

Unofficial Reading Version

University of Mannheim Examination Regulations for the Master's Degree Program in „Business Informatics“

Effective from 20 April 2011

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This presented version is an unofficial reading version, in which the abovementioned recorded revisions are incorporated. Determining and legally binding are only the wordings published in the promulgations by the Office of the Vice Chancellor.

Insofar as for the denomination of persons, the masculine form is being used, it also explicitly includes the representatives of the female gender.

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I. General Information

§ 1 Purpose of the Master's Examination

(1) The Master of Science degree in the field of Business Informatics is the second academic degree (in a consecutive series).

(2) Through the master's examination, the candidate proves his deeper knowledge of the field of Business Informatics. Additionally, the candidate should be evaluated on his ability to understand the subject on a macro level, draw connections and parallels, and independently apply scientific methods and theories. The candidate must also demonstrate the comprehensive skills and knowledge necessary for his successful transition into a research position or a professional career.

§ 2 Academic Degree

Upon successful completion of the master's examination, the University's Business School awards the academic degree "Master of Science, M.Sc."

§ 3 Admission

(1) Admission to the master's degree program is regulated by the statute in force at the time of application.

(2) Applicants cannot be admitted to the degree program Master in "Business Informatics" if they have lost the right to sit examinations in undergraduate or postgraduate degree programs in "Business Informatics" or in a similar degree program with mostly identical content.

§ 4 Study and Examination Deadlines

(1) The expected duration of the course of study is four semesters.

(2) The course of study consists of modules that have a combined value of at least 120 ECTS points. One ECTS point is earned for every thirty hours of coursework. The module catalogue details the type, scope, and application of ECTS credits for the different modules and for the master's thesis.

(3) Students are advised to make use of academic advising at the beginning of their studies. Academic advising is offered by the examination committee. The examination committee can delegate this to qualified staff.

(4) If a student does not pass the master's examination until the beginning of the sixth semester, then the student is required to consult with the examination board for academic advising. If a student does not pass the master's examination until the end of the seventh semester, then the student has forfeited his right to earn a degree due to his failure to adhere to

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the time limit. The examination committee decides upon application by the student whether an extension can be granted.

(5) It is the responsibility of the student to meet the required deadlines outlined in these Examination Regulations, as well as other formal examination requirements.

(6) Upon the student's request, a maternity leave period will be recognized according to the provisions outlined in the § 3 par. 1, § 6 par. 1 of the Maternity Protection Act, version dated 20 June 2002 (BGBl. I p. 2318). All requisite attestations need to be filed with the required request form. Maternity leave period suspends all other deadlines outlined in the studies and examination regulations. The length of the maternity leave is not included in these study time.

Likewise, paternal leave periods will be recognized according to the provisions outlined in the § 15 par. 1 to 3 of the Paternal Leave and Allowances Act version dated 5 December 2006 (BGBl. I p. 2748). The student is obliged to, at least four weeks prior to the intended commencement of the paternal leave, inform the Students Service Office about the intended parental leave time period with enclosed necessary attestations. Student Services Office inspects whether the necessary legal prerequisites, which would otherwise trigger the parental leave entitlement in cases of employed individuals, are being fulfilled, and notifies the student about the inspection outcome, as well as about revised examination deadlines.

In instances when the student takes on the family duties, clauses 5 and 6 apply mutatis mutandis. Family duties are social duties which can be taken on by the student and which have been defined within the auditing framework of the "Family Friendly University" certification¹. Upbringing of children which to the point of the beginning of relevant semester still have not turned 14 years of age and care of care-dependent family members count especially to these duties. Studies extension on grounds of family duties assumption can amount to maximally two additional semesters.

Students exercising their right of maternity protection period according to §§ 3 abs. 1, 6 abs. 1 of the Maternity Protection Act or parental leave according to § 15 par. para. 1 to 3 of the Paternal Leave and Allowances Act retain the right to take part in the examinations during their leave of absence.

§ 5 Examination Committee and Student Services Office

(1) An examination committee is created to oversee the master's examinations. This board is comprised of three university instructors of the School of Business Informatics and Mathematics, as well as one student representative with the right of an advisory vote. The members are selected by the faculty board. The academic members serve for three years, the student representative for one year by the beginning of the fall/winter semester. They can be re-elected. If one member leaves before the end of their tenure, the faculty board must elect a successor for the remaining time of the tenure. The examination committee decides with

¹ Definition of the term family according to the certification:

"Family represents a social network made of parents, children, partner, siblings and grandparents in various constellations. These include also single parents, patchwork and foster families as well as various forms of partnerships (unmarried and same-sex)."

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simple majority. The vote of the head of the examination committee decides in case of a tie vote.

(2) The members are subject to the principles of discretion and confidentiality. If the members do not have public employment status, they must be sworn to secrecy by the head of the examination committee in written form.

(3) The examination board is responsible for making all exam-related decisions as a group, except for those responsibilities specifically delegated to the chairman of the board, to the examiners, or to the examination office. The board ensures that all examination regulations are followed. The examination board regularly updates the departments on the exam schedule and study periods, as well as on the distribution of module and cumulative grades. The university conveniently makes this report public. The examination board is also entitled to offer ideas to reform and improve the curriculum or the examination regulations. The examination board can delegate certain tasks to its chairman.

(4) The University of Mannheim established examination offices to oversee the master's examinations. These examination offices assist the examination board with the implementation of its objectives. The examination office is in charge of the following tasks:

1. Scheduling and posting the registration deadlines for the various examinations;
2. Keeping a list of candidates who have registered for examinations;
3. Scheduling and posting exam dates;
4. Registering candidates who must repeat exams;
5. Informing examiners about the exam dates;
6. Organizing the exams;
7. Managing the exam documents;
8. Announcing the exam results; informing candidates about the results of their master's theses;
9. Producing and handing out documents, exam certificates, and transcripts showing exam results.

(5) If the examination board or its chairman decides to give a candidate a failing grade, then they must notify the candidate in writing. This written notification must include an explanation with a legal foundation and must provide information on academic remediation.

§ 6 Examiners, Co-Chairs and Examinations

(1) The examination committee selects the examiners and co-examiners.

(2) As a rule, only the University and external lecturers are authorized for the acknowledgement of the university examinations. Academic associates may be appointed as examiners and, if necessary, as co-examiners if the examination authorization according to § 52 para. 1, line 6 of the State Tertiary Education Act has been delegated to them. Assignment

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of the master's thesis topics, as well as the supervision and evaluation of the theses can be performed by all the authorized faculty members according to sentences 1 and 2.

(3) As a co-examiner may be appointed only individuals who have themselves completed a master's degree or an equivalent degree in the same or related subject.

(4) For both the examiner and co-examiner § 5 abs. 2 applies respectively.

(5) In general, examinations are completed during the degree program, and, with the exception of the master's thesis, are related to the individual courses in terms of content. Examinations may consist of:

1. written exams (such as examinations, papers),
2. oral exams (such as presentations),
3. graded exercises and homework assignments,
4. oral or written exercises.

(6) The examination board has the right to decide if, in some cases, instructional courses and their corresponding examinations should be conducted in German and/or English. Details can be found in the module catalogue.

(7) A candidate has the right to provide medical evidence that he cannot partially or fully complete an exam as designed due to an ongoing chronic or permanent physical disability. In such cases, the chairman of the examination board can arrange for the candidate to earn the same amount of credit for a different type of exam.

(8) In written exams and homework assignments, students must be able to demonstrate that they can apply the methods of their field of study to identify problems and find solutions. They must be able to work independently, within a time limit, and without the use of excessive outside resources. The examiner decides which supplemental resources are permitted.

(9) For each exam, the supervisor must fill out and sign a report which will become an official document, unless the form of the examination suggests a different form of feedback (e.g. papers).

(10) Oral examinations take place in the presence of one examiner and one competent co-examiner, either in form of group or individual interrogation. A record of the subject matter discussed, as well as the interrogation results, must be reported on in a written protocol. This needs to be signed and filed. Subsequently to the oral examination, examiners are to inform the student about the achieved result.

(11) Exams must be graded within four weeks. The master's thesis is an exception to this rule.

(12) Examiners are permitted to use recommended software to assist with the identification of instances of plagiarism in course papers and master's theses. Students are instructed to submit their course papers and master's theses in both paper and digital formats. When searching for

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plagiarism, the paper must be analyzed anonymously pursuant to § 3 para. 7 of the “Data Protection Act of the State of Baden-Württemberg.”

§ 7 Evaluation of Examination Scores, Calculation of the Module Grade and ECTS-Grade

(1) The assigned examiners determine grades for the individual exams and for the master’s thesis. They use the grades 1,0 (very good); 2,0 (good); 3,0 (satisfactory); 4,0 (sufficient); 5,0 (insufficient). In order to make further distinctions between the grades, decimals can be utilized to increase or decrease the individual grades by 0,3. Nevertheless, the grades 0,7; 4,3; 4,7; and 5,3 are not permitted.

(2) A module can employ one or more types of exams. If a module merely requires one form of exam, then the overall module grade is the same as the exam grade, pursuant to § 7 para. 1. If a module employs several different types of exams, then the overall module grade is determined according to the weight of the exams and components and by using the following chart, in accordance with § 7 para. 1.:

1,0 through 1,1 = 1,0
1,2 through 1,5 = 1,3
1,6 through 1,8 = 1,7
1,9 through 2,1 = 2,0
2,2 through 2,5 = 2,3
2,6 through 2,8 = 2,7
2,9 through 3,1 = 3,0
3,2 through 3,5 = 3,3
3,6 through 3,8 = 3,7
3,9 through 4,0 = 4,0.

The weights/values of the different types of exams will be communicated at the beginning of each semester.

(3) “4,0” is the minimum passing grade for the modules. If a module requires a student to take several different exams, then the student passes the module only if his grade for each and every exam is at least “4,0.”

(4) According to the module catalogue, ECTS credits are only awarded for modules which a student has successfully passed. This presupposes a demonstration of individual effort.

(5) Overall grades for the modules “Business Informatics”, “Informatics”, “Business Studies”, “Specialization Track” and “Key Qualifications” will be calculated as a weighted average of individual module grades, with ECTS points used as weights. Each of the five modules is appointed one grade.

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(6) The cumulative grade for the master's degree is determined from the grades according to § 7 para. 5, as well as from the grade for the master's thesis and that of the weighted average of the ECTS credits.

The cumulative grade is interpreted to be:

With an average up to 1,5 = very good;
with an average from 1,6 to 2,5 = good;
with an average from 2,6 to 3,5 = satisfactory;
with an average from 3,6 to 4,0 = sufficient.

(7) When calculating module grades, subject-specific grades, and cumulative grades, only the first decimal place after the comma will be taken into account; all other decimals will be ignored and will not be rounded.

(8) In addition to the cumulative grade, the transcript will also include a relative grade corresponding to the ECTS grade scale, as soon as the sentence 2 requirements are met:

A = for the top 10 %,

B = for the next 25 %,

C = for the next 30 %,

D = for the next 25 %,

E = for the next 10 %.

The grade is computed on the basis of comparison with the three previous graduating classes in each program of study.

§ 8 Failure, Withdrawal, Cheating, and Refusal to Adhere to Regulations

(1) If the candidate does not show up for an exam or withdraws from an exam without a valid reason, he will receive the failing grade of "5,0". This also applies to neglecting to complete a graded assignment.

(2) If a candidate has a valid reason for withdrawing from or missing an exam, he must present the examination board with certified documentation in writing in a timely fashion. If the candidate himself, or a child or a relative in need of care falls ill, and the candidate is the only person who can take care of the child or the relative, a doctor's note needs to be handed in to the examination committee. In cases of doubt, the examination committee can require a note from a doctor the examination committee names. If the candidate's excuse is recognized to be valid, then the exam must be taken in the next exam period.

(3) If a candidate tries to alter his exam grade by cheating or by using prohibited materials or resources, he will receive the failing grade of "5,0". Cheating in the sense of sentence 1 includes plagiarism.

(4) A candidate who is found guilty of refusing to adhere to exam regulations may be dismissed from an exam by the examiner or by the exam proctor. In this case, the candidate will also

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receive the failing grade of “5,0”. In extreme circumstance, the examination board reserves the right to exclude the candidate from any future exams.

(5) The candidate needs to be immediately informed of the decisions in written form and with information on legal remedies. Before any decision is made, the candidate is given a chance to present his case.

§ 9 Acknowledgement of Previous Studies and Earned Credits

(1) Course credit hours and earned credits that are received in another university or equivalent college’s Bachelor’s or Master’s Program in Business Informatics and/or business or computer science program will be accepted and acknowledged, as long as their equivalency can be ascertained. Equivalency can be ascertained if the course credits hours and earned credits essentially correspond to the course content, scope, and requirements of the Master’s Program in Business Informatics at the University of Mannheim. No more than 30 ECTS credits will be accepted from a previous master’s program. Master’s theses from other universities will not be recognized. An exception to sentence 4 may be granted to participants of the Double Degree Program. Participants in the Double Degree Program may take advantage of the opportunity to write their master’s theses at a partner university. If a student from the University of Mannheim chooses to study abroad during his master’s program, then no more than 30 ECTS credits may be earned at the foreign university. However, sentence 6 does not apply to students studying abroad within the framework of the school’s Double Degree Program. For this program, up to 60 ECTS credits from a foreign university may be accepted.

(2) When calculating course credit hours, earned credits, and exam grades that were completed outside of the jurisdiction of the “Higher Education Act,” one must follow the regulations prescribed by Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs and the Conference of University Presidents who have determined acceptable equivalencies for university partnerships. In cases of doubt, consultation with the Centre for Foreign Education can be sought.

(3) Credit transfer can be denied in cases where more than half of the ECTS of the Master in Business Informatics or the master’s thesis should be transferred.

(4) If credits are accepted, then the grades are to be recalculated according to the provisions of these exam regulations. They should then be included when calculating the cumulative grade. If the grading system used cannot be translated into corresponding grades in Mannheim, then the student should simply receive the grade of “pass.” The grade will be posted in the transcript in this way.

(5) Failed attempts according to para. 1 will be transferred as well.

(6) If a candidate demonstrates fulfillment of the requirements outlined in para. 1 to 3, he is entitled to receive an acknowledgement of earned credit. Official acknowledgement is mandated for course credit hours and exam credit earned within the parameters of the “Higher Education Act.” The student is obligated to present the required documents in order to receive credit.

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(7) Credits that were primarily earned as a component of the degree program on the basis of which admission to the master's degree program was given will not be recognized.

II. Examination Process

§ 10 General Admission Prerequisites and Processes

Students need to register for exams within the registration deadline announced by the Student Services Office. Students may register to earn a degree at the end of a semester if they have been matriculated in the master's program in Business Informatics at the University of Mannheim for at least that one full semester. De-registration from exams is only possible within the official exam registration period announced by the Student Services Office.

§ 11 Format, Scope and Content of the Examination

(1) For the master's degree, students must complete the master's thesis plus graded courses ranging from a total of at least 120 ECTS credits.

(2) The module catalogue lists the requirements for the individual module courses in the master's program. In case there is no information in the module catalogue, details will be announced to students and the Student Services Office at the beginning of the lecture.

(3) Written examinations at the School for Business Informatics and Mathematics generally have a duration of 90 minutes; oral examinations usually take 30 minutes per candidate. Particulars can be obtained from the module catalogue.

(4) Form, scope and content of the examinations not offered by the School for Business Informatics and Mathematics are regulated according to the Examinations Regulations of the particular institution or department of higher education responsible for the organization of the respective course.

(5) When handing in a course paper or the master's thesis, a candidate must include the following assurance:

“I assure that this paper was written by me personally and that I was not assisted in any way by someone else. Furthermore, I promise that this paper or parts of this paper will not be reused by me elsewhere or used by others. When I consulted print or electronic sources and publications to draw upon the writings or thoughts of others, I cited these sources. All secondary literature and additional sources have been acknowledged and listed in my bibliography. This includes graphs, pictures, and all internet sources.”

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§ 12 Master's thesis

(1) The master's thesis provides the candidate with an excellent opportunity to demonstrate that he is capable of using scientific methods to independently address a subject-specific problem within a limited amount of time.

(2) Completion of courses accounting for a minimum of 60 ECTS credits is required for starting to write a thesis. The supervisor will ask the student for proof of this before he is handing out a thesis topic. The student can account for it by handing in a transcript.

(3) The master's thesis can be conducted only within the fields of:

- Business Informatics
- Computer Science

In the event that the master's thesis pertains to a different field, then it must be possible to demonstrate the topic's link to business informatics as recognized by the examination board.

(4) The master's thesis can be supervised and graded by examiners according to § 6 para. 2.

(5) The supervisor assigns a thesis topic to the student. The student can make suggestions; however, the supervisor does not have to follow these suggestions.

(6) Students are given six months in which to compose the master's thesis. The advisor will limit the master's thesis topic, organization, and scope to ensure that the student can complete the work within the allocated amount of time. When the student starts to work on the master's thesis, the advisor must notify the examination office of the topic and the deadline.

(7) The student must provide his advisor with two paper copies of his thesis, as well as an electronic copy.

(8) The topic can be changed just once, and this change is only permitted within the first four weeks of work. Under exceptional circumstances, the examination board may grant an extension of up to eight weeks upon a candidate's appeal and consultation with his advisor.

(9) As a rule, two different examiners must grade the master's thesis. One of these examiners should be the person who assigned the master's thesis topic. If the two examiners cannot agree on a joint grade, then the final grade will be calculated according to § 7 para. 2. If in doubt, the higher grade will be given. If the final grade is lower than 4,0, a "fail" (5,0) will be given.

(11) Notification of the evaluation of the master's thesis must be given within two months of its submission.

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§ 13 Repeating the Master's Examinations or the Master's Thesis

(1) Exams that are not passed may be repeated once. If an exam consists of several parts, only the failed parts need to be repeated. The resit exam must be taken on the very next possible date. The examination board must review any desired change after a course is failed. The first attempt will be counted towards the new course.

(2) According to the limits defined by § 4, a second do-over exam is only permitted for a maximum of two exams. The team project and master's thesis are exceptions to this rule. In case of a failed attempt in a team project, a new team project can be chosen from the offer of the School of Business Informatics and Mathematics or from the Area Information Systems of the Business School. Under no condition may a student take three do-over exams, not even if he does not use one of his second do-over exams. When resorting to a second do-over exam, the candidate should receive personal academic advising. Academic advising can be given by any examiner according to § 6 (2).

(3) The repeat exam will be given no earlier than two weeks after the grade was posted for the first exam attempt. Repeat exams are scheduled before the beginning of the next academic semester, and their results are attributed to the semester in which the initial exam was administered.

(4) In order to repeat a master's thesis, a student must select a new topic within six months after the failing grade was posted. If necessary, the examination board will assign a new master's thesis topic.

(5) Students are not allowed to repeat exams that earned a passing grade.

§ 14 Earning the Master's Degree; Certificate and Transcript of Records

(1) The master's degree will be awarded when at least 120 ECTS credits have been earned.

(2) The master's degree is ultimately not awarded if a student fails an exam on the last possible attempt. In this case the examination committee will inform the student in written form.

(3) The candidate will receive a transcript indicating that the master's degree has been awarded. This includes:

1. the modules according to annex 1. The ECTS credits and cumulative grade for each subject area will be listed pursuant to § 7 para. 5 (both as a numeral and as text);
2. the topic of the master's thesis and the name of the advisor;
3. the grade of the master's thesis pursuant to § 7 para. 1 (both as a numeral and as text);
4. the cumulative grade pursuant to § 7 para. 6 (both as a numeral and as text);

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5. the relative, weighted grade according to § 7 para. 8.

The transcript is dated according to the day upon which the last exam credit is earned. If this day cannot be determined, the transcript is dated on the last day of the respective semester. The chairman of the examination board or his representative signs the transcript.

(4) Along with the transcript, the candidate will also receive a diploma that certifies the award of the master's degree. The diploma displays the date of the transcript. The diploma is signed by the Dean of the School or his representative and is stamped with the seal of the University of Mannheim.

(5) Students are permitted to use their academic titles for the first time upon receiving the diploma.

(6) In the case of outstanding accomplishments (grades of 1,2 or above) the overall ranking of "passed with distinction" will be printed on the transcript and diploma.

(7) Every diploma will be accompanied by a special diploma supplement in the English language according to the European Diploma Supplement Model. Part of the diploma supplement is a "Transcript of Records" which lists all completed modules and their respective exams including the earned ECTS credits and exams grades.

(8) If the candidate does not earn the master's degree, he can still receive a written certificate that denotes the earned credits and grades at his request. However, the certificate will also indicate that the student did not earn a degree.

(9) If at least 60 ECTS credits were obtained in the English language, then this will be documented on the transcript. Furthermore, credits earned within the framework of the Double Degree Program will be noted correspondingly.

III. Concluding Details

§ 15 Invalid Master's Degree

(1) If a candidate cheats on an exam and this offense is not discovered until after the diploma has been handed out, the examination board reserves the right to retroactively adjust the grade for the exam on which the candidate cheated. The examination board may determine that the candidate has failed either the entire degree program or certain parts.

(2) In extenuating circumstances, one might ascertain that a candidate already in possession of a diploma had not met the prerequisites for admission. If this was a valid mistake that did not involve cheating, the student's passing grade will not be negatively affected. The examination

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board will determine if the candidate intentionally or unintentionally committed this error. If it was done intentionally, the student can receive a “fail” (5.,0) for the master’s examination.

(3) Before any decision is made, the candidate is given a chance to present his case.

(4) The incorrect transcript will be confiscated and where applicable a new transcript will be issued. The master’s certificate will also be confiscated if the master examination is considered “failed” (5,0) on account of cheating. A decision according to para. 1 and para. 2 sentence 2 is only possible within 5 years after issuing of the certificate.

(5) The law prescribes when academic titles may be taken away.

§ 16 Examination Transparency

(1) After taking each exam and after writing the master’s thesis, each candidate will be granted the opportunity to review his written exams and read the examiners’ comments upon request.

(2) The request to see an exam must be presented to the examination office no later than one year after the day that the grade is posted. The examination office decides when and where the student may review the exam.

§ 17 Effective Dates

(1) These examination regulations take effect on the day after their public promulgation in the official publication of the Vice Chancellor of the University of Mannheim. They will be applicable for the first for students who take up their studies in the fall 2011 semester.

(2) The examination regulations of the University of Mannheim for the Master degree program in Business Informatics with effect from 22 January 2009 as well as their amendments from 9 March 2010 are still in effect for students who registered with the university before the fall 2011 semester. The examination regulations from 22 January 2009 will be ineffective from 1 August 2014 on. However, they will stay in effect for those students who enrolled before the fall 2011 semester but have not finished their studies by then.

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Annex 1: Overview of modules

1. Module “Business Informatics”	12-24 ECTS
2. Module “Computer Science”	12-24 ECTS
3. Module “Business Studies”	0-24 ECTS
4. Module “Specialization Track”	27 ECTS
5. Module “Key Qualifications”	
Team project	12 ECTS
Scientific Research	3 ECTS
6. Module “Master Thesis”	30 ECTS