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The German version of this document is the only *legally binding version*. This English translation is for your convenience only.

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### Appendix: Overview of modules, courses, credits

## I. General provisions

### § 1 Applicability

These examination regulations govern studies and exams in the master's programme Biological Sciences at the University of Konstanz.

### § 2 Academic degree

Once candidates have passed the master's examination, the academic degree "Master of Science" (abbreviated: "MSc") will be awarded.

**§ 3 Programme structure, standard period of study, workload, ECTS credits**

- (1) The standard period of study for the master's programme is four semesters.
- (2) During the first three semesters, students attend courses. They have to acquire 90 ECTS credits in courses to successfully complete the master's programme. In the entire master's programme, they have to acquire a total of 120 ECTS credits. An overview of courses and the modules they belong to as well as corresponding ECTS credits can be found in the appendix, which is part of these examination regulations. In the fourth semester, students write their master's thesis. The science areas that can be selected for the final colloquium correspond to the advanced modules.
- (3) The curriculum is divided into the following modules and areas: Preference modules, advanced modules, final module and supplementary courses. The modules are listed in the appendix, which is an integral part of these examination regulations.
- (4) In the required elective modules "Advanced modules" and "Preference modules" as well as in supplementary courses, students can choose between several courses.
- (5) They must successfully complete all modules as well as the supplementary courses. Retaking performance assessments in these modules is governed by § 21.
- (6) The workload required for completing the modules is reflected in the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). One ECTS credit corresponds to a workload of approximately 30 hours. The study programme amounts to a total of 120 ECTS credits.
- (7) ECTS credits can be granted only if the course-related performance assessments required for the corresponding course or module were successfully completed. The same performance assessment cannot be counted several times for several modules in the same study programme.
- (8) The ECTS credits listed for each module are the minimum to be achieved.

**§ 4 Structure of exams, deadlines**

- (1) The master's examination comprises coursework and performance assessments in the required elective modules and supplementary courses as listed in the appendix, as well as a final module including the final colloquium as per § 26 and the master's thesis as per § 27. Performance assessments that were part of a completed bachelor's examination cannot be recognized for the master's examination.
- (2) The master's examination has to be completed by the end of the fourth semester. If the master's examination is not completed by the end of the eighth semester, the right to take exams expires unless the reasons for not completing the master's examination in time are beyond the student's control.

- (3) If a student does not complete an exam in due time and the reasons for exceeding the deadline are beyond the student's control, the Examination Board (*StPA*) will grant an extension of the deadline upon written request and accompanied by the corresponding documentation. Special regulations apply for the extension of deadlines for completing final theses (see § 28 master's thesis).

### § 5 Exam administration

Data base systems and web applications are used for exam administration. Students are required to inform themselves about dates and information on exams as well as data and notifications related to their student status, at regular intervals and on specific occasions as needed. If they fail to do so, they will have to bear the consequences.

### § 6 Examination Board (*StPA*)

- (1) The Examination Board (*StPA*) is responsible for establishing proper examination procedures. The *StPA* ensures that the provisions stipulated in these examination regulations are observed. In examination procedures, the *StPA* decides about requests and deals with objections. It may assign certain tasks to the chairperson and take its decisions in a circular procedure.
- (2) The members of the *StPA* are: With voting rights: two university teachers, one academic staff member; In an advisory capacity: one student, the secretary of the *StPA*, as well as from each of the Departments of Chemistry and Physics: one university teacher or one academic staff member.
- (3) The Study Commission of the study programme appoints the members of the *StPA* for a period of two years. The student representative is appointed for one year. The *StPA* elects one of its university teachers as chairperson and at least one as vice chairperson.
- (4) For every member eligible to vote, a representative should be appointed who can act in case the member is prevented or biased.
- (5) The *StPA* is quorate if at least half of all its members eligible to vote are present.
- (6) Decisions about exam parts governed by these examination regulations that are completed in other subjects are taken in agreement between the *StPA* of the relevant study programme and the Examination Board of the other subject as far as subject-related contents are concerned.
- (7) The members of the *StPA* have the right to sit in on exams.
- (8) The members of the *StPA* and the examiners are legally bound to maintain confidentiality. Those who are not in civil service shall be instructed by the chairperson to maintain confidentiality.

**§ 7 Examiners, observers**

- (1) The Examination Board (*StPA*) appoints the examiners for the master's thesis as well as the examiners and observers for the final colloquium. The *StPA* can task the chairperson with these appointments.
- (2) Only university teachers, *Privatdozenten* (lecturers) and academic staff members of the University of Konstanz who have been authorized to conduct exams as per § 52 para. 1 Sentence 6 *Landeshochschulgesetz LHG* (state law on higher education) may assign topics for master's theses, supervise and assess these theses, and act as examiners in final colloquia. Contract lecturers may only be appointed as supervisors or examiners of final theses or as examiners in final colloquia if there is not a sufficient number of persons authorized to conduct exams as per Sentence 1 available.
- (3) Course-related performance assessments are conducted by the course instructors.
- (4) Oral exams are conducted by either one examiner and one observer, or by two examiners. Observers may only be appointed to sit in on an exam if they have passed a master's or *Diplom* examination or equivalent in the relevant field of the exam.

**§ 8 Recognition of coursework and performance assessments**

- (1) On request, coursework and performance assessments completed as part of a study programme offered by another state or state-approved institution of higher education in the Federal Republic of Germany or abroad, or a German *Berufsakademie* are recognized, provided the competencies thus acquired do not differ significantly from the achievements they replace. In this process, ECTS credits in line with those granted at the University of Konstanz for the corresponding achievements in accordance with these examination regulations are taken into account. There is no significant difference if contents, learning objectives and exams largely correspond to the requirements of the relevant master's programme at the University of Konstanz. When recognizing credits, the examination periods laid down in these examination regulations are to be taken into account.
- (2) When recognizing coursework and performance assessments completed outside of Germany, the following have to be considered:
  - Recommendations of the *Kultusministerkonferenz, Zentralstelle für ausländisches Bildungswesen* (Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany, Central Office for Foreign Education)
  - Agreements on Equivalence of the Federal Republic of Germany
  - Agreements with partner universities.
- (3) Coursework or performance assessments completed at another institution of higher education or in another study programme cannot be recognized as master's thesis or final colloquium.

- (4) If coursework and performance assessments are recognized, the grades earned – insofar as the grading systems are comparable – will be transferred and included in the calculations of the grades for the modules and the overall grade. Ungraded performance assessments completed at another institution of higher education that are recognized as graded performance assessments as per paragraph 1, will be included in the calculation of the overall grade with the grade 4.0 ("sufficient"). If the grading systems are not comparable, the grade "passed" will be applied and the performance assessment may be included with the grade 4.0 ("sufficient") in the calculation of the overall grade. Recognitions may be marked as such in the certificate.
- (5) Students must submit the required documents when applying for recognition of credit. If the pre-requisites (see para. 1 and 2) are met, students are legally entitled to recognition of credits. If the corresponding performance assessments were completed before starting the current study programme at the University of Konstanz, the application for recognition usually must be submitted by the end of the semester the student started the study programme at the University of Konstanz. Applications for the recognition of performance assessments completed during a study abroad stay must be submitted within six months after completing the stay abroad.
- (6) The corresponding Examination Board (see § 6), or a person appointed by it, makes decisions as per paragraphs 1 - 5 in cooperation with the representatives of the subject.
- (7) Coursework and performance assessments that were part of a bachelor's examination that was an admission requirement for this master's programme cannot be recognized as work in the corresponding master's programme; however, they will not necessarily have to be repeated in the master's programme but may be replaced by an equivalent alternative performance assessment in agreement with the Examination Board (*StPA*) or a person appointed by it. This does not apply to performance assessments completed in a four-year bachelor's programme at another institution of higher education that, at the University of Konstanz, are part of the master's programme; they can be recognized as per paragraph 1.

**§ 9 Recognition of non-higher education achievements**

- (1) Non-higher education achievements will be assessed as coursework and performance assessments if the following apply:
  - The knowledge and skills thus acquired are equivalent to the coursework and performance assessments they stand to replace
  - The prerequisites for acceptance at an institution of higher education are met at the time credit is granted for such achievements
  - The institution at which the knowledge or skills were acquired has implemented a quality assurance system.
- (2) An overall view must be taken and an overall assessment made when determining whether knowledge and skills are equivalent. They are considered equivalent if there is no significant difference regarding the knowledge and skills acquired. There is no significant difference if the knowledge and skills achieved outside of any institution of higher education largely correspond to the contents, learning objectives and requirements of the corresponding performance assessment in the study programme at the University of Konstanz.
- (3) If equivalence cannot be determined, a placement test may be administered.
- (4) A maximum of 18 ECTS credits can be granted for achievements obtained outside the university system.
- (5) Decisions on whether to recognize the achievements and on the necessity and form of placement tests will be made by the Examination Board (*StPA*) or a person appointed by it.

**§ 10 Non-attendance, withdrawal, fraud, breach of regulations**

- (1) A performance assessment is assessed as "fail" (5.0) if students fail to attend or withdraw from an exam after it has already started without giving compelling reasons. The same applies if a written performance assessment is not completed within the allotted time, unless the reasons for not completing it in time were beyond the students' control.
- (2) Students must provide the Examination Board (*StPA*) with credible reason for missing or withdrawing from an exam without delay. In the case of illness, students have to submit a medical certificate including the medical findings (symptoms) for their inability to take the exam. The required form provided by the Central Examination Office must be used for the medical certificate. In case of doubt, a medical certificate from a doctor specified by the university may be requested. If the reason is accepted, students usually have to take the exam at the next exam date available.

- (3) If students attempt to influence the result of coursework or performance assessments through fraud (e.g. plagiarism) or the use of aids that are not permitted, the corresponding coursework or performance assessment will be considered as "fail" (5.0). The examiner or supervisor can exclude a student who has disturbed the proper proceedings of a performance assessment from continuing the performance assessment. In this case, the corresponding performance assessment is considered to have failed. For repeated or otherwise serious fraud or plagiarism cases, the corresponding *StPA* may decide to exclude the candidate from the exam retake, resulting in a complete loss of right to take exams. If the fraud is detected only after the result of the performance assessment was announced, sentences 1 and 4 apply accordingly.
- (4) Students must be notified of an incriminating decision by the *StPA* without delay; the decision must be substantiated in writing, and information on available options for legal recourse must be included. Before the *StPA* takes a decision, students have to be given the opportunity to comment the case.

### § 11 Academic adjustments and extension of exam deadlines

- (1) In case of disabilities, chronic illnesses or longer-term health impairments (not exam-related) that make it difficult for the student to complete coursework and performance assessments, the Examination Board (*StPA*) may, upon written request, determine suitable measures to counterbalance the health impairments (academic adjustments). The option of academic adjustments may be used only if the illness, impairment or disability allows that the student can prove the competencies required in the corresponding exam in another form or within another period of time. In case of written exams, such adjustments may, in particular, include a reasonable extension of the time limit, rest periods which do not count towards the time limit, or the admission of personal or material aids. Requests for academic adjustments should be submitted to the *StPA* as early as possible and, as a rule, one month before the corresponding exam at the latest. Students must describe their impairments and document them with a medical certificate that must include the medical findings required for assessing the situation. The medical certificate should, if possible, contain suggestions for suitable academic adjustments.
- (2) Students should also consider the option of taking a leave of absence from studying. Possible reasons for a leave of absence, the procedure as well as the legal consequences are governed by § 12 of the Admission and Enrolment Regulations (*ZImmO*).
- (3) In case of a pregnancy, the student will be asked to declare whether she will take or continue the coursework or performance assessment. The maternity protection periods (*Mutterschutzfrist*), as determined by the applicable federal law in Germany on the protection of working mothers (*MuSchG*), have to be taken into consideration. If students take a mother protection period, this period interrupts any deadline stated in these examination regulations; the mother protection period is not counted as time passed for the deadline.



- (4) Similarly, *Elternzeit* (parental leave) as set out in the *Bundeselternzeit- und Elternzeitgesetz BEEG* (law on parental leave allowance and parental leave) will be taken into consideration on request. The student must inform the Examination Board (*StPA*) of the period(s) of *Elternzeit* to be taken no later than four weeks before the first day of planned *Elternzeit*. This must be done in writing and include the necessary documentation. The *StPA* will assess whether the legal pre-requisites are met under which employees have the right to *Elternzeit* in accordance with the *BEEG*, and shall inform the student without delay of their decision and, if applicable, of the new schedule for exam dates. The time period allowed for completing the master's thesis (part of the final examination) cannot be interrupted by *Elternzeit*. In this case, the topic is considered not to have been assigned. After the *Elternzeit* period has ended, the student will be assigned a new topic.
- (5) Students with family commitments that go beyond those set out in paragraph 4 (taking care of children or relatives as per the *Pflegezeitgesetz* (German act on care leave), can also apply to the Examination Board (*StPA*) for a deadline extension. The required documentation must be submitted with the request. Paragraph 4 Sentences 4 to 6 apply accordingly.
- (6) Paragraph 5 applies accordingly to extension requests of exam deadlines by maximal one year of students who are elected members in statutory committees or statutory bodies of the university, the student body (*Verfasste Studierendenschaft*) or the student services for at least one year.
- (7) Additional extensions of exam deadlines may be requested as per §§ 4, 21, 26 and 27 and will be granted in justified cases in line with the corresponding provisions.
- (8) If the *StPA* declines the entire or part of a request for academic adjustments or the extension of exam deadlines, the decision must be substantiated in writing, and information on available options for legal recourse must be included.

### § 12 Course and examination languages

- (1) As a rule, courses are taught in English.
- (2) As a rule, coursework and performance assessments have to be completed in English. In agreement with the examiners, the corresponding exam may also be completed in another language.

## II. Course-related performance assessments and coursework

### § 13 Registration and admission for course-related performance assessments and coursework

- (1) Students have to register for course-related performance assessments in the announced form using data base systems and web applications for registration.
- (2) When registering for a course-related performance assessment, students automatically apply for admission to the corresponding course-related performance assessment.
- (3) Persons appointed by the Examination Board responsible will grant admission to course-related performance assessments if there is no reason for non-admission as per para. 4 and, if applicable, additional requirements as per para. 5 are fulfilled. If admission requirements have not been fulfilled by the time of registration, conditional admission may be granted.
- (4) The corresponding Examination Board or persons appointed by it may revoke admission to a course-related performance assessment if the student is no longer enrolled in the corresponding study programme at the time of the performance assessment, the right to take exams in that study programme has expired, subject-specific or course-specific admission requirements are not fulfilled or the student is not entitled to participate in the exam because of a leave of absence as per § 12 of the Admission and Enrolment Regulations (*ZImmO*) of the University of Konstanz.
- (5) Additional requirements for completing a course-related performance assessment or acquiring ECTS credits in a module or part of a module will be announced in writing or electronically at the beginning of the course. Such requirements may be, for example, successful participation in practice tutorials or regular attendance in the course.
- (6) If a performance assessment is completed without prior registration, it will be deemed invalid regardless of the result and will not be counted as exam attempt.
- (7) Registration is also required for coursework. In courses where coursework is combined with a performance assessment, students register for coursework in the context of the registration for the corresponding performance assessment.

**§ 14 Type and procedure of course-related performance assessments and coursework**

- (1) Course-related performance assessments in the sense of these examination regulations are:
  - Module exams if the module consists of only one component, or only one of several module components is completed with an exam;
  - Partial module exams in several components of a module.
- (2) The type of course-related coursework and performance assessments is specified in the appendix or results from these examination regulations. Furthermore, the course instructor will announce the type of performance assessment at the beginning of the course.
- (3) Course-related performance assessments, partial exams and coursework may also be carried out online as per § 32 a and § 32 b Landeshochschulgesetz LHG (state law on higher education) and the provisions of § 15 and § 16, provided this is possible in terms of content and technology, and equal exam conditions are guaranteed. For such online formats, the university provides information and communication systems that comply with data protection regulations. Exam minutes will be recorded for online formats, just like for non-electronic formats. The minutes have to state that the exam took place online, as well as include any technical problems that might have occurred and a resulting termination of the exam. The participants must immediately report any technical problems during the exam.
- (4) If a performance assessment was not completed on campus and under supervision, students must provide confirmation (in the announced form) that they have worked independently, without the help of third parties, and that they have only used permitted aids.
- (5) Group work is only permissible if the individual contribution can be clearly distinguished, assessed and graded.
- (6) A course-related performance assessment may also consist of several separate exam components. In addition to a written on-campus exam or term paper, it might be comprised of other types of assessment such as mini-tests, presentations etc. At the beginning of the course, the course instructor announces the number and type of (partial) performance assessments, the method for calculating the overall grade and determines when a performance assessment is passed as well as the options for a retake.
- (7) If all required performance assessments are completed in a module, no further exams may be taken in that module, unless this is expressly permitted for the corresponding module.
- (8) The course-related performance assessments will usually be held after the end of the corresponding course; at the latest by the start of the courses of the next semester. The first date is usually in the first week of the lecture-free period, the second date in the last two weeks before lectures start in the next semester.

### **§ 15 Course-related written exams and online exams in text form**

- (1) Written performance assessments may be written on-campus exams, term papers, seminar papers, essays and other written exam types. The examiner may determine that students have to work on the exam offline in electronic form and/or submit it electronically (e.g. take home exam). Usually, written exams shall last at least 60 minutes but not more than 240 minutes. The course instructor will announce the details at the beginning of the course. Instead of a written on-campus exam, the exam may also be a supervised computer-based on-campus exam using university equipment.
- (2) The examiner may also determine that the exam in text form has to be completed online. Such online exams take place either supervised on campus or, if it has not been determined that the exam is a written on-campus exam or other supervised exam format, without supervision off campus. Off-campus online exams with video supervision are not permitted. University devices or the students' own devices will be used for written online exams on campus. If students use their own devices for an online exam, they will be informed about the minimum technical requirements for these devices in good time before the exam. Written online exams take place for all participants in the same form as off-campus online exam without supervision or as on-campus online exam with supervision; if applicable also at different university locations.
- (3) The time taken for the assessment of written performance assessments should not exceed six weeks.
- (4) Exams can partially or entirely be multiple-choice tests. In the assessment of multiple-choice test parts, negative (partial) points are only permitted within questions with multiple answer options. For each question, cumulative negative points result in 0 points (no negative points for questions). The examiners may determine the further assessment rules for the multiple-choice part. These rules have to be announced to the students at the beginning of the exam at the latest. Students pass a multiple-choice exam if they reach the absolute or relative pass threshold. If the calculated pass threshold is not a whole number, the value shall be rounded to the students' advantage. An exam will be passed if the grade is 4.0 ("sufficient") or better.
- (5) The respective examiners are responsible for the exam tasks and the grading scheme (assignment of points to the tasks) that has to be determined before the exam is handed out.

### **§ 16 Oral and practical course-related performance assessments**

- (1) Oral performance assessments may be oral exams, class presentations and other oral forms of exams. Oral and practical performance assessments may be group or individual exams. Furthermore, the course instructor will announce the details at the beginning of the course.

- (2) Oral exams should last at least 10 minutes but not more than 45 minutes per candidate. They are either conducted by one examiner and one observer, or alternatively by two examiners. The date, participants and essential topics as well as results of the oral exam must be written down in examination minutes, which have to be signed by the observers and examiners involved. Subsequently to the oral exam, the candidate will be informed about the result.
- (3) Oral examinations and partial exams may be conducted online in accordance with the provisions of § 14 para. 3 and 4 if the person to be examined and the examiners have given their consent. Accordingly, it is also possible that individual persons join the on-campus exam via videoconferencing.
- (4) An oral exam that concludes a course or a module will be conducted online as a videoconference upon application of the student, provided there is an important reason for this exception. The application must be submitted to the corresponding Examination Board (StPA) by the deadline and in the form requested by the university. If the pre-requisites as per paragraphs 3 and 4, sentence 1, are not met, or if it is reasonable to postpone the exam so that it can take place in person, the StPA will reject the request. Generally, the student will be informed whether the request has been denied or granted at least one week before the scheduled exam. If the request is granted, the student will be informed of the details of the online exam procedure at least 24 hours before the exam date.
- (5) Oral partial exams, e.g. the oral part of (class) presentations or other course-related performance assessments and coursework completed orally, may be conducted online via videoconferencing upon the student's informal request to the lecturer involved. The lecturer decides whether the requirements as per § 14 para. 3 are met and whether the request is granted.
- (6) In the curricular procedure provided for by higher education law, courses and exams in the area of supplementary courses or electives may be offered that are conducted online, especially if this strengthens the competency orientation of teaching and exams. In these cases, registration for a correspondingly marked course documents that students voluntarily chose to participate in the relevant oral online exam or coursework.
- (7) Before the exam starts, students have to show, via camera, their student ID card or an official photo ID at the request of the examiner. All persons involved also have to confirm that the image and sound quality of the video connection is sufficient. When students show an ID card or passport, they are allowed to cover information not required for identification. Recording or storing video and/or sound files of an online exam is not permitted, unless this is required for the transmission of the online exam, partial exam or coursework. The teacher/examiner will point this fact out to the participants at the start of the exam at the latest.

### § 17 Coursework

- (1) Coursework is individual written, oral or practical work that students usually complete in connection with courses; it may also consist of regular attendance at a course for which in itself no ECTS credits are granted. Which coursework has to be completed in the individual modules and which coursework is a pre-requisite for the admission to a module exam will be announced at the beginning of the corresponding course at the latest.
- (2) Analogous to course-related performance assessments, coursework, too, may be completed online as per § 14 paras. 3 and 4, § 15 para. 2 as well as § 16 paras. 3, 5-6 and para. 7.
- (3) Coursework that is a pre-requisite for the admission to course-related performance assessments may be retaken as often as required, provided the deadlines determined for completing that performance assessment are met. The same applies to other coursework as well as coursework in the area of supplementary courses and modules. The instructor of the corresponding course determines the form of the retake.
- (4) Coursework does not necessarily have to be graded, but has to be assessed as "pass" or "fail".

### § 18 Regular attendance as special form of coursework

- (1) In seminars, tutorials and other dialogue-oriented courses as well as in practical courses such as lab courses, the instructors may request regular attendance in the course or participation in a lab introduction as a pre-requisite for completing coursework and performance assessments and/or for acquiring credits. In this case it must be announced, in writing or electronically and at the beginning of the course, that regular attendance and/or participating in the lab introduction is an admission requirement for course-related performance assessments and/or a pre-requisite for acquiring credits.
- (2) Regular attendance means that students do not miss more than one fifth of course time or course dates. Otherwise, admission to coursework and performance assessments in that course will be denied, irrespective of whether or not the student is responsible for the absences. In this case, no ECTS credits can be acquired. In justified cases\* it is possible to deviate from these regulations in favour of the students; corresponding requests have to be submitted to the Examination Board (*StPA*) via its secretary.

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\* Cases for which exceptions may be granted are, in particular: 1. Students with a medically certified chronic or longer-term illness who may request academic adjustments in line with these examination regulations and who cannot participate in all dates of the course for health reasons; 2. Student-parents whose child is ill as well as students with relatives in need of care if they submit corresponding documentation that the care is necessary; 3. Students who are members of a university body or a committee of the student body (Verfasste Studierendenschaft) in the current semester and consequently miss individual classes; they have to submit documentation of their participation in the respective meeting 4. Top athletes in the sense of the university's cooperation agreement for supporting top-class sports if they can document that they were required to participate in competitions or training camps; 5. Study abroad stays during the ongoing semester with corresponding documentation; 6. Startup founders with corresponding documentation.

### § 19 Assessment

(1) Grades for the individual performance assessments are determined by the corresponding examiners. The following grades are used:

- 1 = very good = excellent performance
- 2 = good = performance well above average;
- 3 = satisfactory = average performance
- 4 = sufficient = performance that meets requirements despite shortcomings
- 5 = fail = performance that does not meet requirements due to considerable shortcomings

For a more detailed evaluation of the student's performance, grades can be raised or lowered by a value of 0.3. Values of 0.7, 4.3, 4.7 or 5.3, however, are not permitted.

(2) If an exam is evaluated by more than one examiner, the grade shall be calculated by the arithmetic mean of the grades given by each of the examiners as per para. 1. Grades for individual performance assessments are calculated to only one decimal place. Additional decimal places are discarded without rounding. The same applies for the calculation of a grade from partial grades, for the calculation of module grades from partial module grades as well as the calculation of the overall grade of the master's examination; a potentially deviating weighting of individual grade components remains unaffected by this.

(3) The grades are as follows:

- an average up to 1.5 = very good
- an average above 1.5 up to 2.5 = good
- an average above 2.5 up to 3.5 = satisfactory
- an average above 3.5 up to 4.0 = sufficient
- an average above 4.0 = fail

(4) A performance assessment is passed if the grade is "sufficient" (4.0) or better.

(5) The course instructor has to assess coursework as "pass" or "fail", or can also grade the coursework.

### § 20 Module grades

(1) If a module has to be completed with a final module exam or a module exam, the grade for this exam will be the grade for that module. If the final module exam only completes the module in terms of time, but was preceded by other partial module exams, para. 2 Sentence 1 applies.

(2) If several partial module exams have to be completed in a module, the average grade **of all** grades for the partial module exams will be the grade for that module.

In this calculation, the results of the individual partial module exams are weighted according to the number of ECTS credits actually acquired.

(3) If students completed more work in a module than required, this work may be credited in the area of supplementary courses after consultation with the examination office of the department.

(4) The module grade is:

- an average up to 1.5 = very good
- an average above 1.5 up to 2.5 = good
- an average above 2.5 up to 3.5 = satisfactory
- an average above 3.5 up to 4.0 = sufficient
- an average above 4.0 = fail

(5) In case of a credit-based weighting of course-related module results, the calculation of the overall grade for the study programme will be calculated from the number of credits determined for the corresponding module in the appendix.

(6) For the calculation of the **preliminary** average grade of the study programme, the arithmetic mean of the module grades is calculated in accordance with the weighting of the modules. That grade will also include modules for which not all required performance assessments have been completed yet.

### § 21 Retaking course-related performance assessments

(1) Performance assessments that were passed cannot be retaken.

(2) Course-related performance assessments in all modules, except supplementary courses, that were assessed as "fail" (5.0) or "not passed", may be repeated once subject to the provisions of paragraphs 2 and 4. In the same course, a performance assessment can be repeated no more than two times. The second, as a rule oral, repetition of a course-related performance assessments is only permitted upon written application and no more than three times during the course of studies. The corresponding Examination Board decides on the written application. Students must submit their application no later than two months after the announcement of the exam result. If students miss this deadline, their right to take exams expires, unless the reasons were beyond the students' control.

(3) Coursework and performance assessments in supplementary courses that were not passed can only be repeated once in the same course. However, students can compensate this by successfully completing equivalent performance assessments in another course belonging to the same area.



- (4) Students should retake the exam at the next available exam date, however, no later than in the two semesters following the failed exam. As a rule, the exam retake should take place no sooner than three weeks after the result of the first exam was announced.
- (5) The course instructor determines the form of the exam retake. Contents and requirements must be largely comparable to the first exam. The second retake is usually an oral exam.
- (6) Performance assessment are finally failed if the number of permitted retakes was also failed, no (further) retakes are possible and the examination regulations do not permit students to compensate for the failed performance assessment by completing another equivalent performance assessment.

### **§ 22 Course-related performance assessments in non-biology courses**

Details on course-related performance assessments in courses from other departments (registration for and admission to exams, as well as the procedure, form, scope and assessment of exams) are governed by the examination regulations that apply to the curriculum of the study programme to which the course belongs. Retaking course-related performance assessment in courses from other departments, however, is governed by § 21 of these examination regulations.

### **§ 23 Internships**

- (1) Practical work experience (internship) should last at least two months. All private or public institutions in Germany or abroad are suitable for the internship if students can experience practical work in the field of biological sciences there. The internship may be divided into no more than two stages.
- (2) In addition to the internship, students must also attend lectures offered as part of an advanced module (5 ECTS credits). They can complete this coursework before or after the work experience.
- (3) For the internship as part of the study programme, ECTS credits as stated in the appendix will be awarded.
- (4) Usually, a university teacher or *Privatdozent* will supervise students during the internship. Academic staff may also be appointed as supervisors if they have long-standing successful teaching experience, and, upon recommendation of the Faculty Board, have been authorized to conduct exams by the Rectorate as per § 52 para. 1 sentence 6 LHG.

- (5) Students have to document that they successfully completed their internship by submitting a qualified final report to their supervisor (see para. 4), as a rule, no later than four weeks after the internship has ended.
- (6) Instead of completing an internship, students may request to complete a semester abroad at a university outside of Germany. As a rule, requests for recognition should be submitted before the start of the semester abroad. In the request, students have to specify the subject-specific courses they will attend instead of an internship that correspond to the same workload (these must be worth 10 credits). The university recognises all subject-specific courses that correspond to the academic level of the master's programme and are not considered redundant to courses of the master's programme at the University of Konstanz. The request must be submitted to the supervisor appointed as per paragraph 4, who will evaluate the selected courses as to their subject-specific relevance, scope and redundancy. To have the coursework they completed during their semester abroad recognized as being equivalent to an internship, students must obtain a positive review from their supervisor. Students must prove that they have taken the relevant courses during their semester abroad by submitting suitable documentation.
- (7) The internship can also be completed at the University of Konstanz. Students may do so by taking an advanced module (lecture component and practical component) as an equivalent. In this case, the lecture as per paragraph 2 is not required.

### III. Master's examination

#### § 24 Aim and scope of the master's examination

- (1) The master's examination provides students with an advanced degree in the corresponding subject that qualifies them to enter a profession. In the master's examination, students must show that they have extensive knowledge in the chosen field, are able to work independently according to scientific principles and can apply scientific methods and insights.
- (2) The master's examination consists of the coursework and performance assessments in the course-related modules listed in the appendix, a final colloquium and the master's thesis.

#### § 25 Registration for and admission to the master's examination

- (1) In order to be admitted to the master's thesis, candidates must have successfully completed all course-related performance assessments set out in the appendix. They must also document having successfully completed their internship as per § 24, or coursework equivalent to the internship as per § 24, or, in case of transferring from another university to the University of Konstanz, performance assessments that are considered equivalent as per § 8. In the case of a transfer, students must have been enrolled at the University of Konstanz for at least one semester at the time they are admitted to the master's thesis.

- (2) Students have to submit their application for admission to the master's thesis in writing via the department's examination office to the Examination Board (*StPA*) at the latest three weeks before the final colloquium at the latest and attach the required documentation as per para. 1.
- (3) The application for admission may include a suggestion of a topic for the master's thesis, a supervisor and the reviewers. There is no right guaranteeing that this suggestion will be considered. The Examination Board (*StPA*) or a person appointed by it decides about the admission based on the submitted documents and the data in the student and exam administration systems as per para. 1. The *StPA* appoints the examiners including the supervisor, and determines the topic. Admission is granted with the provision that students remain enrolled until submission of the master's thesis, including a retake, if applicable.
- (4) Admission must be denied if the requirements as per para. 1 are not fulfilled, the application is not complete or, even upon request, has not been submitted completely within the deadline, the master's examination in the corresponding study programme was finally failed or students have lost the right to take exams in that study programme.
- (5) For admission to the final colloquium, students have to document their successful participation in the courses of the advanced modules.

### § 26 Final colloquium

- (1) To be admitted to the final colloquium, students must have completed and passed the coursework and performance assessments in the advanced modules as well as the preference module.
- (2) The final colloquium covers two elective areas from the scientific fields of the chosen advanced modules or the lecture part of an advanced module. The final colloquium is an oral exam that lasts 60 to 90 minutes (30 to 45 minutes per elective area).
- (3) Two examiners conduct the final colloquium. The assessment is based on § 19.
- (4) The date, participants and essential topics as well as results of the oral exam must be written down in examination minutes, which have to be signed by the examiners and, if applicable, the observers involved. Subsequently to the oral exam, the candidate will be informed about the result.
- (5) Analogous to course-related performance assessments, the colloquium on the bachelor's thesis, too, may be completed online via videoconferencing, or individual participants may be connected via videoconferencing, as per § 14 paras. 3 and 4 as well as § 16 paras. 3, 4 and 7.
- (6) If the oral exam is graded "fail", it can be retaken once. The exam must be retaken within six months. If candidates fail to register within this deadline, they lose their right to take the exam, unless the deadline was missed due to circumstances beyond the candidates' control.

**§ 27 Master's thesis**

- (1) The master's thesis is a written exam paper in which students have to demonstrate that they are able to work independently and according to scientific principles on a more extensive task from the field of their study subject within a set deadline. Typically, the master's thesis is based on experimental work.
- (2) The successfully completed master's thesis is worth 30 ECTS credits.
- (3) Group work is not permitted.
- (4) Before starting their master's thesis, and no later than four weeks after completing the final colloquium, candidates must take the "Master preparation course" in the final module. In this course, candidates become acquainted with the foundations of the intended topic area of their master's thesis. In particular, they will acquire special methodological knowledge and learn how to use the relevant expert literature. Students should complete this course in the working group in which they will write their master's theses. The course runs three months.
- (5) Work on the master's thesis usually commences immediately after the course-related performance assessments and the final colloquium have been passed, and the "Master preparation course" has been completed. The Examination Board *StPA* decides about exceptions. Candidates must apply to the *StPA* to issue a topic for the master thesis, taking into consideration the suggestion of the supervisor and reviewer, not before the start and no later than two weeks before the end of the "Master preparation course". The chairperson of the *StPA* ensures that candidates are assigned a topic for their master's thesis by the time they complete the "Master preparation course". If candidates fail to apply on time, the chairperson of the *StPA* will assign a topic within two weeks after the deadline has expired. The date of assignment of a topic is recorded by the *StPA*.
- (6) Two reviewers will assess the master's thesis. The *StPA* decides about the suggested topic, supervisor and reviewers. First reviewer and supervisor will usually be the person who assigned the topic. The *StPA* determines the second reviewer after consultation with the first reviewer. The *StPA* informs the students about the time of the assignment, the topic, the supervisor and the appointed reviewers. This information has to be kept on file. The period for completing the master's thesis begins with the assignment of the topic; at the same time, the supervision duties of the supervisor begin.

The time allotted for the master's thesis is six months. Topic and supervision must match that time period.

- (7) The master's thesis can be completed in either German or English. If the thesis is submitted in German, it must include an English summary and vice versa.
- (8) Students may return a topic only once and only within one month after it was assigned (in case of experimental work: within two months). In this case, they must immediately request a new topic; otherwise, a new topic will be assigned. This does not apply in case of incapability because of illness, documented by a medical certificate.
- (9) In individual cases and upon justified request of the candidate, the *StPA* may grant an extension of the deadline for the time period the incapability lasted – but no more than one month. The request must be submitted via the department's Examination Office and must have been received by the *StPA* no later than two weeks before the allotted time period ends, except in justified cases, and must be approved by the supervisor of the master's thesis. The provisions of § 10 apply accordingly. If the incapability prevails after that time period, the topic is considered as not assigned. If students do not request a new topic within one month after the incapability ended, the *StPA* will assign a new topic.
- (10) Two bound, typewritten copies in DIN A4 format (if applicable, combined with attachments on a storage device), as well as additionally one complete digital copy of the master's thesis in the form specified by the Central Examination Office must be submitted via the Central Examination Office within the prescribed time limit. One digital copy will remain with the Central Examination Office until the conclusion of the examination procedure. The date of submission must be recorded. If the thesis is not submitted by the due date, it will be graded "fail" (5.0), unless the deadline was missed due to circumstances beyond the students' control.
- (11) When submitting the master's thesis, students must provide written confirmation of being the sole author of the thesis and of not having used any sources or aids other than the ones stated, and that this thesis was not submitted before in the context of another master's examination. Students must retain any materials that can prove their sole authorship until the examination procedure has been concluded.
- (12) As a rule, two reviewers as per § 19 para. 1 have to assess the thesis within eight weeks. The grade will be calculated as the arithmetic mean from both reviews as per § 19 paras. 2 and 3.
- (13) If one reviewer grades the master's thesis "sufficient" (4.0) or better, and the other reviewer grades it "fail" (5.0), the *StPA* will appoint a third reviewer. If the third reviewer grades the thesis "sufficient" or better, the master's thesis is passed. In this case, the grade will be "4.0", or will be calculated as the arithmetic mean from all three reviews as per § 19 paras. 2 and 3 if that grade is better. If the third reviewer grades the thesis "fail" (5.0), the master's thesis has failed.

- (14) If the master's thesis is graded "fail", it can be repeated once. If students do not request a new topic within three months after the result was announced, the *StPA* will assign a new topic ex officio, unless students claim and document an obstacle which is recognized by the *StPA*; in this case a new topic, if applicable on request of the student, may be assigned after the obstacle has ceased to prevail. A third attempt of the master's thesis is not permitted. The second topic can only be given back within the time limit mentioned in para. 8 if students did not use this option during their first attempt.
- (15) Students without a master's degree who are accepted into a subject-relevant doctoral programme may have their report, which they have to submit to the thesis committee as per Article 6 para. 4 of the Doctoral Regulations of the University of Konstanz (Subject-specific regulations Department of Biology) within the first 6 months, recognized as master's thesis upon application (fast-track option). This report, which replaces the master's thesis, must have been assessed by the thesis committee with the grade "sufficient" (4.0) or better.

Pre-requisites for admission to the fast track option are: Bachelor's degree with a minimum grade of 1.8, or the bachelor's degree was among the top 15 of one hundred in the relevant bachelor's programme in the year of graduation (reference: overall grade); Students have been admitted to a master's programme in the Department of Biology and have completed all required coursework and performance assessments, except the master's thesis; The average grade of the coursework and performance assessments (preference module and final colloquium) is 1.3 or better (see Doctoral Regulations of the University of Konstanz and the subject-specific regulations of the Department of Biology).

#### IV. Final provisions

##### § 28 Results of the master's examination, overall grade

- (1) The master's examination will be passed if all required modules as per the appendix as well as the work in the area of supplementary courses were completed and assessed as "pass".
- (2) The overall grade is calculated as follows: 20% average grade of the course-related module grades, 40 % final colloquium, 40% master's thesis. Supplementary courses are not included in the overall grade.  
In addition to that, the overall grade is calculated as per § 19.
- (3) If all required work as per para. 1 has been completed, the overall grade will be calculated based on the coursework and performance assessments available and as allocated to the corresponding modules/areas at the time the certificate is requested; a reallocation later on is not possible.

**§ 29 Examination certificate and degree certificate**

- (1) Once students have passed the master's examination and all achievements relevant for passing the exam have been recorded, they will receive an examination certificate stating the overall grade achieved in their study programme. The certificate also includes the grade and topic of the master's thesis.
- (2) The certificate will be awarded "with distinction" if students achieve an overall grade of 1.2 or better.
- (3) With the examination certificate, students also receive a degree certificate confirming that they have earned an academic master's degree and indicating the subject studied.
- (4) The examination and degree certificate are signed by the chairperson of the Examination Board (*StPA*) and stamped with the seal of the University of Konstanz. The date to be entered is the date on which, according to the request for issuing a certificate, the last coursework or performance assessment was completed.
- (5) A diploma supplement in line with the European Diploma Supplement Model and a transcript of records are issued as further components of the certificate. The transcript of records contains the completed modules and their components, the module grades, the ECTS credits acquired in the modules and the overall number of ECTS credits as well as the grades for the completed coursework and performance assessments; ungraded modules and work will be included with a remark about successful participation. Coursework and performance assessments that are not included in the master's examination will be included in the transcript of records as "Sonstige Leistungen" / "Additional voluntary course work".
- (6) In addition to that, a transcript of records as per para. 5 is issued without the grades for the individual coursework and performance assessments.
- (7) On request of the students, the duration of studies until completion of the study programme can be included in the transcript of records.
- (8) All documents mentioned in paragraphs 1, 3, 5 and 6 will be issued in German and –as far as possible – in English.

### § 30 Final failure

- (1) The entire master's examination will have finally not been passed and the right to take exams in this study programme will expire if a performance assessment required as per the examination regulations is assessed as "fail" and was not retaken within the deadline or – in case this is permissible – was not compensated for, and the corresponding student is responsible for this fact; if the permitted retakes were not passed or if a retake is excluded as per § 10 para. 3.
- (2) If students finally fail the master's examination, the corresponding Examination Board will send a written notification along with information on the options available for legal recourse.
- (3) If students have finally failed the master's examination, they will be issued, on request, a written confirmation listing all performance assessments that were passed and, if applicable, coursework that was completed. It will also state that the examination was finally failed.

### § 31 Invalidation of the master's examination

- (1) If students have cheated on an exam and this fact is discovered after the exam has been completed or the certificate has been issued, the Examination Board (*StPA*) may subsequently correct the corresponding grades and may declare all or part of the exam failed.
- (2) If the pre-requisites for admission to an exam were not met, and this fact is discovered after the exam has been completed or the certificate was issued, the deficit will be deemed to have been rectified by the passing of the exam, provided the students had no intent to deceive. If students intentionally practised deceit to obtain admission to the exam, the *StPA* will decide.
- (3) Before a decision goes into effect, students will be given opportunity to make a statement.
- (4) The incorrect examination certificate will be revoked and, if appropriate, a new certificate issued. If the master's examination is declared "fail" due to deceitful practices, the degree certificate will be revoked along with the examination certificate.
- (5) Revocation of the academic degree will be handled in accordance with statutory provisions.



### § 32 Inspection of examination records

- (1) For up to one year after the examination certificate was received and on request, students are permitted to inspect, within a reasonable period, their final examination records and the examiners' reviews, and in case of a final oral exam, the examination minutes.
- (2) It is possible to inspect course-related coursework and performance assessments and the corresponding evaluations as well as the examination minutes in case of course-related exams completed orally on the dates offered by the department or in agreement with the examiner within two years, starting at the end of the semester in which the performance assessment/exam was completed.

### § 33 Legal recourse

Students can object to decisions in the examination procedure that constitute an administrative act (§§ 68 et. seq. *VwGO*). The Vice Rector for Teaching will issue a ruling on the matter following a recommendation of the Central Examination Board, which will hear the Examination Board (*StPA*) on that matter.

### § 34 Effective date and transitional provisions

These examination regulations come into effect on 01 October 2022. They apply to all students who begin their studies in the master's programme in the winter semester 2022/23 or later. Students who started their studies before these examination regulations came into effect, continue their studies in accordance with the examination regulations that have previously applied; they have to complete their studies by the end of the summer semester 2024 at the latest. After this date, they can only continue their studies in accordance with this new version of the examination regulations. In justified cases and upon application, the Examination Board (*StPA*) may extend this deadline.

### Appendix

#### Note:

The German version of these regulations was published in the *Amtliche Bekanntmachungen* (official announcements) of the University of Konstanz No. 54/2022 on 28 July 2022.

### Overview of modules, courses and credits in the master's programme Biological Sciences

Module	Semester	Course	SWS*	ECTS credits	Type
	1 to 3	Internship + advanced module lecture		10 + 5	coursework
Advanced modules	1 to 3	Two advanced modules (lecture+practical work) <sup>1), 2)</sup>	30	30	coursework
Preference module	1 to 3	Two courses	4	8	performance assessment
Supplementary courses	1 to 3	Electives <sup>3)</sup>		19	coursework
Individual project course	3	Final colloquium		3+3 <sup>4)</sup>	performance assessment
Individual project course	3	Master preparation course		12	coursework
Individual project course	4	Master's thesis		30	

**TOTAL**

**120**

**\*SWS = weekly teaching hours**

- 1) Advanced courses are full-time and last for six weeks. Per week, there are lectures including colloquia (eight hours), seminars (two hours) and a practical component (24 hours). The advanced courses available are listed on the departmental web pages [www.biologie.uni-konstanz.de/en/](http://www.biologie.uni-konstanz.de/en/).
- 2) In the advanced module, students have to complete at least two courses offered by the Department of Biology. One further course may be chosen from the curriculum of the Faculty of Sciences.
- 3) These may be courses offered by the Faculty of Sciences or other faculties. Students have to complete coursework in the courses (see § 15). A minimum of 10 up to 14 ECTS credits must be from courses in mathematics or the natural sciences.
- 4) To be admitted to the individual project course, students must have completed and passed the coursework and performance assessments in the advanced modules as well as the preference module.
- 5) The final colloquium is worth a total of 6 ECTS credits. Two science areas are examined, each worth 3 ECTS credits. These science areas correspond to the subject matter of the respective advanced modules; the two science areas have to be from the advanced modules completed (students can also select the advanced module lecture associated with the internship).

<b>Preference module</b> <sup>5)</sup>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>
a) Disease Biology I	2	4
b) Disease Biology II	2	4
c) Pharmacology and Toxicology II	2	4
d) Biochemistry III	2	4
e) Methods in Biology	2	4
f) Evolutionary Organismal Biology	2	4
g) Concepts in Ecology	2	4

6) Students can choose from the courses offered in the preference module where they have to complete performance assessments worth 8 credits. Courses must be assigned to the preference module no later than one week prior to the date of the corresponding performance assessment (written on-campus exam). If students attend additional courses in the preference module and document the corresponding ECTS credits for that coursework, these courses will be recognized as biology/natural sciences courses in the elective modules.