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Coordination: M. Kössl, Tel. 069-79842052, Email: koessler@bio.uni-frankfurt.de

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## ***Unofficial version***

# ***Rules of the Faculties of Medicine, Biosciences, Biochemistry, Chemistry and Pharmacy as well as Psychology and Sports Sciences of the Goethe University for the Master's programme Interdisciplinary Neuroscience to graduate with "Master of Science" (M.Sc.)***

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## **Abbreviations**

Co	Colloquium
CP	Certificate of participation
CP	Credit Points
E	Exercise
EB	Examination board
ECTS	European Credit Point Transfer System
EM	Elective module
GVBl.	Law and ordinance pamphlet for the State of Hessen
HHG	Hessian Higher Education Act in the version of 31 July, 2000 (GVBl. I, S. 374ff.) last modified by the Act of 16 October, 2006 (GVBl. I, S. 512 ff.)
HlmmaVO	Regulation on the procedure of matriculation, part-time study, the implementation of Hessian Credit Points Law, processing of personal data at the universities in the State of Hessen from 29.12.2003 (GVBl. I, Nr. 1. S. 12ff.) in the currently valid version
ICN	Interdisciplinary Center for Neurosciences
L	Lecture
M.Sc.	Master of Science
MT	Master's thesis
OM	Obligatory module
P	Practical
PC	Performance certificate
S	Seminar
SHW	Semester hours per week

## **1. Section: General**

### **§ 1 Area of validity**

- (1) These regulations govern the study and examinations included in the Master's programme Interdisciplinary Neuroscience of the faculties of Medicine, Biosciences, Biochemistry, Chemistry and Pharmacy as well as Psychology and Sports Sciences of the Goethe University Frankfurt am Main.
- (2) The Master's degree in Interdisciplinary Neuroscience leads to a second professional scientific qualification. The programme follows consecutively and builds upon a biomedicine, life sciences, or mathematics Bachelor of Science degree (§ 8).
- (3) The Master's study programme is orientated towards research
- (4) After the successful completion of the Master's degree it is possible to proceed to a PhD. This is governed by PhD regulations.
- (5) These regulations should allow students to optimally plan and successfully complete their Master's degree. They provide information about examinations, aims and structure of the programme, requirements for participating in, and start of courses, the standard period of study, certificates of performance and formats of the teaching sessions.

### **§ 2 Aim of the examinations**

The study-related Master's examination is intended to determine whether the student has gained an in-depth understanding of the relationships in the area of interdisciplinary neuroscience and also possesses the ability to independently apply scientific methods and information, and critically classify and evaluate the knowledge she/he has gained.

### **§ 3 Academic degree**

- (1) Based on passing the Master's examination, the faculty in charge at the Goethe University Frankfurt am Main awards the academic degree of Master of Science (M.Sc.).
- (2) The equivalence to graduating with a university diploma will be certified upon request.

### **§ 4 Standard period of study**

- (1) The standard period of study, including all module examinations and the Master's thesis is four semesters. The Master's programme can be completed in a shorter period.
- (2) Based on these regulations, those faculties participating in the Master's programme Interdisciplinary Neuroscience ensure through the courses offered and designing the examination procedure that the Master's programme including all module exams and the Master's thesis can be completed within the standard period of study.

## **§ 5 Part-time studies**

According to the Hessian Part-Time Study Regulations from 23 July, 2007 (GVBl. 2007, S.530), the programme can be carried out entirely or partially part-time, as long as the statutes on part-time study at the Goethe University do not exclude part-time studies in the relevant programme. Participation in part-time studies is governed by the rules of Hessen Part-Time Study Regulations and the University Statutes. If the regulations for the study programme designate deadlines for performing the first examination, these deadlines can be extended for part-time students upon application. The application for a deadline extension must be submitted before the deadline. Part-time student have no claim to being provided with special teaching or study programmes.

## ***2. Section: Aim of the Master's programme, start of studies, and admission requirements***

### **§ 6 Aim of the Master's programme**

- (1) The general aim of the Master's programme is to provide further training in current sub-disciplines in neurosciences. Through broad training in different methods and concepts in neurosciences, the student should be able to carry out interdisciplinary research. The Master's programme should provide the student with the necessary knowledge and competence to be able to independently pursue scientific thinking as well as act responsibly.
- (2) The Master's programme is research orientated and upon completion should enable graduates to quickly familiarise themselves with new developments, get used to new areas of work and even to contribute to further developments in their field of science and technology. The expertise required for a transition into professional practice should be acquired during the four semesters of the Master's programme.

- (3) The broad course of studies should qualify the candidates for demanding positions in science, research and teaching. Potential areas of work for the Master's programme graduates are, for example, independent neuroscience research, marketing or public relations in science, medicine and industry.

### **§ 7 Start of studies**

Enrolment to the Master's programme is every winter semester

### **§ 8 Requirements for admission to the Master's program**

- (1) For admission to the Master's programme, applicants are required to
- a) have passed the Goethe University's Bachelor examination for a biomedical, bioscience or psychology degree, or
  - b) have passed the Goethe University's Bachelor examination for a different science or mathematics degree. In this case, the examination board decides on admission, or
  - c) have an equivalent biomedical, bioscience, or psychology degree from another university with a standard period of study of at least six semesters or
  - d) have an equivalent foreign qualification in the same or related field with a standard period of study of at least six semesters, and
  - e) have not conclusively failed or lost their entitlement to take the Master's examination in an equivalent field at another university. The same applies for Master's examinations in related fields, to the extent that the examination board has ascertained a corresponding match in the fields of study. A statement explaining failed Master exams in the same or related field of study is to be submitted upon application to the programme.
- (2) The application must include a motivation letter.
- (3) Proof of sufficient English language proficiency to at least level B2 of the Common European Framework of References must be provided. This proof may not be older than 2 years.

A certificate of proficiency based on a Bachelor thesis written in English issued by the Faculty of Biosciences, the Faculty of Psychology and Sport Sciences, the Faculty of Medicine or the Faculty of Biochemistry, Chemistry and Pharmacy of the Goethe University, is also suitable.



Other types of proof are possible after consultation with the examination board. Native English speakers are exempt from the obligation to provide evidence.

- (4) A written application to the registrar's office is required for enrolment in the programme. This must also include:
  1. A final certificate in accordance with Subparagraph (1), to include the final grade and marks achieved in all examination performances;
  2. The corresponding diploma supplement or equivalent documentation;
  3. Proof of English proficiency according to Subparagraph (3).
- (5) The examination board shall decide on the admission to the Master's programme. For cases described in Paragraph 1b) to d), admission may be combined with the provision of further course work confined to no more than 30 Credit Points (CP). This is to be completed within 12 months. If the conditions are not fulfilled in a timely manner, the chairperson of the examination board will revoke admission to the Master's programme. The CPs are not included in the Master's degree.
- (6) Applicants who at the time of application have not yet completed their Bachelor of Science degree may be provisionally admitted to the Master's programme upon submission of a proof of enrolment in the Bachelor of Science degree programme and a detailed certificate of the status and expected completion of the Bachelor of Science degree. Furthermore, the requirement of having at least 130 CP in the Bachelor of Science degree is to be fulfilled.

If the Bachelor of Science degree certificate is not submitted within 6 months after the provisional admission, admission to the Master's programme shall be revoked by the chairperson of the examination board. The examination board decides on any exceptions.

### **3. Section: Course structure and organization**

#### **§ 9 Structure of the programme and examinations; modules**

- (1) The structure of the Master's programme is modular. The programme comprises the compulsory modules 'Introduction to Neuroscience', 'Methods in Neuroscience' and 'Current Concepts in Neuroscience', the compulsory "Masters thesis module" and the 4 elective modules specified in Appendix 2, providing students with both interdisciplinary training and specialisation within the field. The contents of the modules are defined in Appendices 1 and 2. A typical course schedule is shown in Appendix 3. Enrolled students do not have

legal entitlement to continuation of elective modules existing at the time of enrolment. In the case of an elective module's cancellation or an elective module's change of curriculum, the examination board ensures that students who started the elective module can finish under the previous terms.

- (2) The four elective modules are to be selected from at least two subject areas of the degree, to ensure an interdisciplinary training (see Appendix 1 for the list of elective modules).
- (3) A module is a teaching and learning unit of defined content and duration. Modules are usually a combination of interrelated teaching sessions that include time for studying on one's own.
- (4) The content and format of obligatory events are clearly defined in the module descriptions.
- (5) The teaching sessions are conducted in English or according to the module descriptions.
- (6) A module's teaching sessions may build on each other. Students are tied to the sequence of teaching sessions specified in the module description.
- (7) The modules are completed by examinations or a confirmation of module completion. The examination results contribute to the overall grade of the Master's examination. A module examination comprises either one examination at the end of the module or an accumulation of several module exams. The details for completion of a module are stipulated in the module descriptions.
- (8) The module descriptions specify whether within a single module, a confirmation of module completion is a prerequisite for taking the final module examination. Course work is to be performed in strict adherence to the timeframe and content of the corresponding teaching session within a module. Further details are provided in § 12.
- (9) Modules from other Master programmes may be recognised by the examination board as equivalent to the compulsory or elective modules or sub-modules of this Master's programme.

#### **§ 10 Scope of the study and modules; credit points (CP)**

- (1) Each module is assigned *credit points* (CP) in the module descriptions on the basis of the *European Credit Transfer Systems* (ECTS) and taking into account the decisions and recommendations of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and the Arts and the German Rectors' Conference. The

CP also facilitate the transfer of credits to other Master programmes at the Goethe University or other universities.

- (2) The CP are a quantitative measure of the workload for an average student. The workload includes classroom instruction, preparation and evaluation of course content, and preparation and development of individual contributions and examination performances required to successfully complete a module. The regular workload does not exceed 1800 hours per year of study. 30 CP correspond to the average workload of a semester. The average student would work 30 hours for 1 CP.
- (3) 120 CP must be obtained for the Master's degree.
- (4) CP are only awarded once the requirements outlined in the module description have been successfully fulfilled.
- (5) The examination office opens a *credit points* account for every student in the programme. Students have the means to check the status of the account at any time.
- (6) Once the programme has been introduced, the scope of the work will be assessed as part of the evaluation under § 27 (4) of the HHG.
- (7) Students may take examinations in modules other than those prescribed (additional modules). These can be in elective modules listed in Appendix 1, as well as modules that teach so-called 'soft skills' (for example the supervision of bachelor students). The result of the examination will not be included in the overall grade of the Master's examination.

#### **§ 11 Teaching and learning formats; admission to modules; teaching units with limited participants**

- (1) Teaching sessions may have the following formats

Lectures (L)  
Exercises (E)  
Practicals (P)  
Seminars (S)  
Colloquia (Co)  
Projects (Pr)

- **Lectures** offer a coherent coverage of topics and provide an overview of a particular area of science and research.

- **Exercises** strengthen lecture content, for example through demonstrations, problem solving, discussion of illustrative material, and development of specific skills and abilities.
  - A **practical** is a training session in which students themselves carry out empirical or experimental work. A practical generally includes the preparation, carrying out, completion, evaluation and interpretation of experiments. Practicals also comprise the scientific theory required for carrying out and understanding the experiments.
  - **Seminars** are theoretical training sessions, in which students make contributions requiring extensive preparation.
  - **Colloquia** serve to present and discuss current research in a respective field. Usually, national and international research group leaders give a talk about their work, followed by a discussion.
  - **Projects** are written presentations and discussions of open scientific questions or theoretical concepts of a scientific field on the basis of current literature
- (2) The formats referred to in Subparagraph (1) may be supplemented with other teaching formats, in particular subject-specific teaching methods or methods using electronic media (e-learning). Several teaching formats may be combined in one teaching session.
- (3) The module description will indicate whether admission to a teaching session requires the successful completion of other modules. The same applies if evidence of regular participation in specific teaching sessions is required for access to another teaching session within the same or in a different module. The teacher responsible for the module checks compliance with admission requirements.
- (4) If the number of students interested in a teaching session is expected to exceed the course's capacity, the teaching session organisers may introduce an application procedure. The registration requirements and the application deadline will be announced in the annotated course catalogue or by other appropriate means. If the number of registered students exceeds the capacity of the teaching session or the session is overflowing and students cannot be referred to alternative events, at the request of the session organisers the relevant dean's office checks whether an additional teaching session can be set up. If this is not possible due to limited capacity, it is permissible to include only a limited number of applicants to ensure the proper running of the course. For this the teaching session organisers must carry out a suitable selection procedure according to the relevant dean's office guidelines. In compiling the

selection criteria it is important to prioritise students for whom admission to the teaching session is compulsory and who have a particular interest in the session. Such is particularly the case where according to the study plan a student already had claim to a place in the previous semester, but despite applying could not obtain one. Students who registered but were not admitted to a compulsory teaching session may request an attestation.

## **§ 12 Performance and participation certificates**

- (1) The module descriptions specify whether confirmations of completion (participation certificates and/or performance certificates) are required. Participation and performance certificates prove the proper pursuit of study and are usually a prerequisite for admission to module examinations.
- (2) Participation certificates document the regular and active participation in the teaching sessions. Regular attendance is defined as a student being present at all scheduled events of a single semester. Regular attendance will still be certified if the student has missed up to 20 per cent of scheduled days. If the number of absent days is higher, the instructor may grant the participation certificate upon fulfilment of requirements. Depending on the module description, active participation includes small tasks, such as written experimental protocols, contributions in seminars, or evidence of preparation for the practical. Participation certificates are issued by the instructor at the end of the event.
- (3) For the performance certificate, the successful completion and, if stipulated by the instructor, regular participation (Subparagraph 2) in the teaching sessions, are required. Successful completion is given upon an instructor's positive evaluation of ungraded individual course work (Subparagraph 4). If permitted by the module description, the instructor can also confirm successful participation in a teaching session based on the successful delivery of several pieces of course work. At the beginning of the teaching session, the instructor will announce the deadline for producing the work required for the performance assessment.
- (4) In particular, course work may be:
  - Written work
  - Presentations (with or without written work)
  - Work reports, protocols
  - Conducting experiments

- Literature reports or documentations

At the beginning of the teaching session, the instructor will announce the amount of work, its format and the period in which the work is to be performed. The criteria for awarding performance certificates should not be changed during an on-going semester to the disadvantage of the students. The instructor may allow a student to correct written work within a deadline.

### **§ 13 Course guidance; orientation event; course catalogue**

- (1) The example of a study plan (Appendix 3) refers students to a focused course of studies.
- (2) Students may use the academic advisory services of faculties affiliated with the Master's programme. Course guidance is carried out by academic advisors authorised by the faculties' study deans, and their names are posted on the notice board or announced by other suitable means. Academic advisors advise students in designing their course of study, their study methods and choice of teaching sessions. Academic advising services should be particularly sought:
  - at the beginning of the first semester;
  - upon failing exams and failed attempts to obtain the required performance certificates;
  - in case of difficulties with particular teaching sessions;
  - when changing degree programmes or universities.
- (3) In addition to the faculties' academic advisory services, students have access to the central course guidance service of the Goethe University. As a general guidance service it informs about study opportunities, content, structure and requirements of a programme and advises on personal difficulties related to studies.
- (4) All new students are invited to an orientation event held just before or at the start of their first semester. It provides information about the structure and overall design of the Master's programme and semester-specific issues. Here, students are given the opportunity to resolve issues related to the organisation of the programme.
- (5) In the final week of the preceding semester, participating faculties issue an annotated electronic or printed module and teaching session catalogue based on the programme's module descriptions and study plan. In particular, it contains information about the module coordinators, dates and deadlines for examinations and, if necessary, application procedures for teaching sessions. It

also contains specifications for individual modules and teaching sessions for students from other programmes.

#### **§ 14 Academic leadership and module coordination**

- (1) A member of the Interdisciplinary Neuroscience Master of Science programme's professoriate is appointed as academic director by the participating deans and assumes the academic management of the Master's programme.

In particular, the academic director has the following responsibilities:

- coordinating the teaching sessions and examinations offered by the participating faculties, in cooperation with the module coordinators;
- creating and update lists of examiners;
- evaluating the degree;
- nominating the module coordinators.

- (2) For each module of the Master's programme, the academic director appoints a module coordinator by mutual agreement with the study dean of the faculty responsible for the module. The module coordinator must belong to the professoriate or be a permanent academic member of that faculty, and teach in the Interdisciplinary Neuroscience Master of Science programme. They are responsible for the content of the modules and organisational tasks regulated by the programme's rules.

### **4. Section: Examination organization**

#### **§ 15 Examination board; examination office**

- (1) The faculty councils of the participating faculties form a joint examination board for the Master's programme.
- (2) The examination board comprises the academic director of the programme, the study dean of the relevant faculty and three other representatives of the professoriate, two student representatives from participating faculties, preferably enrolled for this programme, and two academic staff representatives from participating faculties. A deputy is elected for each member. The group majority must lie with the professoriate. At its inaugural meeting, the examination board elects a chairperson and vice-chairperson from the Interdisciplinary Neuroscience Master of Science's professoriate.

- (3) The members of the examination board together with a deputy are nominated by the respective groups of the participating faculty councils. The students' term of office is one year, for the other members it is two years. Re-election is permitted.
- (4) If a matter concerns a member of the examination board, their membership is suspended with respect to this matter, and they are represented by the deputy. This does not apply to purely organisational matters.
- (5) The chairperson shall conduct the business of the examination board. They call the examination board meetings and preside over all discussions and resolutions. Generally at least one examination board meeting is to be held each semester. A meeting is to be convened if demanded by at least three members of the examination board.
- (6) The examination board meets in private. It has a quorum if at least half of the members, including the chairperson or deputy chairperson, are present and the majority vote of the professors is guaranteed. Approval by the majority of attendees is required for resolutions. If votes are tied, the chairperson's vote decides. The resolutions of the examination board are to be entered in the minutes. Apart from that, the proceedings are governed by the rules of procedure for committees of the Goethe University.
- (7) For individual and recurring tasks, the examination board may delegate exclusive execution and decision-making to the chairperson. Members of the examination board and the candidate concerned have a right to appeal against such decisions. The chairperson of the examination board may delegate tasks to the examination office.
- (8) The members of the examination board and their deputies are subject to official secrecy. As long as they are not in public service, they are to be sworn to secrecy by the chairperson; they confirm this commitment with their signature that is placed on file.
- (9) The members of the examination board have the right to attend oral examinations as part of the audience.
- (10) The examination board may communicate orders, deadlines and other decisions in accordance with legally binding data protection rules by posting these at the examination office or by other appropriate means.
- (11) Negative decisions of the examination board or the chairperson are to be immediately communicated and justified in writing to the student, accompanied by information on how to appeal against the decision. The student should be given the opportunity to respond prior to the decision.



- (12) The examination office of the faculty responsible for the Master's degree takes charge of the organisation of the examinations within the programme. Since the Interdisciplinary Neuroscience Master of Science programme is in the responsibility of multiple faculties, the participating deans mutually agreed which dean is responsible for the Master's programme. This dean's office is responsible for establishing and supervising the Master's degree's examination office.
- (13) The faculty responsible for the programme may switch at the beginning of an academic year at the request of the ICN's decision-making body and with approval of the participating faculties.

### **§ 16 Responsibilities of the examination board**

- (1) The examination board is responsible for organising the examinations. It ensures compliance with the Master's programme regulations defined in this document. The examination board decides on all examination matters that are not transferred by order or statute to another body or committee or to the chairperson of the examination board.
- (2) The examination board is usually responsible for the following tasks:
- determining compliance with requirements for acceptance into the Master's programme;
  - setting examination periods and dates for module examinations;
  - setting registration deadlines for module examinations;
  - setting withdrawal deadlines;
  - appointing examiners;
  - organising the transfer of credits acquired outside the Interdisciplinary Neuroscience Master of Science programme;
  - proposing reforms of the programme and examinations to the faculty councils participating in the Master's programme;
  - deciding on appeals against the examination board chairperson's decisions.

### **§ 17 Examiners; assessors**

- (1) The professoriate, lecturers that offer or could offer teaching sessions in the examination subjects and academic members, when allocated teaching

assignments in neurosciences, are eligible to hold university examinations (§ 23 (3) of the HHG). Providing they consent, honorary professors, assistant lecturers, adjunct and retired professors, who teach the examination subjects, may be appointed as examiners.

- (2) Usually a module's examination is conducted by its instructors without special appointment by the examination board. If an organiser cannot hold an examination for compelling reasons, the examination board may appoint another examiner.
- (3) Written examination performances, which may not be repeated, are to be assessed by two examiners. Oral examinations are to be held by an examiner in the presence of an assessor. The Master's thesis must be assessed by at least two examiners.
- (4) Only a member or associate of the Goethe University who has passed the Master's examination or an equivalent examination (for example a diploma examination) may be appointed as an assessor. The chairperson of the examination board appoints the assessor. The chairperson may allow the examiner to appoint an assessor.
- (5) Examiners and assessors are sworn to secrecy. § 15 (8) sentence 2 applies accordingly.

## **5. Section: Examination requirements and procedures**

### **§ 18 Admission to the Master's examination**

- (1) Students must submit a completed registration form for the Master's examination to the examination office at the latest upon registering for the first module's examination at the Goethe University. This must be accompanied by:
  - a) a statement as to whether the student has already failed or lost her or his right to appeal in a final examination in a neuroscience or related Master's degree or diploma course at a university within the scope of ECTS, or whether she or he is in a pending examination procedure.
  - b) if applicable, evidence of examination performances or course work that are to be incorporated into the degree
  - c) if applicable, proof of payment of examination fees in accordance with § 38

- (2) The chairperson of the examination board decides on admission. Non-admission may only be decided by the examination board. Admission to the master's examination must be denied if,
  - a) the student does not provide the evidence referred to in Subparagraph 1;
  - b) the student has irrevocably failed the final exam or lost the right to appeal in the same or a related programme at a university within the scope of ECTS, or is pursuing such a programme without having yet completed the module examination.
- (3) At the request of the student, the examination board may decide on exceptions in specific cases.
- (4) The chairperson of the examination board shall notify the student in writing about a rejection of admission. This must be justified and accompanied by legal information on how to appeal against the decision.

### **§ 19 Scope of the Master's examination**

The Master's examination includes:

- the module examination of the compulsory module "Introduction to Neuroscience"
- the module examinations of the four elective modules in accordance with § 9 Subparagraph 2
- the Master's thesis

as well as the successful completion of the compulsory modules "Methods in Neuroscience" and "Current Concepts in Neuroscience".

### **§ 20 Examination date and registration procedure**

- (1) Module examinations adhere to the period and content of the corresponding modules.
- (2) The examination dates for the module examinations, their registration deadlines, the type of registration procedure, and the withdrawal deadlines are determined by the examination board in consultation with the examiners. The examination office informs the students about the examination schedule as early as possible, but no later than four weeks before the examination dates, including the time and location of the examination, registration and withdrawal deadlines, as well as the names of the participating examiners, by posting on a notice board or by other suitable means. If the examination schedule must be

changed for compelling reasons, a revision of the date is only possible with permission of the examination board's chairperson.

- (3) Students must register within the deadline and in the required format for each module examination, otherwise they are excluded from taking the exam. In justified exceptions, upon request of the student the chairperson of the examination board may decide on an extension for registering for a module examination.
- (4) A student may only register for a module examination or take the module examination if she or he has been admitted to the Master's examination, has not conclusively failed the relevant module examination, and has produced the required participation and, if necessary, performance certificates for the module stipulated by the module description. Students undertaking a semester of leave may not take exams.
- (5) If the registration for a module examination is not withdrawn within the withdrawal period, the missed examination performance will be graded "insufficient" (5.0)

#### **§ 21 Omission and withdrawal**

- (1) The module exam performance will be evaluated as "insufficient" (5.0), if the student does not attend the fixed examination without valid reason or withdraws during the examination without a valid reason. The same applies when a written examination performance is not submitted by the predetermined deadline.
- (2) The reason for withdrawal or absence has to be immediately communicated in writing with substantiating evidence to the examination board. In the case of illness, a doctor's certificate must be provided. In justifiable cases of doubt, a detailed medical certificate or an official doctor's certificate is required. Inability to continue the examination occurring during the examination must be communicated immediately to the examiner or proctor. The obligation to report and substantiate the reasons to the examination board remains unaffected. Deadlines for registering for examinations, repetition of examinations, reasons for missed examinations, and compliance with handling periods for graded work, are equally applicable for the illness of the student as for the illness of a child for whom she or he is generally the sole carer, or a close relative (parent, grandparent, spouse and life partner) for whom she or he is generally the sole carer. The chairperson of the examination board decides whether the reason will be accepted. If the reason is accepted, a new date for the examination is set.

- (3) In the case of accepted withdrawal or absence, the examination credits already acquired for sub-modules will be counted.

## **§ 22 Disadvantage balancing**

- (1) The examination procedure takes into consideration the nature and severity of a disability or chronic illness. The nature and severity of a disability or impairment must be verified by a doctor's certificate; in cases of doubt, an official doctor's certificate may be required. If the student proves, based on the medical certificate, that she or he is unable to perform the examination in the intended form, in whole or in part, due to her or his physical disability or chronic illness, then this disadvantage is to be compensated by appropriate measures, such as an extension of the turnaround time or by an alternative design of the examination procedure. The same applies for the confirmation of course completion. The compensation for a disadvantage balancing must be requested in writing. The application should be made no later than the registration for the examination.
- (2) Decisions according to Subparagraph 1 are made by the examiner, or in cases of doubt, by the examination board in agreement with the examiner.

## **§ 23 Deception and breach of regulations**

- (1) If the student attempts to influence the result of her or his examination or course work by cheating or using unauthorised aids, the examination or course work will be graded "insufficient" (5.0). In particular, bringing unauthorised aids into the examination room or submitting a false declaration under §§ 25 (6), 27 (10) is considered an attempt at cheating.
- (2) A student who disrupts the orderly conduct of the examination will be excluded from continuing the examination by the examiner or proctor, usually after a warning; in this case, the examination performance will be graded "insufficient" (5.0). In serious cases, the examination board may exclude the student from partaking in further examinations.
- (3) If a student has by culpable conduct unjustly participated in an examination, the examination board responsible may deem the examination performance as failed ("insufficient" (5.0)).
- (4) Within a period of two weeks the student may request in writing that the decision is reviewed by the relevant examination board according to Subparagraph 1, sentence 1 and Subparagraph 2.

- (5) Negative decisions by the examination board or chairperson are to be immediately communicated to the student in writing, to be justified and accompanied by legal information on how to appeal against the decision.

#### **§ 24 Accrediting modules and performance records**

- (1) When changing from a modular course of study at a university in the Federal Republic of Germany, credit is generally given for completed modules. Credit will not be given for modules that to a large extent do not provide the same learning and qualification outcomes. Here, overall consideration and evaluation of the content, scope and requirements are made, not a schematic comparison. The burden of proof for the lack of equivalence lies with the examination board.
- (2) Subparagraph 1 shall apply accordingly to the crediting of modules from modularised programs as well as individual performance certificates from non-modularised programs at foreign universities. At the same time, the agreements of equivalence approved by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and the Arts and the German Rectors' Conference as well as agreements within university partnership contracts are to be observed. If agreements of equivalence are not available, the examination board decides. When doubts exist about the equivalence, the Central Office for Foreign Education is to be heeded.
- (3) Supplementary work may be required for accrediting, particularly if important areas of previously acquired skills are incomplete or the module in question yielded less CPs than would be credited in a degree at the Goethe University.
- (4) Course work and examination performances from a Bachelor of Science degree may only be accredited, if they were not a requirement for admission to this Master's program.
- (5) Course work and examination performances acquired during study abroad may also be accredited if they were acquired during a semester of leave.
- (6) Where examination performances are accredited, the grades – as far as the grading systems are comparable – are to be transferred and included in the calculation of the final grade. In the case of incomparable grading systems, the endorsement "passed" will be recorded. Transferred credits will be marked in the certificate.
- (7) A legal right to accreditation exists, when changing a subject or a university, or after study abroad, as long as the conditions are fulfilled and the creditable work is not older than five years at the time of accreditation. Accrediting older examination performances is decided by the examination board under consideration of the current state of knowledge. The student must submit the

documents required for accreditation. There is no claim for being accredited for parts of work from uncompleted modules.

- (8) A maximum of 80 CP may be gained. The Master's thesis may not be accredited.
- (9) Students who change their subject or university are placed into the appropriate semester of the Interdisciplinary Neuroscience Master of Science programme at the Goethe University based on their accepted credits.
- (10) Universally valid decisions about accrediting are made by the examination board; accreditation in individual cases is decided by the chairperson, if necessary in consultation with an examiner of the subject.

## **6. Section: Implementation of the module examinations**

### **§ 25 Module examinations**

- (1) Module examinations may be repeated twice and are graded.
- (2) A module examination comprises either a module completion exam or accumulation of several module examination parts. The nature of the module examination and the examination format can be found in the module descriptions.
- (3) A module completion exam usually involves the entire subject area covered by the module. In the case of cumulative module examinations, the contents and methods of the sub-modules are examined in the examination part. The examination content derives from the module descriptions.
- (4) All examination parts of cumulative module examinations must be passed.
- (5) The examination language is usually English. Examinations may also be taken in German upon agreement of all involved in the examination.
- (6) Take-home written work is to be produced by the student in accordance with the rules of good scientific practice. When handing the work in, the student must assure in writing that she or he wrote it on their own and that all sources and aids used are acknowledged in the work. Further, it has to be declared that the work has not yet been used as a performance assessment in another programme.
- (7) Protocols (graded and ungraded) are to be written in the format of a scientific publication in the respective area of neuroscience: usually amounting to 15-30 pages.

- (8) The result of a written module examination is recorded by the examiner in an examination protocol, which she or he immediately forwards with the examination to the examination office. In addition to the examination result, the name of the module or module part, the examination format, date and length are to be recorded in the examination protocol. Furthermore, incidences potentially affecting the examination results, in particular those according to § 23 Subparagraph 1 und Subparagraph 2, are to be recorded.

### **§ 26 Written examinations under supervision**

- (1) Supervised written examinations involve answering questions or solving problems. In a supervised written examination the student must prove that she or he has mastered the relevant subject area and can use this knowledge to solve problems independently, in limited time and with limited aids.
- (2) Multiple-choice questions are permitted in supervised written examinations. Multiple-choice questions are answered by selecting single or multiple correct answer(s). The answer to a multiple-choice question may not be graded with less than 0 points.
- (3) If multiple-choice questions make up more than 25 per cent of the overall score, the following regulations are to be followed when preparing the list of questions and grading the supervised written examinations:
- The list of questions and answers is to be drawn up by at least two authorized examiners, one of whom must belong to the professoriate.
  - The conditions for passing the written exam must be announced to the students at the latest upon assigning the work.
- (4) Supervised written examinations last 45 minutes provided no other regulation has been specified in the module description.
- (5) Supervised written examinations are usually graded by the examiner. A failed supervised written examination repeated for the last time is to be additionally graded by a second examiner. If the grades differ, the grade for the supervised written examination is calculated from the arithmetic mean of both grades. Grading the supervised written examinations should not take longer than 4 weeks.

### **§ 27 Master's thesis**

- (1) The Master's thesis should demonstrate that the student is capable of using scientific methods to work in depth and comprehensively on a subject within a set timeframe in accordance with the goals in § 2. The topic must be designed



such that it can be completed within the time limit. The supervisor of the Master's thesis is usually the supervisor of the "Methods in Neuroscience" module. The examination board decides on exceptions. If the supervisor leaves the relevant faculty and cannot supervise the Master's thesis, a new supervisor is appointed by the examination board.

- (2) The workload of the thesis is 30 CP. The deadline for submitting the Master's thesis is six months after the day the thesis topic is assigned (Subparagraph 6). The deadline for submission is made once the topic of the Master's thesis is assigned.
- (3) Students with 75 CP may apply to start the Master's thesis. The chairperson of the examination board decides on admission to the Master's thesis.
- (4) The Master's thesis topic may be assigned and supervised by a professor or lecturer from one of the faculties participating in the programme. This person must also be participating in the programme. Upon application by the students, further persons according to § 17 (1) may be appointed to supervise the project. The supervisor of the Master's thesis project is the primary reviewer of the Master's thesis. The chairperson of the examination board appoints the second reviewer, who must be a professor or lecturer participating in the Master's programme and belong to the participating faculties. The supervisor must ensure the availability of equipment or facilities as required to carry out the Master's thesis project.
- (5) With the approval of the examination board's chairperson, the Master's thesis project can be carried out outside the faculties participating in the Master's programme (external Master's thesis, for example in other faculties, at Max Planck Institutes or other research institutions), as long as the supervision by local professors, junior professors or other qualified (usually qualified to assume professorship) scientists is secured. The primary reviewer of an external Master's thesis is the supervising scientist of the relevant institution. Before the Master's thesis project is assigned, the chairperson of the examination board appoints a professor from a faculty participating in the Master's programme as a second reviewer. The second reviewer must also be participating in the programme.
- (6) The student may propose a topic for the Master's thesis project in consultation with the supervisor. The topic is assigned by the supervisor through the chairperson of the examination board. The chairperson of the examination board ensures that the student receives a topic and the required supervision on time. The topic and date it was assigned are to be recorded.
- (7) The Master's thesis must be written in English.

- (8) The assigned topic may only be changed once and only within the first two months of the time available. The content of the new topic must differ from that of the old topic. If a new topic is assigned for the Master's thesis project following a withdrawal relating to sentence 1, the new topic must not be changed.
- (9) If the first deadline cannot be met for reasons outside a student's control (for example illness of the student or her or his child), the chairperson of the relevant examination board may extend the deadline if requested by the student before the first submission deadline, and if approved by the supervisor. For delays over 50% of the allocated project time, the chairperson of the examination board may refuse the extension. If the delay is more than 50% of the project time, the student may withdraw from the Master's thesis project and work on a new topic.
- (10) Three printed and bound copies of the Master's thesis must be handed in or posted to the examination office before the deadline. The submission date must be recorded, for posted copies the date of the postmark is decisive. The student must state in the Master's thesis that she or he independently wrote the thesis without using unreferenced sources and aids. It must further be stated that the work has not yet been used for performance assessment in another degree.
- (11) The Master's thesis must be examined and graded in writing by the primary reviewer and the second reviewer. The Master's thesis must be assessed by both reviewers without delay, at the latest four weeks after its submission. If the Master's thesis is graded "insufficient" (5.0) by only one of the two reviewers, or if the two grades differ by more than 2.0, a third assessment must be obtained within two weeks. The overall grade of the Master's thesis is calculated from the arithmetic mean of the individual grades according to § 28 (4). However, for cases described in the first half of sentence 3, the grade 4.0 ("sufficient") is set if the arithmetic mean of the individual grades is above 4.0, but two of the reviewers graded the thesis with 4.0 or better.

## ***7. Section: Assessment of examination performance; compiling the grades; overall grade***

### **§ 28 Assessment of examination performance**

- (1) Assessment is always based on the individual performance of the student.
- (2) The following grades are to be used for individual examination performances:

Grade 1	“very good”	=	outstanding performance
Grade 2	“good”	=	performance clearly above average requirements
Grade 3	“satisfactory”	=	average performance
Grade 4	“sufficient”	=	performance, despite defects, sufficient for the requirements
Grade 5	“insufficient”	=	performance that due to considerable defects is not sufficient for the requirements

To differentiate assessments of the examination performance the grades can be raised or lowered by 0.3 points, the grades 0.7, 4.3, 4.7 and 5.3 are ruled out.

- (3) The grades for the individual examination performances are set by the relevant examiner.
- (4) If a module examination comprises several module exam parts, the overall grade for the module is derived from the average of different weighted scores (CP component of the course). Only numbers to the first decimal point are taken into account; all other numbers are omitted without rounding up. The grades are then:

with an average up to and including 1.5	very good
with an average over 1.5 up to and including 2.5	good
with an average over 2.5 up to and including 3.5	satisfactory
with an average over 3.5 up to and including 4.0	sufficient
with an average over 4.0	insufficient

If only one module exam performance is required, and this is assessed differently by two or more examiners, then the overall grade for the module is derived from the average of the individual grades.

- (5) For the Master’s examination the overall grade is derived from calculating the average of different weighted CP of the individual modules. The Master’s thesis carried double weighting. Subparagraph 4 applies to the calculation of the overall grade.
- (6) The overall grade is supplemented by an ECTS grade that is recorded in the Diploma Supplement. The ECTS assessment scale takes into account statistical aspects of the assessment as follows:

- A = the grade gained by the best 10% of those passing a Master's exam
- B = the grade gained by the next 25%
- C = the grade gained by the next 30%
- D = the grade gained by the next 25%
- E = the grade gained by the next 10%

The calculation is carried out by the examination office based on statistical evaluation of examination results. This should be based on a time period of 5 years. A minimal size for the reference group should be defined in order to obtain reliable information. As long as relevant databanks are still under construction, the examination board decides on an appropriate procedure to determine the relative overall grade.

- (7) When all the module grades are "very good", the overall rating "with distinction" is given.

#### **§ 29 Passing and failing; disclosure of the grades**

- (1) An individual examination is passed when graded "sufficient" or better.
- (2) A module is successfully completed when the module examination is passed or for modules without a module examination the confirmation of module completion stipulated by the module description have been produced.
- (3) The Master's examination is passed, when the compulsory modules relevant to the examination, the elective modules and the Master's thesis were graded at least "sufficient" and altogether at least 120 CP were achieved according to these regulations.
- (4) If the student did not pass a module examination, she or he receives a written statement by the chairperson of the examination board specifying whether the module examination may be repeated, indicating the deadline and, if necessary, the scope of the retake. If a retake is no longer possible, the Master exam is ultimately defined as failed. The examination board may decide that the examination grades are released within the university community, while safeguarding legitimate interests of those concerned and general data protection regulations,. The examination board also defines the procedure. Subparagraph 6 remains unaffected.
- (5) The chairperson of the examination board must issue a written notification of a conclusive failing of a Master's thesis or a module examination. It is accompanied by legal information on rights to appeal.

- (6) If the student has definitively failed the Master's examination, the student must be ex-matriculated. Upon presentation of the certificate of ex-matriculation to the examination office, she or he may request a certificate containing the passed module examinations, their grades, the Credit Points acquired and a statement that the Master's examination was definitively failed.

## **8. Section: Repetition of exams; failing the whole course**

### **§ 30 Repetition of exams**

- (1) Passed module examinations may not be repeated.
- (2) Failed module examinations may be repeated twice at most. The elective module may be changed after taking the failed attempt into account.
- (3) A failed Master's thesis may be repeated once. A different topic is assigned. The assignment must be made within 6 months after notification of the first result. The examination board decides on exceptions. When repeating a Master's thesis, a change of topic is only permitted if the student did not use this opportunity during the preparation of the first Master's thesis. In all other respects the regulations for the Master's thesis (§ 26) also apply to the repetition of the Master's thesis.
- (4) Failed attempts at equivalent modules or sub modules within a different degree course at the Goethe University are to be taken into account.
- (5) A failed module examination or sub-module examination must be repeated at the next scheduled examination date. When admission to a module requires a pass from a previous semester's module, the faculty offers a first retake before the beginning of the respective semester.
- (6) The examination is failed if the retake deadline is not kept. The examination board will decide on exceptions by applying § 21 (2).
- (7) In the case of cumulative module examinations, only the failed module exam parts are to be repeated.

### **§ 31 Failing the whole degree**

- (1) The Master's examination is conclusively failed if:
  - a) one module exam was conclusively graded as "unsatisfactory" (5.0) or counts as "unsatisfactory" (5.0);

- b) the Master's thesis also after repetition was graded as "unsatisfactory" (5.0) or counts as "unsatisfactory" (5.0);
  - c) the entitlement to an examination for example due to exceeding the repeat deadline is cancelled.
- (2) If the Master's examination is conclusively failed the student is provided with notification with information about all the examination performances and the reasons for not passing the overall examination. It is accompanied by legal information on rights to appeal.

## **9. Section: Examination certificate; degree certificate and diploma supplement**

### **§ 32 Examination certificate**

Within four weeks of disclosing the last examination results, a certificate in German and English will be issued confirming passing Master's examination. The certificate specifies the modules attended and the grades obtained, the theme and grade of the Master's thesis, the overall grade and the total CP gained. The certificate is signed by the chair of the examination board and has the seal of the Goethe University. The certificate bears the date of the day when the last course or examination was completed. Grades and CP gained in extra non-compulsory courses can be added in a special section of the certificate, or as an Appendix to the certificate.

### **§ 33 MSc degree certificate**

- (1) At the same time as the examination certificate the student receives a degree certificate with the same date as the examination certificate. This proves the awarding of the academic degree. The certificate is in German and English.
- (2) The certificate is signed by the study dean or dean of the relevant faculty and bears the seal of the Goethe University.
- (3) The academic title can first be used after handing over of the certificate.

### **§ 34 Diploma supplement**

Issued with both certificates is a Diploma supplement in German and English, which contains information about the programme's contents, the study process, and about the academic and professional qualification gained. The diploma supplement bears the date of the examination certificate.

**10. Section:      *Invalidity of the Master's examination;  
examination records; objections and appeals; examination fees***

**§ 35    Invalidity of examinations**

- (1)    If the student has cheated in an examination performance and should this fact first come to light after handing out the examination certificate, the grade of the examination performance may be corrected in accordance with § 28 (2). If necessary, the module examination may be declared "insufficient" and the Master examination "failed". The same applies to the Master's thesis. The student must be given the opportunity to make a statement.
- (2)    If the requirements for taking the module examination were not fulfilled, without the student intending to deceive, and if this fact becomes known only after the examination certificate has been issued, this shortcoming is corrected by her or his passing the examination. If the student gained admission to the module examination by intentionally deceitful means, the module examination may be declared "insufficient" and the Master's examination "failed". Subparagraph 1 sentence 3 shall apply accordingly.
- (3)    An incorrect examination certificate is to be taken away and if necessary a new one is to be issued. The Diploma-supplement and the degree certificate are to be taken away with the incorrect examination certificate. If the Master's examination is declared "failed", the awarded degree must be withdrawn. A decision under Subparagraph 1 and sentence 2 of Subparagraph 2 is not possible after a period of five years from the date stated on the certificate.

**§ 36    Access to examination records; retention periods**

- (1)    After every module examination and upon completion of the entire process, the student may gain access to her or his examination records upon request.
- (2)    The examination records are to be administered by the examination office. The retention period for examination papers is stipulated by § 23 of the Hessian Matriculation Regulations (HImmaVO).

**§ 37    Objections and appeals**

- (1)    An objection may be raised against decisions of the chairperson of the examination board. It must be submitted to the chairperson of the relevant examination board within four weeks after the decision is announced. The examination board decides on the objection. If it does not rectify the objection,

the chairperson of the examination board issues a justified notice of rejection, which must provide legal information on the rights to appeal.

- (2) Appeals against examination decisions and the examination procedure must be raised and justified in writing to the chairperson of the examination board (examination office) within one month, as long as legal information on the rights to appeal has been given, but if not, within one year of their announcement. If the examination board, if necessary after a statement from the participating examiners, does not rectify the appeal, the chairperson issues the decision about the appeal. The decision must be justified and issued with legal information on the rights to appeal.

### **§ 38 Examination fees**

- (1) The examination fees for the Master's examination including the Master's thesis are 100,- Euro.
- (2) The fees under Subparagraph 1 are due in two equal instalments, the first upon applying for admission to the Master's examination, the second upon admission to the Master's thesis project. The payment of the examination fees must be verified by the examination office.
- (3) The presidium of Goethe University may suspend the levying of examination fees, providing additional means to improve the quality of teaching and study conditions are available.

## **11. Section: Final provisions**

### **§ 39 Taking effect**

The regulations for the Master's degree in Interdisciplinary Neuroscience take effect after approval of the Presidium of the Goethe University on the day following their publication in the UniReport of the Goethe University.



## ***Appendix 1: List of elective modules comprising the Master's programme***

### Subject areas A: Basic Neuroscience

- Cellular and Molecular Basis of Signal Transfer in the Nervous System (FB15)
- Auditory Neuroscience (FB15)
- Molecular Control of Neuronal Differentiation (MPI Hirnforschung & FB15)
- Functional Anatomy of the Retina (MPI Hirnforschung & FB15)
- Clock Mechanisms in Mammalian Neurons and Neuroendocrine Cells (FB16)
- Cellular and Molecular Biology of the Circadian System (FB16)
- Neurobiology of the Nematode *Caenorhabditis elegans* (FB14)
- Neuropharmacology (FB14)
- Cellular Physiology of Dopaminergic Neurons (FB16 & FB12)  
Neurophysiology and Behaviour (FB 15)
- Developmental Neurobiology (FB 15)
- The Neurovascular Interface (FB 16)
- Embryonic and Adult Neurogenesis (FB 16)
- Electrophysiological Recordings in Freely Behaving Animals (FB 16)
- Neuroscience of Visual Perception (Ernst Strüngmann Institute & FB 15)
- External practical module "Basic Neuroscience"

### Subject area B: Clinical Neuroscience

- Aging and Neurodegeneration (FB16)
- Physiology and Pharmacology of Pain (FB16)
- Human Neuroanatomy and Neurohistology (FB16)

- Plasticity in Hippocampus – Morphology, Physiology, and Clinical Relevance (FB16)
- Motor Cortex Neurophysiology (FB16)
- Brain Damage and Neuroprotection (FB16)
- Clinical Paediatric Neurology (FB16)
- Clinical Neuroimaging (FB16)
- Auditory Neuroscience (FB 16)
- External practical module “Clinical Neuroscience”

Subject area C: Cognitive and Computational Neuroscience

- Modern Non-invasive Methods in Human Cognition Research (FB16)
- Cognitive development across the life span and neuroimaging (FB 5)
- Modelling and Simulation in Neuroscience (FB12)
- Virtual Hippocampus – Introduction to Computational Neuroscience (FB 16)
- Studying Human Cognition with Magnetoencephalography (FB 16)
- Cognitive Neuroscience – Higher Cognitive Functions (FB 05)
- Cognitive and Sensorimotor Aspects of Speech (FB 16)
- External practical module “Cognitive and Computational Neuroscience”

Subject area 0: Extraordinary themes

- Free-choice studies