Examination regulations
for the Masters programme of
Materials Science and Simulation
at the Ruhr-University of Bochum

English translation

Only the German version is legally binding!
Examination regulations for the Master’s programme of Materials Science and Simulation at the Ruhr-University Bochum
from 05.08.2010

Due to § 2 Paragraph 4 and § 64 of the law regarding Universities of the state of North Rhein-Westphalia (University law – Ul.) from 31.10.2006 (GV. NRW 2006 pg. 474), last changed through Art. 2 of the law on reforming teacher training from 12.05.2009 (GV.NRW pg. 308), the Ruhr-University Bochum has issued the following statute:

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I. General
§ 1 The aim of the programme
(1) The programme shall teach the students, taking into consideration the requirements and changes in the business world and multi-disciplinary references, the necessary professional knowledge, skills and methods in such a way that it enables scientific work, methods in professional practice, the critical classification of scientific knowledge and acting responsibly.

(2) The Master’s programme builds on the knowledge and skills which the student has obtained through a relevant Bachelor degree (see §2 (2)) and serves the attainment, skills which the student has obtained through a relevant Bachelor degree (see §2 (2)), and/or the confirmation that the graduate was in the top 30% of his year.

- Academic achievement in the scope of at least 6 ECTS points in the subjects: materials science, solid-state physics, chemical engineering, related subjects. All together academic achievements of at least 20 ECTS points must be verified in these or comparable subjects. Furthermore additional academic achievements of at least 20 ECTS points must be verified in mathematics, numerical mathematics, advanced programming language or other comparable subjects.

- Sufficient knowledge of the English language, verified by getting 75% of possible points on a TOEFL or comparable test.

(3) Insofar as knowledge was not conveyed during a candidate’s Bachelor study, which is indispensable in order to successfully graduate from the Master’s programme, the examination committee can impose conditions for basic modules that must be completed.

(4) Students with a Bachelor’s degree of at least seven semesters and the necessary qualifications have, in accordance with § 10, the possibility of gaining admittance directly after the second semester. The examination board is authorised to issue additional conditions.

(5) A person cannot be admitted to the Master’s programme that has definitively failed a Bachelor exam, a Master’s exam or a diploma exam in one of the subjects named in (2) within the scope of basic law.

§ 3 Academic Degree
Once the Master’s exam has been passed, the Faculty of engineering awards the academic degree of “Master of Science”, short form “M.Sc.”

§ 4 Standard Period of Study, Modules
(1) The standard period of study for the Master’s programme is four semesters.

(2) The Master’s programme including the Master’s thesis has a scope of 120 ECTS points. This is to guarantee that the candidate can place emphasis according to his own choice within the framework of these examination regulations. This is achieved by dividing the modules into compulsory modules – that have to be taken – and optional modules – where the student can choose from a list of possible courses. The Module Hand Book lists which available modules are compulsory and which are optional.

(3) The basic elements of the programme and the performance evaluations are the modules, which are a part of the examination regulations. The attached curriculum describes the type, quantity and scope of the module. Should study abroad take place with permission from the faculty, the examination committee can allow the mandatory module to be replaced with a comparable one.

(4) The courses are taught primarily in English language.
§ 5 Examinations, examination performance and dates

(1) The basic elements of the study programme are modules. Every module is concluded with a module exam. A module exam can consist of numerous partial achievements in order to be able to especially test theoretical and practical teaching content appropriately. A module exam is completed as soon as all examination performances for the module are available. The student must be enrolled at the time of the exam.

(2) As a rule, an examination is a written exam or an oral test, which takes place during the examination timeframe defined by the examination committee. The teacher responsible of a module can determine, in coordination with the examination committee, that the candidate must render examination performances in the form of a written study or project, a laboratory exercise with elaboration, a contribution to the seminar or numerous attestations. The rendering of partial performances belonging to an examination can also be spread over numerous dates during the semester. The use of multiple-choice questions is permissible for parts of the examinations.

(3) A test should render proof that questions regarding the subject of the course, being evaluated in the test, are properly processed and suitable solution approaches can be found during a limited period of time and with limited resources. The length of a test follows the subject content aspects in consideration of the achievement points intended for the module. It is determined by the examiner and is between one and four hours in length.

(4) In an oral test the candidates should prove that they possess sufficient knowledge in this area of examination, understand, connections and are in a position to classify specific questions within the framework of these connections. The oral test should be 15 to a maximum of 45 minutes in length depending on the candidate. Oral tests take place as either group or individual tests. The essential objects and results of the test are to be recorded in a protocol. The result of the test is to be made known to the candidate two days after the test at the latest.

(5) Seminar contributions are examination performances, which are rendered by a participant in the form of a dissertation or an explained graphic presentation (poster, video, etc.), within the predefined topic in front of the participants of the exercise.

(6) Homework addressing a question from the scope of the course, possibly with the citation of relevant literature and other suitable resources is to be properly processed and given suitable solutions.

(7) Examination performances can also be permissible as a group performance by the teacher of the course in accordance with Para. 5 to 6, when an assessment of every individual group member’s contribution can be made.

(8) Multiple-choice tests are tests with predefined possible answers and one or more right answers. They can also be deemed as failing (a grade of 5.0).

(9) The form of the examination performance and/or performances will be made known at the beginning of the course. How the individual grades of examination performances influence the total grade of the course’s or module examinations will also be made known.

(10) Exams are to be graded by at least two examiners in terms of § 6 Para. 1.

(11) The grading of an examination performance should be made known in the University, taking into consideration the applicable data protection regulations, after at least four weeks. The examination committee can set deadlines for grading.

(12) The candidates can have access to their graded exam within a month after the grades have been disclosed. The time and place of accessibility are to be announced by the teachers.

(13) The module examinations will take place on two regular dates within every academic year. Special rules for lecture-accompanying academic achievements can be arranged by the examination committee.

(14) In the Master’s programme the students are automatically registered in all the examinations of the fundamental and core modules (modules 1 to 5) in the first three semesters in accordance with the course schedule. The student carries out the registration to all other modules independently. At the time of the independent registration it is verified whether the requirements named in the Module Handbook for that particular module are fulfilled.

(15) Should an examination date be offered in addition to the two regular examination dates, the students definitely have to register for it independently. Participating counts as an examination attempt.

(16) If a module examination is not passed the student will be automatically registered for a re-test on the next possible date within the timeframe of the following semester. This applies to automatic and independently registered examinations. § 16 of these regulations applies to registration to the Master’s thesis.

(17) Unregistering from an automatic registration to a module examination for modules 1 to 5 is not possible. It is possible to unregister from independently registered exams up to 1 week before the date of the exam.

(18) The examination committee decides by way of an informal application whether students can be admitted to participate in examinations of a higher semester. The deadlines for handing in applications will be determined by the examination committee and announced by the examination office. These deadlines are submission deadlines.

(19) If a module examination is failed twice, participation in a second re-test is only possible after a counselling interview. The deadline for conducting the interview will be determined by the examination committee.

(20) If the student has not yet independently registered for obligatorily independent registration examinations in the 3rd semester of the Master’s programme, the selection of courses is to be determined at the beginning of the following semester during a personal counselling interview. The deadline for conducting the interview will be determined by the examination committee. If the student does not participate in the interview, the examination committee will decide on the registration.

(21) Not participating in a registered examination is deemed as failing (a grade of 5.0).

(22) As a rule the examination dates are determined by the examination committee and announced by the examination office four weeks before the first examination date at the latest. For lecture-accompanying exams the examination committee leaves setting the dates to the teacher of the course. The teacher of the course announces the form of examination and the date of examination in the first class of the course.

(23) Claiming protection regulations in accordance with maternity rights and the respective deadlines of the federal child care benefits law on parental leave as well as taking periods of absence into consideration due to the need to care for other persons is to be made known to the examination committee on time and in writing. The exami-
nation committee regulates further.

§6 Evaluation of examination performance and forming of grades

(1) The grades for individual examination performances are determined by the respective examiner. The following grade system is to be used for evaluation:

- 1 = very good = an outstanding performance;
- 2 = good = a performance that is high above the average requirements;
- 3 = satisfactory = a performance that corresponds to the average requirements;
- 4 = sufficient = a performance that satisfies the requirements despite its deficiencies;
- 5 = not sufficient = a performance that is not sufficient due to considerable deficiencies.

To differentiate the evaluation of examination performances intermediate values of the single grades can be raised or lowered by 0.3. The values of 4.3, 4.7 and 5.3 are hereby excluded.

(2) An examination has been passed when the grade is at least "sufficient" (4.0). The grades are:

- an average of up to 1.5 = very good,
- an average of more than 1.5 to 2.5 = good,
- an average of more than 2.5 to 3.5 = satisfactory,
- an average of more than 3.5 to 4.0 = sufficient,
- an average of more than 4.0 = not sufficient.

As a rule, if a module consists of more than one course the grades of the individual partial performances will be weighed in relation to the course’s semester periods per week. The examination committee decides on objectively justified deviations.

(3) The number of achieved ECTS points results from the sum of ECTS points assigned to the modules.

(4) The total grade of the Master’s examination is calculated from the module grades that have ECTS points assigned to them and the Master’s thesis. The weighing takes place in such a way that every module grade goes into the total grade which corresponds to the ECTS points of the graded performance in relation to the ECTS points to the total sum.

(5) The total grades of a passed Master examination are:

- an average of up to 1.5 = very good,
- an average of more than 1.5 to 2.5 = good,
- an average of more than 2.5 to 3.5 = satisfactory,
- an average of more than 3.5 to 4.0 = sufficient.

(6) In the formation of grades and the total grade only the first decimal behind the comma will be considered; all other positions will be dropped without being rounded. Only the grades of the module will be recorded in the certificate.

(7) Instead of the total grade of "very good" the overall rating of "achieved with distinction" will be issued when the Bachelor’s and/or Master’s thesis has a grade of at least 1.3 and the average of all other grades of the module with ECTS points is smaller than 1.3.

(8) A grade in accordance with the ECTS grading scale is limited to the total grade and is only used in the diploma supplement.

§ 7 Credit points and workload

(1) As proof of academic achievements every course or examination performance will be weighed according to the expected workload in an accumulative performance point system (credit points system) according to ECTS (European Course Credit Transfer System) standard. An average of 1,800 work hours are scheduled per academic year and converted into 60 ECTS points (30 ECTS points per semester). An ECTS point thereby corresponds to the estimated workload of ca. 30 hours.

(2) When a candidate has successfully completed a module the ECTS points allotted to this module will be awarded them. The sum of ECTS points achieved serves as an indicator for the scope of the successfully passed student workload.

§ 8 Examination committee

(1) The Faculty of Engineering creates an examination committee for the organisation of examinations and the tasks assigned by these examination regulations. The examination committee consists of the chairperson and/or their representative and five further members. The chairperson, the representative and two other members will be from the group of university professors, one member will be from the group of scientific employees and two members will be chosen from the group of students. Accordingly the members of the examination committee, with the exemption of the chairperson and/or their representative and their representative will be chosen. The term for members from the group of University professors and the group of scientific employees is three years, the term for student members is one year. Re-election is admissible.

(2) The examination committee is an authority in terms of administrative procedures and the right to exercise administrative processes.

(3) The examination committee makes sure that the provisions of the examination regulations are abided by and cares for the proper implementation of examinations. The examination committee gives a report at least once a year to the faculty council about the development of module grades and the total grades. The examination committee transfers the execution of its responsibilities to the chairperson in all normal cases; this does not apply to decisions about objections and reporting to the faculty council.

(4) The examination committee is curator when in addition to the chairperson or their representative, two other university teachers and at least two other voting members are present. Decisions are made based on simple majority. In the case of a tie the voice of the chairperson decides. The student members of the examination committee do not take part in the evaluation and the taking into account of study and examination performances.

(5) The members of the examination committee have the right to attend examinations.

(6) The examination committee’s sessions are not public. The members of the examination committee and their representatives are subject to official secrecy. Insofar as they are not civil servants, they are obliged to secrecy by the chairperson of the examination committee.

(7) A protocol of results will be produced about the council of the examination committee.
(8) The examination committee and/or its chairperson has at its side the examination office located in the ICAMS branch for carrying out regular tasks, especially administration of examination performances including the acceptance of the Master’s thesis and the generation of reports and certificates, organisation of examinations and examination-related correspondence.

§ 9 Examiners

(1) The examination committee names the examiners. They can transfer the order to the chairperson. One can only be named as an examiner if they have taken at least one diploma or Master’s examination in the respective subject of examination or at least an equivalent examination.

(2) The examiners are independent in their examining activities.

(3) The chairperson of the examination committee makes sure that the names of the examiners are made known to the candidates.

(4) § 8 Para. 6 Sentence 2 and 3 apply to the examiner respectively.

§ 10 Recognition of study periods, academic achievement and examination performances, upgrading to a higher semester

(1) Achievements that have been rendered at another university in the scope of the basic law of the same programme will be taken into account by the office. Achievements in other programmes or from officially recognised vocational colleges within the scope of the basic law are to be taken into account should they be deemed equivalent; this also applies to achievements at universities outside the scope of the basic law made with an application. Other knowledge and qualifications on the basis of submitted documents can be taken into account for the programme with an application.

(2) Should academic achievements and examination performances be taken into account, the grades – insofar as the grading system is comparable - will be taken over and integrated into the total grade. In the case of an incomparable grading system – subject to special agreement between faculties and/or their subject representatives – a conversion procedure is used which complies with the guidelines of the ECTS of the European Union. The grades taken on are marked in the certificate. In the case of an incomparable grading system the notation of the converted grade is marked in the certificate. In the case of an incomparable grading system the notation of the converted grade is marked in the certificate. In the case of an incomparable grading system the notation of the converted grade is marked in the certificate. In the case of an incomparable grading system the notation of the converted grade is marked in the certificate. In the case of an incomparable grading system the notation of the converted grade is marked in the certificate. In the case of an incomparable grading system the notation of the converted grade is marked in the certificate. In the case of an incomparable grading system the notation of the converted grade is marked in the certificate. In the case of an incomparable grading system the notation of the converted grade is marked in the certificate.

(3) After the recognition of academic and examination performances from another university an upgrade into a higher semester can result, independent from the scope of the standard period of study. This application can only be made once during the entire course of study.

(4) The examination committee is responsible for the apportionment. Before determining equivalence the respective subject representative is to be heard.

(5) The student has up to three months time after registering for the programme to present the necessary documents for the apportionment of the grade. The decision will be made within 6 weeks after the completed documents have been presented.

§11 Additional academic achievements

(1) The candidate can be subject to examination performances beyond the prescribed examination performances (additional subjects). It is to be indicated that it is a matter of one additional examination.

(2) The results of this performance examination will not be integrated when determining the total grade. Upon application by the candidate a certificate will be issued that contains the rendered additional performance. Additional examinations in the diploma-supplement can also be listed.

§ 12 Repetition of examinations and expiration of examination claims

(1) Every module examination that has not been passed can be repeated up to a maximum of three times (4 examination attempts). This does not apply to the Master’s thesis (see § 12(6)). If a module examination has not been passed after being repeated three times (4 examination attempts), the module examination is deemed failed.

(2) The repetition of a module examination, which has been passed is not permissible as a rule. Upon application the examination committee can allow students one more attempt to improve their grade in an individual exam within the standard period of study. This application can only be made once during the entire course of study.

(3) If an examination performance only consists of a written exam, then in the case of a repeated examination a verbal additional examination of at least 15 minutes and 45 minutes at the most can be offered before the grade “not sufficient” has been given; this does not apply to the third repetition (4th examination attempt). The resulting grade of the verbal additional examination will be determined as sufficient (4.0) or not sufficient (5.0). The examination committee decides on the offer of verbal additional examinations at the beginning of the examination year.

(4) If a module examination of a compulsory module is definitively not passed then the Master’s exam can also not be passed.

(5) If sickness is the reason for failing to participate in an examination then it is to be verified with a medical certificate, which includes, among others, the effects of the sickness on the examination capacity of the student at the time of the examination. Medical certificates are to be presented to the examination office after the second repeated exam (3rd examination attempt) at the earliest and 4 weeks before the examination period of the third repetition of the exam at the latest for every moment of absence from an examination date due to sickness. If this concerns more than one module examination date then a medical certificate is to be presented as of the second absence. If the examination committee accepts the reasons for absence, the respective examination will not be counted as one of the maximum number of examination repetitions.

(6) A failed Master’s thesis can be repeated once. A second repetition is not permissible.

§ 13 Failure, deception, violation of regulations

(1) An examination performance is considered to be "not sufficient" (5.0) when the candidate to an examination is absent on the date of the exam or if they withdraw from the examination before the start of the exam. This also applies when a written examination performance is not rendered within the prescribed processing period.

(2) If a candidate attempts to influence their examination performance using deception, for example through the use of inadmissible resources, the respective examination will be graded as "not sufficient" (5.0); the assessment will be made by the respective examiner or supervisor and be recorded on file. The examination committee carries out the evaluation. A candidate who disturbs the proper
course of the examination can be excluded from continuing with the examination performance by the supervisor after a warning; in this case the respective examination performance will be graded as “not sufficient” (5.0). In serious cases the examination committee can exclude the candidate from rendering further academic or examination performances.

(3) Encumbering decisions are to be shared and justified with the candidate immediately in writing and a legal remedy is to be provided.

II. Master’s Examination

§ 14 Nature and scope of the Master’s examination

(1) The master’s examination consists of the accumulated assessment of all of the successfully passed examinations. A special final examination does not take place.

The Master’s examination includes, in accordance with the Master’s curriculum (appendix), the following in particular:

1. the examinations for all the modules of the core lectures and fundamentals of the range of compulsory courses,
2. the examinations of the modules of the range of materials science optional courses and general electives, as well as project work,
3. the examinations for non-technical electives,
4. the Master’s thesis.

(2) The curriculum (appendix) is a part of these examination regulations and names the major fields of study available, the necessary number of ECTS points to be achieved in the individual areas, the module and the assigned semester periods per week and ECTS points and the rules for election for compulsory subjects. Furthermore it indicates the division of the individual semesters.

§ 15 Admission to the Master’s examination

(1) A candidate can be admitted to a Master’s programme exam that:

1. is enrolled in the Master’s programme of Materials Science and Simulation at the Ruhr-University Bochum or is admitted as a cross-registered student that is entitled to participate in the exam,
2. is registered for the exam,
3. is not participating in a similar examination procedure at another university and hasn’t definitively failed such a similar examination at another university.

If the requirements according to points 1-3 are not fulfilled, admittance to the Master’s examination is not permitted.

(2) The Master’s thesis can be started once only 40 ECTS points are lacking from the total amount of obtainable ECTS points, in other words, those lacking including the ECTS points assigned to the Master’s thesis.

(3) The examination board decides on admittance in the case of justified exemptions.

§ 16 Master’s Thesis

(1) The Master’s thesis is a written work that concludes the scientific course of study. It should demonstrate that the candidate is in a position to process demanding questions by independently using the methods gained in the Master’s programme within a predefined period of time.

(2) The Master’s thesis can be handed out and supervised by every university teacher, every honorary professor as well as every private teacher, insofar as they are members of the Faculty of Engineering, the Faculty of Physics and Astronomy, the Faculty of Civil and Environmental Engineering, the Faculty of Chemistry or the Faculty of Mathematics at the Ruhr-University Bochum. In exceptional cases a written application can be made whereby the examination committee can grant permission for the Master’s thesis to be handed out and supervised by an appropriate examiner from another faculty. Should the Master’s thesis be completed in an outside establishment, authorisation is required from the examination committee. The candidate has the right to propose the topic.

(3) The topics are issued by the chairperson of the examination committee. The time when the topics of the Master’s thesis are issued is to be recorded on file.

(4) Upon request the chairperson can make sure that the candidate receives a topic for a Master’s thesis.

(5) The topic, problem definition and scope of the Master’s thesis are to be limited thus that the Master’s thesis can be developed within a timeframe of ca. 900 work hours. The timeframe between announcing the topic and handing in the Master’s thesis is at least four months and six months at the most. The topic can only be given back once within the first two weeks of the processing period. In individual exceptional cases the examination committee can extend the processing period by up to four weeks. The Master’s thesis can be composed in English or German.

(6) When handing in the Master’s thesis the candidate must ensure in writing that they have composed their work alone and no one other than the sources and resources listed or quotes marked were used.

(7) The Master’s thesis can be repeated once. A second repetition is excluded. Changing Master’s thesis topics according to the deadline in Para. 5 is only permissible when the candidate did not use this option when working on his first Master’s thesis.

§ 17 Admission and grading of the Master’s thesis

(1) The written documentation of the Master’s thesis is to be given to the examination office in duplicate and in electronic form. The date for handing in the work is to be recorded on file. If the Master’s thesis is not handed in on time it will be marked as “not sufficient” (5.0).

(2) The Master’s thesis is to be evaluated by two examiners. One of the examiners should be the one who supplied the topic.

The second examiner must belong to the group of people listed in § 9 Para. 1 and will be determined by the chairperson of the examination office. The individual evaluation is to be justified in writing in accordance with § 6. The grades of the Master’s thesis generated from the individual evaluations using arithmetic means, insofar as the difference is no more than 2.0. If the difference is more than 2.0 the examination committee will be chosen to evaluate the Master’s thesis. In this case the grade of the Master’s thesis will be generated from the three grades using arithmetic means. However the Master’s thesis can only be evaluated as “sufficient” or better, when at least two grades are “sufficient” or better.

(3) The evaluation process can only exceed the timeframe of four weeks in justifiable exceptional cases.
§ 18 Passing the Master’s examination

The Master’s examination is deemed passed when all grades from all modules and the Master’s thesis are at least ‘sufficient’ (up to 4.0) and thus 120 ECTS points have been obtained. Also, all requirements according to § 2 must be fulfilled. When the Master’s examination has been passed the Master’s programme is over.

III. Final provisions

§ 19 Report of grades

(1) A certificate will be issued concerning the passed Master’s examination after the last examination performance has been rendered. The total grade and the sum of ECTS points are recorded in the certificate. The total evaluation and the total grade of the Master’s examination are generated in accordance with § 6 Para. 4 and/or 5. The certificate will be signed by the Dean or the chairperson of the examination committee and adorned with the respective seal of the Faculty of Engineering at the Ruhr-University of Bochum. The date on the certificate is the day on which the last examination performance was rendered. The certificate will be accompanied by an extensive English diploma supplement as well as a German translation of the Master certificate (§ 20).

(2) If the candidate has not passed the Master’s examination and would not like to continue studies at the Ruhr-University of Bochum, on application can be made to receive written confirmation issued after presenting the necessary proof. The examination office confirms the examinations that have been passed in addition to the ECTS points achieved and the number of missing ECTS points needed to pass the Master’s examination.

§ 20 Document

(1) When receiving the certificate the candidate will also receive a Master’s document with the date of the certificate on it. The award of the Master’s Degree in accordance with § 3 is authenticated therein.

(2) The Master’s document will be signed by the Dean or the chairperson of the examination office and adorned with the respective seal of the Faculty of Engineering at the Ruhr-University of Bochum and the date of issue.

(3) The Master’s documentation is composed in German.

§ 21 Invalidity of the Master’s examination, denial of academic degree

(1) If the candidate cheated on an examination performance and if this fact is made known after the certificate has been handed out, the examination committee can correct the evaluation and grade of the respective examination retroactively and, if applicable, declare that the exam was not passed.

(2) If the requirements for admission to an examination were not fulfilled without the candidates wilful deception, and if this fact is made known after the certificate has been handed out, this fault will be cancelled out by the fact that the exam was passed. If the candidate has intentionally obtained admission unjustly, the examination committee decides on the legal consequences in consideration of the administrative processing law of the state of North Rhine-Westphalia.

(3) Before a decision has been made the affected party has an opportunity to express themselves.

(4) The wrong examination certificate is to be revoked and a new one issued, if applicable. A decision according to Para. 1 and Para. 2 Sentence 2 is excluded after one year has passed after the withdrawal of justifiable conditions has been announced.

(5) If an examination is deemed failed based on deception, the awarded academic degree is denied and the respective document is revoked. The faculty council of the Faculty of Engineering decides on the disposition.

§ 22 Access to examination files

(1) After completion of the Master’s examination the candidate is allowed to view their examination file on application within a reasonable timeframe.

(2) The application is to be made within a month after the certificate has been issued by the chairperson of the examination committee. The chairperson of the examination committee determines the place and time of access.

§ 23 Scope and transitional regulations, coming into effect and publications

These examination regulations come into effect on the day of their publication in the official publications of the Ruhr-University of Bochum and apply to all students that have enrolled in the Master’s programme of Materials Science and Simulation as of the winter semester of 2010/2011.

Note that only the German version is legally binding!