3	WP	12		12/100
MN-B-SM [LM] (Type 4)	Subject Module (Type 4) [Advanced Module]	None	<b>Start:</b> year-round <b>Duration:</b> 7 weeks	Project (TP, 20%) <sup>3</sup> ; Seminar (TP, 20%) <sup>1</sup>	None	<b>Examination elements:</b> 2 <b>Examination type:</b> Oral examination (50%), internship report (50%) <b>Duration:</b> 20-30 min (oral exam), 1 week (internship report) <b>Language:</b> English	3	WP	12		12/100

						<b>LP allocation:</b> <i>Passing all examination elements</i>					
MN-B-JE	Joint Events [Supplementary Module]	None	<b>Start:</b> year-round <b>Duration:</b> 2 semesters	Lecture; project and/or exercise (TP, 20%) <sup>2,3</sup> ; seminar (TP, 20%) <sup>1</sup>	None	<b>LP allocation:</b> <i>Proof of participation</i>	None	P	12		0/100

<sup>1</sup>The obligation to provide verifiable proof of regular participation in seminars arises from Section 9 (4) sentence 4 a).

<sup>2</sup>The obligation to provide evidence of regular participation in exercises arises from § 9 (4) sentence 4 e). Furthermore, participation in safety training is mandatory in accordance with § 9 (4) sentence 4 d).

<sup>3</sup>The obligation to provide evidence of regular participation in projects is derived from § 9 (4) sentence 4 e). Furthermore, participation in safety training is mandatory in accordance with § 9 (4) sentence 4 d).

## Appendix 1.2

### Specific provisions for the part of the Master of Science in imAGEin - Genetics and Biology of Aging and Regeneration offered by the University of Cologne in the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences in the 2nd year of study

**Explanation:** For students who are completing their studies in their second year at the University of Cologne, the following applies: In the third semester, two advanced modules (project modules), each worth 12 credit points, must be completed. The program is completed with the Master's thesis module worth 30 credit points and a final colloquium worth 6 credit points in the third and fourth semesters.

Module identification number	Module title	Module participation requirements	Start   Frequency   Duration of the module	Course formats and attendance requirements (TP)	Examination requirements	Examination elements   Type of examination (and weighting)   Duration   Language of the module examination   Requirements for the award of credit points	Experiment restrictions	Elective module (WP), compulsory module (P)	Credit points for the module	Total number of credits in the elective area	Weighting of modules in the overall grade
MN-B-PM (Type 1)	Project module [specialization module]	None	<b>Start:</b> year-round <b>Duration:</b> 7 weeks <sup>4</sup>	Project	None	<b>Examination elements:</b> 1 <b>Examination type:</b> Internship report <b>Duration:</b> 1 week <b>Language:</b> English <b>LP allocation:</b> Passing the exam element	3	WP	12	24	3/100
MN-B-PM (Type 2)	Project Module [Focus Module]	None	<b>Start:</b> year-round <b>Duration:</b> 7 weeks <sup>4</sup>	Project	None	<b>Examination elements:</b> 1 <b>Examination type:</b> Presentation <b>Duration:</b> 20-30 min <b>Language:</b> English <b>LP allocation:</b> Passing the exam element	3	WP	12		3/100

MN-B-MT	Master's Thesis and Defense Module [Specialization Module] <sup>(5)</sup>		<b>Start:</b> year-round <b>Duration:</b> 7 months	Project	A grade of at least "sufficient" on the master's thesis is required to take the final colloquium.	<b>Examination elements:</b> 2 <b>Examination type:</b> Master's thesis (75%), final colloquium (25%) <b>Duration:</b> 6 months (master's thesis), 45 min (final colloquium) <b>Language:</b> English <b>LP allocation:</b> Passing all examination elements	2	P	36	40/100
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<sup>1</sup>The obligation to provide evidence of regular attendance at seminars is set out in Section 9 (4) sentence 4 a).

<sup>2</sup>The obligation to provide evidence of regular participation in exercises arises from § 9 (4) sentence 4 e). Furthermore, participation in safety training is mandatory in accordance with § 9 (4) sentence 4 d).

<sup>3</sup>The obligation to provide evidence of regular participation in projects is based on Section 9 (4) sentence 4 e). Furthermore, participation in safety training is mandatory in accordance with Section 9 (4) sentence 4 d).

<sup>4</sup>Preparation time prior to the official start of the module is not taken into account.

<sup>5</sup>The Master's Thesis and Defense Module consists of a master's thesis worth 30 LP (duration: 6 months) and a final colloquium worth 6 LP (preparation time: 4 weeks).

## Appendix 2.1

### Study tracks of the imAGEin degree program with the participation of the University of Cologne

**Explanation:** Students spend the first year of study (1st and 2nd semesters) at one of the following partner universities: Universidade de Coimbra (UC; Coimbra, Portugal), Université Côte d'Azur (UCA; Nice, France), Universidad de Sevilla (USE; Seville, Spain), University of Cologne (UzK; Cologne, Germany). The second year of study (3rd and 4th semesters) is completed at one of the following partner universities: UC, UCA, USE, UzK, Sorbonne Université (SU; Paris, France).

The combination of individual modules at each partner university results in a specific profile that qualifies graduates of the program for certain fields of work.

TRACK NUMBER	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	QUALIFICATION PROFILE
Track #1.1	UC	<b>UzK</b>	Fundamental research
Track #1.2	<b>UzK</b>	UC	Fundamental research
Track #1.3	UCA	<b>UzK</b>	Fundamental research
Track #1.4	<b>UzK</b>	SU	Fundamental research
Track #2.5	USE	<b>UzK</b>	Applied biomedical research
Track #3.2	<b>UzK</b>	UCA	Innovation and Biotechnology
Track #3.4	<b>UzK</b>	USE	Innovation and Biotechnology

## Appendix 2.2

### Study plans for the imAGEin degree program in collaboration with the University of Cologne

#### Start of studies in Cologne in the 1st year

**Explanation:** Students begin in Cologne and complete the modules listed below in the 1st and 2nd semesters. They then transfer to a partner university and complete modules at the respective partner university in the 3rd and 4th semesters.

Semester	Basic, advanced, and specialization modules	Supplementary module
1	Compulsory lecture (basic module) – 6 CP	"Joint Events" (supplementary module) – 12 CP
	Compulsory seminar (basic module) – 6 CP	
	Elective lecture 1 (basic module) – 6 CP	
	Elective lecture 2 (basic module) – 6 CP	
2	Subject Module 1 (advanced module) – 12 CP	
	Subject Module 2 (advanced module) – 12 CP	
3	<i>Course content at another partner university</i>	
4	<i>Course content at another partner university</i>	

### Start of studies in Cologne in the 2nd year

**Explanation:** Students begin at a partner university and complete the corresponding modules there in the 1st and 2nd semesters. They then transfer to the University of Cologne and complete the modules listed below there in the 3rd and 4th semesters.

Semester	Basic, advanced, and specialization modules
1	<i>Course content from another partner university</i>
2	<i>Course content from another partner university</i>
3	Project Module 1 (specialization module) – 12 LP
	Project Module 2 (specialization module) – 12 CP
4	Master's Thesis and Defense Module (specialization module) <sup>1</sup> – 36 CP

<sup>1</sup>The Master's Thesis and Defense Module consists of the master's thesis worth 30 CP (duration 6 months) and a final defense worth 6 CP (preparation time 4 weeks). The master's thesis and the final colloquium are combined into a single overall grade. The master's thesis accounts for 75% and the final colloquium for 25%.



### Appendix 3

#### Grade conversion tables

<i>ECTS grades</i>	<i>Université Côte d'Azur</i>	<i>Sorbonne University</i>	<i>University of Seville</i>	<i>University of Coimbra</i>	<i>University of Cologne</i>
F, FX	≤ 10	≤ 10	≤ 5	≤ 10	≥ 4.1
E	10	10	5	10-11	≤ 4.0
D	≥ 10	≥ 10	≥ 5	≥ 12	≤ 3.5
C	≥ 12	≥ 12		≥ 14	≤ 3.0
B	≥ 14	≥ 14	≥ 7	≥ 16	≤ 2.0
A	≥ 16	≥ 16	≥ 9	≥ 18	≤ 1.5

## Appendix 4

### Module overview of partner universities

**Explanation:** The following table shows the modules offered by the partner universities. The specific provisions of these modules are regulated accordingly in the examination regulations of the partner universities.

The following courses are offered at partner universities in the first year of study:

Partner university	Module title	Status
UCA	Hallmarks and theories of aging	Compulsory
UCA	Tissue homeostasis, repair, and regeneration	Compulsory
UCA	Physiology of Aging	Compulsory
UCA	Pathophysiology of transport and medicine	Elective
UCA	Molecular biology of cell membranes	Elective
UCA	Algorithms & Programming	Elective
UCA	Artificial Intelligence in Aging	Elective
UCA	Deeptech entrepreneurship: overcoming challenges	Compulsory
UCA	Technology transfer and entrepreneurship	Elective
UCA	Artificial Intelligence: Introduction to Machine Learning	Elective
UCA	1st year Internship and thesis	Compulsory
USE	Omics technologies, functional genomics, and bioinformatics	Compulsory
USE	Molecular genetics in biomedical model organisms	Compulsory
USE	Biochemical and physiological basis of aging and its control	Compulsory
USE	Cell therapy and regenerative medicine	Compulsory
USE	Valorization and knowledge transfer	Compulsory
USE	Lifestyle, chronic diseases, and healthy aging	Compulsory
USE	Epigenetic	Elective
USE	Cell cycle and Differentiation	Elective
USE	Genome structure and dynamics	Elective
USE	Signal Transduction	Elective
USE	1st year Internship and thesis	Compulsory
UC	Cell Regulation	Compulsory

UC	Ageing	Compulsory
UC	Biostatistics and Experimental Design	Compulsory
UC	Scientific Writing	Compulsory
UC	Research Plan in Cellular and Molecular Biology	Compulsory
UC	Molecular Mechanisms of Disease	Elective
UC	Neuronal Circuits and Behavior	Elective
UC	Molecular and Cellular Neurobiology	Elective
UC	Methodologies in Cellular and Molecular Biology	Elective
UC	Molecular Biology of Cancer	Elective
UC	Neurobiology of Disease	Elective
UC	Neuroimmunology	Elective
UC	Computational Biology	Elective
UC	Bioentrepreneurship and the creation of new ventures	Elective
UC	Laboratory Rotation I	Compulsory
UC	Laboratory Rotation II	Compulsory

In the second year of study, the following courses are offered at the partner universities. In addition, a master's thesis must be completed at each partner university in the second year to complete the program:

<b>Partner university</b>	<b>Module title</b>	<b>Status</b>
UCA	Neurophysiology of Aging	Compulsory
UCA	Artificial Intelligence in Aging	Compulsory
UCA	Modeling of biological systems	Compulsory
UCA	Immuno-Pathology	Elective
UCA	New therapeutic approaches	Elective
UCA	Pathophysiology of transport and medicine	Elective
UCA	Pathophysiology of transport and medicine	Elective
UCA	Molecular biology of cell membranes	Elective
UCA	Network for Across-University Science (NAUS)	Elective
UCA	Behavioral and cognitive neuroscience	Elective
UCA	Technology transfer and entrepreneurship	Elective

UCA	Artificial Intelligence: Introduction to Machine Learning	Elective
SU	Fundamental mechanisms of normal and pathological aging	Compulsory
SU	Pharmacological approaches to aging	Compulsory
SU	Scientific analysis: Environmental factors and aging	Compulsory
SU	Research project	Compulsory
SU	Inflammatory and disabling diseases	Elective
SU	Science and society	Elective
SU	Cancer and environment	Elective
SU	Physiopathology of sensory diseases and translational research	Elective
USE	Methods in biomedical research	Compulsory
USE	Advanced therapies in aging/neurodegeneration	Compulsory
USE	Cellular basis of pathology	Elective
USE	Ethics in health management, research, and innovation	Elective
USE	Molecular basis of immune regulation	Elective
USE	Technologies for the study of cell function	Elective
USE	Computational Biomedicine	Elective
USE	Biomedical Engineering	Elective
UC	Research Challenges in Cellular Biology and Biomedicine	Compulsory
UC	Dissertation in Biomedicine	Compulsory