

Rapid decision from the president of the University of Bremen in accordance with § 81 para. 6 BremHG

on April 14, 2020, regarding

Examinations in the summer semester 2020

Please note that only the original German version of this text is legally binding.

Reason for Rapid Decision

Since March 16, 2020, the examination operations at the University of Bremen have been put on hold. Initially, examinations in the winter semester 2019/20, especially make-up examinations, were affected by this. With the start of the online teaching period on April 20, 2020 – at the latest – the students must receive transparent information regarding the examination requirements in the summer semester 2020 modules and classes taken by them. It is therefore necessary that the conditions for the examination operations be determined as quickly as possible for the period of the corona pandemic and in case of possible further contact restrictions. The conditions must in all cases be determined prior to the start of the online teaching period.

As the next Academic Senate meeting is on April 20, 2020, a rapid decision by the president of the university is necessary.

Part 1: Preamble

In order to adhere to the federal virus protection measures based on the corona pandemic, the related contact restrictions, and also to maintain the health of university members, the University of Bremen will comprehensively switch the teaching in the coming summer semester 2020 (SuSe 2020) to online classes and further digitally supported processes. This also affects examinations in the summer semester 2020 that require presence on site. Individual parts of the *general part* of the Examination Regulations (AT)¹ and the subject-specific Examination Regulations for the courses and/or subjects may not or only partially be able to be applied under the current circumstances and there may be a need for a temporary expansion of said regulations and/or a framework so that flexible and subject-relevant decisions can be made.

In the following, this rapid decision document will contain a framework for the examinations of the affected classes and modules in the summer semester 2020. Deviation from the already published examination regulations (AT, subject-specific Examination Regulations) can take place within said framework. The aim is to still offer students of the University of Bremen a structured degree and the acquisition of credit point in a qualitatively and legally secured manner. Additionally, the Rapid Decision Document is to support the decision-making processes of teaching staff and especially faculty examination boards.

As the situations in the degree courses and subjects at the University of Bremen vary greatly and the students are also at different points in their degree and the related examinations within the frame of a single degree subject and/or course, it is the case that the examination board responsible for each degree subject and course must specify this Rapid Decision Document with its subject-related expertise. This process may be supported by recommendations from the Academic Committee.

Scope of Application

This document applies to all examinations that are offered within the summer semester 2020 period, including examinations that were not able to be held in the winter semester 2019/20 due to the coronavirus pandemic (so-called make-up examinations).

The following regulations also apply to the law degree course with the aim of completing the first state examination in law. This applies as long as the senator for law and/or the Law Examination Office do not publish any other regulations.

The Rapid Decision Document is valid with immediate effect and until September 30, 2020.

¹ "General Part of the Bachelor Examination Regulations of the University of Bremen" and "General Part of the Master Examination Regulations of the University of Bremen" dated January 27, 2010, last amended on May 22, 2019.

Part 2: Additional Regulations to the AT Regulations for the Summer Semester 2020

1. The catalogue of examination forms, of which some cannot take place due to contact restrictions and which are defined in the general parts of the bachelor and master Examination Regulations (hereafter AT)² and the subject-specific Examination Regulations, may be expanded by means of additional examination forms, also digitally supported forms, in the summer semester. This serves the purpose of replacing examinations forms that cannot be carried out due to the contact restrictions. The decision regarding the expansion of examination forms lies with the responsible examination board acting on a proposal by the person responsible for the degree course³.
2. All oral examinations in the summer semester will generally take place without the presence of university staff and students due to the contact prohibitions and in order to protect university members. This applies unless the examination candidate objects to the non-inclusion of university staff and students. In such a case, § 9 para. 1 AT applies.
3. Admission requirements for modules⁴ that are a prerequisite for the registration for an examination and can currently not be fulfilled due to the contact prohibitions or due to an examination not being able to take place in the winter semester 2019/20 can be abandoned by means of an individual request addressed to the examination board. The circumstance that the issuing of degree certificates⁵ requires the completion of a bachelor's or master's examination⁶ remains unchanged.
4. The following applies to all digitally supported oral examinations: Only systems for which the University of Bremen has a license may be utilized (a current list can be found here: <https://www.medienstelle.uni-bremen.de/>)⁷. All participants must present official proof of ID as a means of identification if asked to do so. Recording of the examination is not allowed. The right to document the examination by means of minutes remains unchanged.⁸
5. The decisions made by the examination board that affect the degree course or subject in their entirety must be documented in writing and be suitably published within the university. This will be carried out by the examination office⁹.
6. With regard to make-up examinations (e.g. from the winter semester 2019/20), which were intended to be carried after / for which the deadline was after March 12, 2020, the lack of a recorded grade will be recognized as a withdrawal from the examination. The deadlines as per § 21 para. 1 AT will be extended by one semester. Participation in the make-up examination is in this case possible without being enrolled for the summer semester.

² This mainly applies to §§ 8 and 9 AT and the examination forms defined in the relevant § and attachments of the subject-specific Examination Regulations. Amendments of the examination forms as per § 5 para. 8 AT may also take place; see *Implementation Aids* – part 3 of this document.

³ The person responsible for the degree course must coordinate and collect the proposals from the modules and/or classes. Degree subjects or courses, for which this role has not been explicitly named or for which the responsible person cannot carry out the coordination task, should allow for this coordination to be carried out via the deans' office.

⁴ This applies to the modules Bachelor's Thesis and Master's Thesis; the only modules for which the admission requirements can be defined in the subject-specific Examination Regulations. The prerequisites for examinations as per § 5 para. 10, which are to be fulfilled **within** the module due to safety reasons, remain unchanged.

⁵ cf. § 25 AT.

⁶ As per § 7 AT.

⁷ See <https://www.medienstelle.uni-bremen.de/videokonferenz/index.php>

⁸ cf. § 9 para. 2 AT and § 27 AT.

⁹ <https://www.uni-bremen.de/zpa/>

7. Generally, it is valid that for each decision made that the basic comparability of examination conditions must be given and that equal opportunities and academic feasibility are guaranteed in terms of the technical requirements and organization of the examination. The decisions must be made in accordance with the module's and degree course's competence aims. The workload stated in the module description for the examination preparation and carrying out of the examination must be adhered to. The students must be informed of the changes to examination modalities as early as possible by the teaching staff.

Part 3: Implementation Aids for Teaching Staff and Students

1. On qualitative and legal aspects of digitally supported examinations

Digitally supported examinations are not only challenging in terms of didactical conceptualization of the examinations but also in terms of technical implementation and the adherence to legal requirements (especially in terms of equal opportunities and data protection). In order to fulfil the needs of the examiners and the students, the vice president academic is currently working on guidelines for working with various software, for which we have licenses, and comments on digitally supported examination processes.

2. Carrying out examinations – aspects of examination administration

There will neither be changes made to the Examination Regulations, nor to the modeling in FlexNow for the carrying out of examinations in the summer semester, as it does not align with the short-term application and heterogeneity of the cases and also does not correspond with the available time and staff resources.

Carrying out of examinations and the connected documentation of performance will also take place for changed teaching and examination forms in the frame of the planned examination types, i.e.

- a) Documentation of *one* grade from module examinations (or documentation of “pass” or “fail” for non-graded examinations);
- b) Documentation of *one* total grade made up of several parts of a combined examination (or documentation of “pass” or “fail” for non-graded combined examinations);
- c) Documentation of two or more grades corresponding to the number of partial examinations (or documentation of “pass” or “fail” for non-graded partial examinations)¹⁰.

¹⁰ These examination types are stated in the attachments of each of the subject-specific Examination Regulations and are shortened there as follows: Module examination = MP, combined examination = KP, partial examination = TP. Generally, the amount of graded work (graded = PL) and non-graded work (non-graded = SL) that is required for each examination type is also stated.

3. Examination types and registration

Should multi-part graded work (partial, combined, portfolio examinations) be replaced by single graded work, agreement from the examination board is required. Should single examination parts be modelled in the software then the students must register for each of the modelled examination parts of a module. The result will then be entered into each of the graded examination parts as the same grade or “pass” or “fail” will be entered into the non-graded parts. The above also applies to modules that cross over several semesters.

4. Graded and non-graded examinations

It is not possible to replace graded module examinations (regardless of the type) with non-graded examinations, as this endangers the issuing of degree certificates.

5. Official stamps and proof of performance organized by hand

Should proof of performance documents¹¹ not be able to be signed and stamped as intended due to operational restrictions based on the coronavirus protection measures, it is also possible in urgent cases that teaching staff members send a (digitally) signed proof of performance document to the responsible examination office. In such a case, the document must be sent from the work email address of the teaching staff members. It is not sufficient for students to send the document.

¹¹ This affects proof of performance documents that are issued on paper and must be stamped by the faculty. This generally comprises work from the general studies field at the University of Bremen or work that is recognized as being general studies.