

Examination Regulations for the international Master's Program in Computational Neuroscience at the Humboldt University of Berlin and the Technical University of Berlin

of 26th September 2005

On the basis of § 74 sub-sec. 1 in connection with § 71 sub-sec. 1 no. 1 of the Law on universities in the Land of Berlin (Berlin Higher Education Act, *Berliner Hochschulgesetz – BerlHG*), as amended by the Amendment Act of 2nd December 2004, the Joint Committee of the Charité University Medicine Berlin, the Department of Biology-Chemistry-Pharmacy of the Free University of Berlin, the Mathematical-Natural Science Faculty I of the Humboldt University of Berlin and Faculty IV – Electrical Engineering and Computer Science of the Technical University of Berlin has issued the following Examination Regulations.

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I. General Part

§ 1 – Scope of application

These Examination Regulations govern the examination matters of the international Master's program in Computational Neuroscience of the Free University of Berlin, the Humboldt University of Berlin and the Technical University of Berlin.

§ 2 – Purpose of the Master's examination

The Master's examination shall serve to determine whether the students have reached the study objectives formulated in the Study Regulations.

§ 3 – Academic degree

On the basis of the passed Master's examination, the academic degree of "Master of Science" will be jointly awarded by the Free University of Berlin, the Humboldt University of Berlin and the Technical University of Berlin.

§ 4 – Beginning of studies

The program will start in the winter semester.

§ 5 – Structure of the program

(1) The standard period of study is four study semesters. Vacation semesters in accordance with the Regulations of the Technical University of Berlin on the students' rights and duties (*OTU*) will not be taken into account.

(2) The Master's examination will be taken in the form of study-accompanying module examinations and a Master thesis. Normally, the Master thesis will be written in the fourth semester.

§ 6 – Examination Board

(1) The Examination Board (EB) of the study program "Computational Neuroscience" will be responsible for all questions relating to these Examination Regulations as well as for all resulting tasks and decisions in examination matters, in particular for

1. the selection of applicants pursuant to §7 ZO (*Zulassungsordnung* = Admission Regulations),

2. the organization of the examinations,
3. the recognition of study and examination achievements,
4. the preparation of lists of examiners and associate examiners,
5. the decision pursuant to § 10 sub-sec. 3 on equivalent study or examination achievements for students who, due to physical handicap or impairment, are not able to provide study and examination achievements in the required form.

The Examination Board may, by resolution, revocably transfer responsibilities to its chairwoman or chairman. The person concerned may raise objections to any decisions made on the basis of a transfer, which will be decided upon by the Examination Board. Members of the Examination Board cannot perform any responsibilities of this board, if they themselves are involved in the examination matter.

(2) Decisions reached by the Examination Board will be communicated to the Examination Office of the Technical University of Berlin, in so far as this is required for its work or affects third parties' rights. The Examination Office will inform the person concerned of these decisions. The person concerned shall be given opportunity to be heard in accordance with due process of law.

(3) The members of the Examination Board are allowed to be present at examinations as well as at the discussion of the examination results, and to fully inform themselves about the compliance with the Examination Regulations. They are not regarded as public pursuant to § 11 sub-sec. 4.

(4) The Joint Committee with decision-making power for the Master's program in Computational Neuroscience (*GKmE CNS*) appoints the Examination Board by selecting

- three professors as members as well as one professor as deputy,
- an academic staff member as member as well as another academic staff member as deputy, and
- a student as member as well as another student as deputy.

The representatives of the respective status groups in the *GKmE CNS* shall have the right of nomination.

(5) From the professors who form part of the Examination Board, the Examination Board will elect one as chairperson and the others as her/his representatives.

(6) Pursuant to § 49 *BerIHG*, the term of office of the members of the Examination Board is two years, and that of the students' representative one year. A reelection is possible. The *GKmE CNS* can, by majority of its members, appoint a new Examination Board before the expiration of the term of office.

(7) The members of the examination board as well as their deputies are subject to official secrecy. If they are not members of the public service, they shall be bound to official secrecy by the chairwoman or chairman.

§ 7 – Examiners, associate examiners

(1) Pursuant § 32 *BerlHG*, professors as well as habilitated academic staff can be appointed as examiners; in deviation of this, also non-habilitated academic personnel and assistant lecturers can be appointed, provided that they are entitled to teach independently.

(2) The Examination Board appoints the examiners and associate examiners by assigning them to a specific module. Only persons, who have performed teaching activities in the field to which the examination relates, can be appointed as examiners. Only persons, who have completed university studies and who are experts in the field of the examination, can be appointed as associate examiners.

(3) The examiners and associate examiners are subject to secrecy. If they are not members of the public service, they shall be bound to secrecy by the chairwoman or chairman.

§ 8 – Recognition of study and examination achievements

(1) Study periods, study achievements and examination achievements in other study programs will be recognized by the Examination Board, if equivalence is established. Equivalence is to be established if study periods, study achievements and examination achievements – with regard to contents, scope and requirements – essentially correspond to those of the joint international Master's program in Computational Neuroscience of the Free University of Berlin, Humboldt University of Berlin and Technical University of Berlin. In this context, instead of a schematic comparison, an overall examination and evaluation shall be conducted. As regards the recognition of study periods, study achievements and examination achievements performed outside the scope of application of the German Framework Act for Higher Education (*Hochschulrahmengesetz*), the equivalence agreements approved by the Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (*Kultusministerkonferenz*) and the arrangements within university partnerships shall be taken into account.

(2) Study period, study achievements and examination achievements of different European universities will be mutually recognized in accordance with the decision of the Examination Board.

(3) If study and examination achievements are recognized, the grades – as far as the grade systems are comparable – shall be accepted and included in the calculation of the overall grade. If grade systems are not comparable, the annotation "pass" will be included. It is permitted to mark the recognition in the certificate.

(4) The recognition of parts of the Master's examination can be denied, if more than half of the examination achievements, more than one project ("Lab Rotation") or the Master thesis were performed outside the Master's program of Computational Neuroscience. In these cases, the Examination Board determines which modules and examination achievements still have to be performed within the Master's program of Computational Neuroscience.

§ 9 – Data processing authorization and inspection of the examination files

(1) The Students' Data Regulation (*Studentendatenverordnung*) of the Land of Berlin, as amended, shall apply to the collection and cancellation of students' data.

(2) Within one year after completion of a module, the student will – at request – be allowed to inspect his written examination papers, the examiners' opinions and the minutes of the examination. In other respects, the Berlin Administrative Procedure Act (*Verwaltungsverfahrensgesetz*) shall apply.

II. Examination principles

§ 10 – Examination types and language

(1) As regards module examinations within the framework of the Master's examination, the following examination types are possible: oral examination (§ 11), written examination (§ 12) and study achievements equivalent to the examination

(§ 13). Another examination achievement within the framework of the Master's examination is the Master thesis.

(2) The language of studies and examination is English. Exceptions are governed by the Examination Board.

(3) If a student – if necessary, by means of a medical certificate – satisfactorily shows that, due to a long-term or permanent physical handicap or impairment, she or he is not able to perform a study or examination achievement in the proposed form, the Examination Board is obliged to allow her or him to perform equivalent study or examination achievements in a different form.

§ 11 – Oral examination

(1) Oral examinations are taken as individual examinations. The duration of the examination is at least 20 minutes and at most 60 minutes. Upon approval by the candidate, it may, by way of exception, be exceeded. The examination will be carried out by one of the authorized examiners, in the presence of an associate examiner.

(2) During the oral examination, tasks to be solved in writing may be assigned to a reasonable extent, provided that the oral character of the examination is maintained.

(3) Subjects, results and the course of the oral examination shall be recorded in the minutes of the examination, which shall be signed by the examiner and associate examiner and then be enclosed with the examination files.

(4) Students attending courses at the Free University of Berlin, the Humboldt University of Berlin and the Technical University of Berlin may sit in on oral examinations as listeners, provided that there is enough room available; students who intend to take the same examination shall be given priority. Admission of the named persons does not extend to the discussion and announcement of the examination results. At the request of the candidate, the public shall be excluded.

The public may be excluded by the examiner, if the module examination is disturbed. In this case, the examination will be continued with the public excluded.

(5) The examination may be interrupted by the examiner, if there is good reason. A new examination date shall be fixed in such a way that the examination will take place immediately after the reason for interruption ceases to exist. The examination results already achieved will be taken into account. A new registration for the examination is not required. The reasons that caused the interruption of the examination shall be included in the minutes of the examination.

§ 12 – Written examination (written test)

(1) A written examination (written test) is taken under supervision, with permitted aids. The duration of the examination is at least one and at most three hours. In general, it is to be assessed by two examiners.

(2) The examiner decides which aids are permitted for a written test. A list of the permitted aids shall be announced at the same time as the examination date.

§ 13 – Study achievements equivalent to the examination

(1) A module examination in the form of study achievements that are equivalent to the examination consists of several different study achievements, which are performed within the framework of the courses assigned to the module. Study achievements that are equivalent to the examination may, for example, be required to be performed in the form of subject talks, papers, written tests, other written elaborations or recorded practical performances. These study achievements may also be performed in the form of group work, provided that the respective individual contribution to the achievement can be identified.

(2) Type, scope and weighting of the study achievements that are equivalent to the examination will be determined by the person responsible for the module and announced at the beginning of the first course of a module. Moreover, they are stipulated in the module catalog, which is published every year by the *GKmE CNS*.

§ 14 – Assessment of examination achievements

(1) For the grading of study achievements, the following grades shall be used:

1.0 / 1.3	<i>Sehr Gut</i> (Very Good)	= excellent achievement
1.7 / 2.0 / 2.3	<i>Gut</i> (Good)	= achievement, which is considerably above average requirements
2.7 / 3.0 / 3.3	<i>Befriedigend</i> (Satisfactory)	= achievement, which in every respect meets average requirements
3.7 / 4.0	<i>Ausreichend</i> (Fair)	= achievement, which – despite deficiencies – still meets the requirements
5.0	<i>Nicht ausreichend</i> (Unsatisfactory)	= achievement with considerable deficiencies, which does not meet the requirements

(2) The grades used for a summarized grade, if applicable (e.g. module examination by means of study achievements equivalent to the examination), are as follows:

1.0	- 1.5	<i>Sehr Gut</i> (Very Good)
1.6	- 2.5	<i>Gut</i> (Good)
2.6	- 3.5	<i>Befriedigend</i> (Satisfactory)
3.6	- 4.0	<i>Ausreichend</i> (Fair)
4.1	- 5.0	<i>Nicht ausreichend</i> (Unsatisfactory)

(3) Students who were assessed with at least *Ausreichend* (Fair) will receive the following ECTS Assessment for their overall grade, which gives information about the student's relative performance and is included in the Diploma Supplement. The reference group should have a minimum size and is determined by the *GKmE CNS*. The conversion of the overall grade to ECTS Assessment will be effected in accordance with the following table:

A	the best 10%
B	the next 25%
C	the next 30 %
D	the next 25%
E	the next 10%

The right to the award of an ECTS Degree will only be granted after the corresponding data are available.

(4) The results of the individual module examinations shall immediately be announced to the candidate and be communicated to the Examination Office of the Technical University of Berlin within ten working days after the announcement. The module examination is passed, if the achievements have been assessed with at least *Ausreichend* (Fair). If it is not passed, a written notice will be issued, including instructions on the right to appeal and a specification of the period for the re-examination.

§ 15 – Registration for module examinations, selection of examiner

(1) Basically, the right to examination will continue to exist after removal from the register of students, provided that the required study achievements have been performed.

(2) The registration for oral module examinations shall be made at the Examination Office of the Technical University of Berlin three working days before the examination date at the latest.

(3) If there are several persons authorized to conduct the examination in a module, for which an oral examination is proposed, the candidate will be entitled to select one of these as examiner. At the examiner's well-founded request, the Examination Board may – after consultation with the candidate – appoint another examiner.

(4) The registration for written module examinations shall be made at the Examination Office, three working days before the examination date at the latest. The examination date will be fixed by the examiner and announced in due time – at the

latest, however, four weeks before the examination date – by putting up a notice.

(5) The registration for individual module examinations can be made dependent on the prior provision of specific study achievements.

(6) A module examination in the form of study achievements that are equivalent to the examination starts on the day following registration at the examination office. The registration deadline will be set by the examiner and must be prior to the student's first examination, at least, however, 4 weeks after the beginning of the course, on which the study achievements that are equivalent to the examination are based. It shall be announced at the beginning of the course by putting up a notice.

(7) The examination date shall be agreed between the candidate and the examiner, with due regard to the periods pursuant to sub-sections 2, 4 and 6.

§ 16 – Withdrawal, absence, cheating, infringements of the regulations

(1) The candidate may withdraw the registration for a module examination without giving any reasons, by communicating this to the Examination Board of the Technical University of Berlin as well as to the examiner three working days before the module examination at the latest (in the case of study achievements that are equivalent to the examination, prior to the first examination).

(2) If a candidate fails to comply with any period according to sub-sec. 1, if she/he misses the examination date, if she/he withdraws after the beginning of the examination, or if the Master thesis is not submitted in due time, the examination concerned is considered to be failed.

(3) The Examination Board shall immediately – via the Examination Office – be notified of good reasons for the withdrawal or missing. In the case of illness of the examinee or of one of his close relatives who is in his care, a medical certificate attesting the inability to take the examination shall be enclosed. The Examination Board may ask for a medical certificate issued by the medical officer.

(4) The Examination Board decides upon the recognition of good reasons pursuant to sub-section 3. If the reasons are recognized, the examination is considered not to have been taken and a new date will be fixed. The examination results that have already been obtained shall be taken into account.

(5) If the candidate culpably attempts to influence the result of his/her own examination or that of somebody else, by means of deceit or the use of aids that are not permitted, or if she/he disturbs the orderly course of the examination, then she/he may be excluded from continuing the examination by the examiner or by the person in charge. The examination will then be considered to be failed. It can be repeated according to § 17. If the candidate is excluded from continuing the examination, he may apply for cancellation of this decision by the Examination Board. If an act pursuant to phrase 2 only becomes known after conclusion of the Master's examination, § 21 will apply accordingly.

§ 17 – Repetition of module examinations

(1) Module examinations that have not been passed or that are considered not to

have been passed can be repeated twice. The first repetition of a written examination shall be conducted in written form, the second one – orally. Failed attempts at other universities shall be taken into account. It is not permitted to repeat a passed module examination or re-examination.

(2) The first re-examination shall take place until the beginning of the next semester, within 12 months after the date of the failed examination at latest. The Examination Board makes sure that the candidate can repeat the re-examination within these periods. The Examination Board can – at the written request of the candidate – extend the period for the first re-examination. The request shall be granted, if there are reasons, for which the candidate is not responsible.

(3) The provisions on the withdrawal of an academic degree will remain unaffected.

III. Master's Examination

§ 18 – Admission requirements and procedure

(1) Prior to taking the first examination, the student shall file the application for admission to the Master's examination to the Examination Office of the Technical University of Berlin. The following documents shall be enclosed with the application, unless they have already been submitted to the Examination Office:

1. a declaration by the student that these Examination Regulations as well as the Study Regulations are known to her/him,
2. a declaration by the student about whether she/he has already failed or finally failed an examination of the same or a related program at a Scientific University within the scope of the German Framework Act for Higher Education, or whether she/he is involved in a pending examination procedure,
3. certificate of enrolment at the Technical University of Berlin for the international Master's program in Computational Neuroscience
4. if applicable, confirmations of recognition pursuant to § 8.

(2) Admission can only be denied if

1. the documents according to sub-section (1) are incomplete,
2. the student is not enrolled at the Technical University of Berlin for the Master's program in Computational Neuroscience,
3. the student has finally failed the Master's examination in the program of Computational Neuroscience or in a related program at a Scientific University within the scope of the German Framework Act for Higher Education,
4. the student is currently involved in an examination procedure within the Master's program of Computational Neuroscience or within a related program at a Scientific University within the scope of the German Framework Act for Higher Education, or if the right to examination is extinct.

(3) Admission to the Master's examination is considered to be granted if it has been demonstrated to the Examination Office that all admission requirements pursuant to sub-section (1) have been met, and if there are no reasons for denial pursuant to sub-section (2). If a student – through no fault of her/his own – cannot provide the necessary documents pursuant to sub-section (1), the Examination Board may allow her/him to provide the respective confirmations in some other way.

§ 19 – Scope of examination and overall grade

(1) The Master's examination consists of the Master thesis comprising 20 LP (*Leistungspunkte* = Credit Points) and the following module examinations comprising 100 LP:

<i>Title</i>	<i>Kind of module</i>	<i>LP</i>	<i>Examination type</i>
1. Models of Neural Systems	Compulsory module	12 LP	Oral examination
2. Models of Higher Brain Functions	Compulsory module	12 LP	Oral examination
3. Acquisition and Analysis of Neural Data	Compulsory module	12 LP	Oral examination
4. Machine Intelligence	Compulsory module	12 LP	Oral examination
5. Programming Course and Project	Compulsory module	6 LP	Study achievement equivalent to the examination
6. Individual Studies	Optional module	6 LP	Determined by the person responsible for the module
7. „Lab Rotations“ (see § 4 sub-sec. 5 of the Study Regulations CNS (<i>StuO CNS</i>))	Three optional modules	9 LP each	Study achievement equivalent to the examination
8. Ethical Issues and Implications for Society	Compulsory module	3 LP	Study achievement equivalent to the examination
9. Courses on Advanced Topics	Optional module	10 LP	Determined by the person responsible for the module

Table 1: Module catalog

(2) The compulsory modules are listed in the module catalog of the Master's program in Computational Neuroscience (see table 1: module catalog). Every year, the module descriptions will be updated and published by the Joint Committee with decision-making power for the Master's program in Computational Neuroscience.

(3) The examinations for the modules of Programming Course and Project, Ethical Issues and Implications for Society, Individual Studies and "Lab Rotations" will be assessed with the grades "pass" or "fail". The grade "fail" will be given for an achievement, which – due to considerable deficiencies – does not meet the requirements.

(4) Based on all other module grades of the Master's examination and the grade of the Master thesis, an overall grade – weighted according to credit points – will be determined as arithmetic mean (grade point average). As regards the result, only the first decimal place behind the point will be taken into account; all further decimal places will be deleted without rounding. The overall grade then results from § 14 sub-sec. 2, the corresponding ECTS Assessment from § 14 Abs. 3.

(5) The Master's examination is passed if all module examinations and the Master thesis have been passed, and it is finally failed if at least one of the aforementioned examination achievements has been finally failed.

§ 20 – Master thesis

(1) The Master thesis is an examination paper. It can also be written outside the two universities involved in the program; the regulations on the supervisor will remain unaffected. In the Master thesis, the candidate shall demonstrate that she/he is able to deal with a task in the respective study field independently and according to scientific methods, within the stipulated period of time. The Master thesis comprises 20LP.

(2) Upon successful completion of the modules mentioned in § 19 sub-sec. 1 under items 1-4, 6 and 8, the student may apply to the Examination Board for allocation of a Master thesis. In this context, the student can propose a supervisor and a topic; any examiner appointed according to § 7 sub-sec. 2, can be a supervisor. § 15 sub-sec. 3 phrase 2 applies accordingly. At the suggestion of the supervisor, upon consultation with the candidate, the Examination Board will allocate the topic and put the date of allocation on record.

(3) The examination board pays attention to the equivalence of topics and that the Master thesis can be completed within the period fixed for completion of the thesis.

(4) The period for completion of the thesis is four months. At the candidate's request, upon hearing the supervisor, the Examination Board may, by way of exception, extend this period. The topic of the Master thesis can be returned only once and only within the first six weeks of the period granted for completion of the thesis.

(5) The Master thesis must be written in English. Exceptional cases will be decided upon by the Examination Board.

(6) Upon submission of the Master thesis, the student shall declare in writing that she/he has written the thesis without inadmissible help from third parties and that she/he has not used any other sources or aids than those specified. Borrowings from other theses are to be marked in the respective passages of the Master thesis. The finished thesis shall be submitted, in due time, in triplicate to the Examination Office of the Technical University of Berlin, which will put the time of submission on record and forward the thesis for examination and assessment.

(7) The candidate shall defend the results of the final thesis in a university-public colloquium.

(8) The Master thesis shall be assessed by at least two experts, among them the supervisor, in accordance with § 14 sub-section 1. The second expert will be appointed by the Examination Board. Assessments shall be delivered to the Examination Board within two months upon submission of the thesis. If assessments differ from each other and prove to be *Nicht Ausreichend* (Unsatisfactory) in one case, the Examination Board will seek to reach an agreement between the experts – if necessary, with the aid of another expert. The grade as well as the assessment will in this case be determined by the professors of the Examination Board. If the assessments given by the experts differ from each other, but are at least *Ausreichend* (Fair) in both cases, the individual grades will be averaged and an overall grade will be determined according to § 14 Abs. 2.

(9) Master's theses that have not been submitted in due time or have not been assessed with *Ausreichend* (Fair) may be repeated only once. It is only permitted to return the topic within the period of time specified in sub-section 4, if the candidate has not made use of this possibility during her/his first Master thesis. In other respects, § 17 sub-sec. 2 applies.

(10) The assessed Master thesis remains with the supervisor's institute. It may temporarily be left to the author for inspection and for making copies. It shall be kept for at least three years.

§ 21 – Invalidity of the Master's examination

(1) If the candidate cheated during an examination and if this only becomes known after the certificate has been issued, the examination board can subsequently declare the respective examination to have been failed. It can be repeated in accordance with § 17.

(2) If the requirements for admission to the Master's examination were not met without the candidate trying to deceive, and if this only becomes known after the certificate has been issued, then passing the examination will nullify this defect. If the candidate has wrongly obtained admission on purpose, the Examination Board will decide upon the withdrawal of the admission.

(3) Prior to a decision, the student shall be given the opportunity to express her/his opinion.

(4) The incorrect certificate shall be withdrawn and, if applicable, a new one shall be issued. After a period of five years following the date of the certificate, a decision pursuant to sub-section 1 and sub-section 2, phrase 2, will be excluded.

(5) Sub-sections 1 to 4 will accordingly apply to written confirmations pursuant to § 22 sub-sec. 7 and 8.

(6) The provisions on the withdrawal of an academic degree will remain unaffected.

(7) A complaint against the decision made by the Examination Board may be filed to the Berlin Administrative Court.

§ 22 – Certificates, Diploma, Diploma Supplement

(1) Upon successful completion of the Master's examination, a German certificate will immediately be issued by the Examination office of the Technical University of Berlin, and an English translation will be enclosed. In the certificate, the following information will be provided:

1. Program,
2. Overall assessment and grade,
3. for each examination subject pursuant to § 19 sub-section 1: name, scope in credit points, and assessment and grade for the module examination,
4. Subject, scope in credit points and assessment for the Master thesis, as well as the names of the examiners of the Master thesis,
5. at the request of the candidate, which is to be filed before the issuing of the certificate, the number of study semesters required to complete the Master's degree,
6. an annotation stating that a Diploma Supplement was issued,

(2) The certificate bears the date of the day on which the candidate has taken the last examination. It will be signed by the dean of Faculty IV of the Technical University of Berlin, on behalf of the faculties involved in the program. The certificate bears the seal of the three universities involved (Free University of Berlin, Humboldt University of Berlin, Technical University of Berlin).

(3) If any achievements specified in the certificate were not performed within the Master's program of Computational Neuroscience, this will be noted in the certificate.

(4) In addition to the certificate for the Master's examination, a German diploma with the same date will be issued by the Examination Office for the award of the academic degree of Master of Science (M.Sc.) within the program of Computational Neuroscience, and an English translation will be enclosed. The diploma will be signed by the president of the Technical University of Berlin, on behalf of the three universities involved in the program, and by the dean of Faculty IV of the Technical

University of Berlin, on behalf of the faculties involved in the program. The diploma bears the seal of the three universities involved.

(5) The right to use the academic degree 'Master of Science' will be acquired after the diploma has been issued.

(6) The certificate for the Master's examination and the diploma include the statement that the examination has been taken in accordance with the provisions of the Examination Regulations applicable in each case.

(7) In addition to certificate and diploma, the Examination Office issues a German Diploma Supplement and encloses an English translation.

(8) If a candidate has failed the Master's examination, she/he will – at request – be issued a graded confirmation by the Examination Office. This confirmation includes the modules already completed and specifies the examinations still to be taken. If, in one module, there is no more possibility for repetition, it will be specified in the confirmation that the Master's examination has been finally failed.

IV. Final Provisions

§ 23 – Entry into force

These Examination Regulations will enter into force on the day following that of their publication in the official newsletters of the Free University of Berlin, the Humboldt University of Berlin and the Technical University of Berlin.