

Examination Regulations
for the Post Graduate Course of Study in
‘International Business Informatics’
at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of the
European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder)

- As agreed by the Board of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration on 14th June 2000 –

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I. General rules

§ 1 Principle of equality

All references to people and roles in these regulations apply equally to men and women.

§ 2 Purpose and form of the Master's course of study

(1) The Master's course of study¹ in 'International Business Informatics' leads to an independent occupational qualification in business informatics. In the examination, the candidate should show that he has profound knowledge of this subject, that he has gained a good overview of how different areas in this field interact, and that he is able to recognise the importance of information systems in both intra and inter-company business affairs in local and global environments. The candidate should be able to work independently on questions drawn from the subjects covered in the course of study, using the methods that he has been taught. In his Master's thesis, the candidate should show that he is capable of his own accord of applying the scientific approaches he has learnt to practical problems.

(2) The 'International Business Informatics' course of study is run as a distance learning programme. It is run in English worldwide, making extensive use of the capabilities of information and communications technology.

(3) A programme coordinator is responsible for organising the programme. The coordinator is appointed by the Faculty Board.

§ 3 Academic degree

After passing the examination, graduates will be awarded the degree of 'International Master of Business Informatics' (abbreviated as 'MBI').

§ 4 Scope and duration of the course of study

(1) The regular study period for full-time students is two years. For part-time students, the length of study depends on how many modules are completed each semester.

(2) The course of study includes a maximum of 75 HWS², plus the Master's thesis as per § 13 and the practical work (internship) or project as per § 14.

(3) Successful progress during the course of study is measured by awarding performance points. There are a total of 120 points to be obtained.

(4) Achievements on courses and exams accomplished outside of the 'International Business Informatics' course can be taken into account, if it can be shown that they are of equal academic value. All decisions on recognition of such achievements are made by the Examining Board.

¹ The terms 'course of study' and 'programme' are used interchangeably throughout this document.

² HWS = hours per week for the duration of one semester.

§ 5
Admission to the course of study

- (1) It is a prerequisite of admission to the Master's course of study that the applicant:
1. has already graduated as a Bachelor of Business Administration or gained a comparable degree, and
 2. has not already sat and failed the final examination on a Master's programme in 'International Business Informatics' or comparable course of study.
- (2) Applicants who possess a Bachelor's or comparable degree in a subject other than that indicated at (1) 1. above, may be admitted to the programme. In such cases, the Examining Board may place conditions on the subjects that student must take.
- (3) Applicants whose first language is not English must show that they have taken the 'Test of English as a Foreign Language' (TOEFL) and achieved at least 550 points in the paper-based test or 213 points in the computer-based test. Alternatively, they must provide evidence that they possess the Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English or other comparable proof of English ability.
- (4) Evidence of the points achieved by applicants in the General Management Admission Test (GMAT) may be required for admission to the Master's programme.
- (5) Applications for admission to the Master's programme are to be made in writing and addressed to the Registration and Examinations Office at the European University. Applications should be accompanied by the documentary evidence referred to at sub-paragraphs (1) to (4) above.
- (6) Registered full-time students are automatically signed up for all obligatory courses offered during the relevant semester. Students must notify the Examining Board and relevant lecturer of the optional courses (electives) that they want to do no later than 3 weeks after these have begun. They will then be registered for these electives. If good reasons exist (e.g. the maximum number of participants has been exceeded), the Examining Board or the lecturer may refuse to allow students to participate on a given course within 2 weeks. For part-time students and for students repeating the course, sentence 2 above applies accordingly.

§ 6
Examining Board

- (1) The Examining Board is responsible for setting examinations and for carrying out the duties assigned to it by these examination regulations. It consists of a total of at least 3 members (professors or academic staff), who should teach on the Master's course of study in 'International Business Informatics'. A representative of the students on the course of study can be added to the Examining Board. The programme coordinator is a member of the Examining Board.
- (2) Examining Board members (with the exception of the programme coordinator) and their deputies are appointed by the Faculty Board for a period of two years. The term of office for student members is one year. The Examining Board elects a Chairperson and deputy from its own rank. The Examining Board may delegate regular decisions to the Chairperson.
- (3) The Examining Board ensures adherence to the provisions of the examination regulations. It reports regularly to the Faculty on examinations trends and study times, makes suggestions for reforming the curriculum or examination regulations and provides information on the distributions of subject and total grades that have been issued. It makes decisions on exam admissions and sets examination dates.
- (4) Examining Board members have the right to take part in the examinations acceptance procedure.

(5) Examining Board members and their deputies are required to maintain strict confidentiality. Insofar as they are not members of the civil service, they are to give a commitment of confidentiality to the Chairperson.

§ 7 Examiners and observers

(1) The Examining Board appoints the examiners and observers. The board may delegate this appointment to the Chairperson. Professors and qualified teaching staff on the Master's course of study do not need to be appointed as examiners for the subject that they represent. Other people can also be appointed as examiners, if they teach on the Master's course of study and possess a university degree.

(2) § 6 (5) of these regulations applies accordingly to all examiners and observers.

(3) Written exam work should generally be assessed by at least two examiners. For the purpose of these regulations, written work also includes electronic documents, i.e. documents created with software programmes, that are readily available only in electronic form and that can be converted by the use of software into a readable format.

(4) Oral examinations require the presence of an examiner and a competent observer, who should keep minutes of the examination process. As a minimum requirement, observers must belong to the academic staff of one of the departments that teach on the Master's programme, possess requisite competence in the subject being examined, and be qualified at least to a German Diploma degree or comparable level.

§ 8 Course work certificates

(1) Course work certificates can be gained for the courses on the programme.

(2) Students are notified by the lecturer well before a course begins what work has to be done to gain a course work certificate.

(3) Work referred to at (2) above may be done in a variety of forms, fully exploiting the capabilities of information and communications technology. This may especially be done by:

- a) concurrent assessment work during the semester, e.g. solving exercises
- b) written papers
- c) written or oral compositions
- d) creating software solutions
- e) written or oral responses based on audio-visual or other electronic communications media
- f) any combination of a) to e)

As a rule, exercises are set and work is submitted by electronic means over the telecommunications network. Exactly how exercises and work are to be sent is advised in each case by the relevant lecturer.

(4) For work as per (3) above, the candidate must give an assurance, to include his full name, that he has done the work on his own without any help from anyone else and that he has used no source material or aids other than those stipulated. This assurance must also be confirmed by the candidate's personal signature and submitted in hard copy to the relevant lecturer. Where a student is submitting multiple tasks, as in the case of (3) a) above, one confirmation note per semester is sufficient. For grading course work certificates, § 10 (1) will be applied appropriately, as will §§ 11 (2), (4) and (5) for ensuring that work is done in accordance with regulations.

(5) Any student registered for a course is duly registered and entitled to try for the corresponding course work certificate.

§ 9
Master's examination

(1) The Master's examination consists of the final exam as defined at § 15 (3) and the Master's thesis, as per § 13.

(2) Attainment of course work certificates, as stipulated at § 15 (5), is a prerequisite for the Master's examination.

§ 10
Assessment of examination work

(1) The following grades are used for assessing examination performance:

<i>Grade</i>	<i>In words</i>	<i>Comments</i>
A	Excellent	An outstanding performance with only minor errors
B	Very good	Above average standard but with some errors
C	Good	Generally sound work with a number of notable errors
D	Satisfactory	Fair but with significant shortcomings
E	Sufficient	Performance meets minimum criteria
F	Fail	Performance does not meet minimum criteria, considerable further work is required

(2) If the exam as a whole is to be assessed based on an average of individual pieces of work or individual assessments, then the following points are allocated to each grade:

- A = 1 point
- B = 2 points
- C = 3 points
- D = 4 points
- E = 5 points
- F = 6 points

Grades for overall performance are then calculated as follows:

- If the average is lower than or equal to 1.5 = A
- If the average is over 1.5 and less than or equal to 2.5 = B
- If the average is over 2.5 and less than or equal to 3.5 = C
- If the average is over 3.5 and less than or equal to 4.5 = D
- If the average is over 4.5 and less than or equal to 5.0 = E
- If the average is over 5.0 = F

(3) When calculating the total grades, only the first digit after the decimal point is taken into account. The numbers in all other decimal places are ignored, without any rounding.

§ 11

Admission to exams, absence, withdrawal, cheating, contravening regulations

- (1) Only students registered on the Master's course of study can be admitted to the Master's exam.
- (2) Any candidate who fails without good reason to keep to an examination date or who withdraws from the exam without good reason once it has started will receive examination grade F (fail). The same applies if written examination work is not done within the prescribed time.
- (3) Reasons to justify withdrawal or absence must be notified to the Examining Board immediately. These must also be substantiated. If the candidate was ill, a doctor's note must be provided. If the reasons are acknowledged as valid by the Examining Board, an F grade (fail) will not be issued.
- (4) If, for reasons outside of the candidate's control, an examination cannot be properly conducted, it will be repeated.
- (5) If a candidate attempts to influence the result of his exam work by cheating or by use of unauthorised aids, his work will be deemed to have been graded F (fail). A candidate who disrupts the orderly conduct of the exam can be excluded from taking any further part in the exam by the relevant examiner or head supervisor. In such cases, the candidate's exam work will be deemed to have been graded F (fail). In very serious cases, the Examining Board may exclude the candidate from doing any further examination work.
- (6) For a period of up to four weeks, the candidate may request that any decisions taken in respect of § 11 (5), sentences 1 to 3 of these regulations are reviewed by the Examining Board. Where the Examining Board makes decisions of an incriminatory nature against the candidate, these are to be notified immediately to the candidate in writing. The reasons for such decisions must also be given, and the candidate must be advised of any legal recourse available to him.

II. Master's course of study

§ 12

Structure and composition of the Master's course of study

- (1) The Master's course of study includes obligatory and optional subjects, a Master's thesis and a practical element in the form of work experience (internship) or a project. The obligatory and optional subjects are listed in appendix 1. There are courses within both the obligatory and optional subjects.
- (2) The course of study is broken down into semesters. Courses are run during the first three semesters. In each of the three semesters, one course must be covered from the list of electives, unless the Examining Board lays down conditions as per § 5 (2) resulting in restrictions to the number of electives available.
- (3) As a rule, the Master's thesis and the practical element of the Master's course are done in the fourth semester.

§ 13

Master's thesis

- (1) Every student must complete a Master's thesis in which he shows that he is capable of independently applying scientific business and economic methods, mentally penetrating scientific literature, as well as writing papers that sufficiently meet scientific requirements.

(2) In exceptional cases, for instance, where extensive data collection is involved, two students may jointly complete one Master's thesis. In such cases, each student's individual work must be clearly distinguishable. Separate assessments are given for each student.

(3) Students are given the opportunity to choose a mentor from amongst the professors and other qualified teaching staff on the Master's programme, who will set the topic for their Master's thesis. If a candidate fails to find a mentor, the Examining Board will assign one.

(4) As a rule, the Master's thesis is written immediately after the end of the third semester, before doing work experience, as per § 14 (2). The sequence in which work experience and the Master's thesis are done can be reversed. In individual cases, the Examining Board may also determine otherwise.

(5) As a rule, students are allowed 3 months to complete a thesis. If, instead of practical work experience (internship), a candidate undertakes a project as per § 14 (3) that is done during term-time, the date for handing in the thesis is extended by three months.

(6) The Master's thesis is to be submitted on time to the Examining Board, usually as a file via electronic transfer. The thesis is deemed to have been submitted when the file is received by the Examining Board. If prior to expiry of the deadline for thesis submission, a candidate shows credible evidence that it will not be possible, due to unforeseen technical problems, to deliver the thesis on time by electronic means, it is possible that a further five working days will be allowed for a printed version of the thesis to be handed in. The thesis manuscript must be produced using a standard word-processing programme. Technical and organisational aspects of how the thesis is to be submitted are determined by the Examining Board. The dates of assignment and submission of the thesis have to be recorded. When handing in his Master's thesis, the candidate must provide a written assurance that he has done the work on his own and without anybody else's help, and that he has used no source material or aids other than those stipulated. § 8 (4) sentence 2 applies accordingly.

(7) If a candidate fails his Master's thesis (i.e. he gets an F), a new topic can be set once only, for which the same period of time will apply for the thesis to be completed.

§ 14

Practical part of the Master's course of study

(1) In order to gain knowledge and insights into the practical world of 'Business Informatics' students have to complete a project or period of practical work experience (internship).

(2) Work experience generally takes place in or prior to the fourth semester and usually lasts for three months. The Examining Board may approve durations of shorter or longer periods. Work experience should be done in the area of computer-aided information and communications systems in an organisation actively involved in this field.

(3) In place of work experience, students may do a project in the fourth semester. Projects are led by one of the Master's programme teaching staff and run using project management methodology. As a rule, the project lasts for the duration of the semester. The Examining Board may determine otherwise. The relevant member of the teaching staff issues a certificate to confirm the student's successful participation in the project.

III. Completing the Master's course of study

§ 15

Passing and grades of the Master's examination

(1) The Examining Board Chairperson determines overall grades for the Master's examination. Overall grades are calculated as per § 10.

(2) The Master's thesis and final examination, supplemented by course work certificates, all go towards the final Master's grade with the following weighting:

30% Grade for the Master's thesis

40% Average grade of the course work certificates

30% Grade for the final examination, as per sub-paragraph (3) below.

(3) The basic areas covered by the final examination are the topics of the obligatory courses and the candidate's chosen electives. The exam takes place at a location determined by the Examining Board and is conducted either as a written exam of 4 hours duration or as an oral exam lasting a maximum of 60 minutes. Taking into account the aids permitted for each exam, reasonable use may be made of information and communications technology.

(4) If a student fails the exam as described at (3) above, he can re-sit it once. In exceptional cases, students may be allowed to re-sit the exam a second time. Students must apply to do so, and all decisions about such applications will be made by the Chairperson of the Examining Board.

(5) The average grade of course work certificates is determined from the certificates attained by the student as per § 8. Fifteen certificates need to be attained. Of these, at least

- a) eleven certificates graded E (sufficient) or better must come from the obligatory subjects as per appendix 1, and
- b) three certificates graded E (sufficient) or better must come from the optional subjects, also listed at appendix 1.

If, in accordance with § 5 (2), the Examining Board has imposed conditions on the modules to be taken, then the minimum number of certificates required for electives is reduced accordingly.

(6) The Master's examination has been passed, if

1. an overall grade of at least E (sufficient) is attained,
2. a grade of at least E (sufficient) is attained in the final examination, as described at sub-paragraph (3) above,
3. the Master's thesis, as described at § 13, receives at least grade E (sufficient),
4. and, the work experience or project, as described at § 14, is successfully completed.

(7) If the candidate has failed his last chance to pass the exam, this is to be notified to him in writing. Reasons must be given for this failure, and the candidate must be advised of any legal recourse available to him.

§ 16

Grade report

(1) Upon successful completion of the Master's course of study a grade report is issued. The report is signed by the Examining Board Chairperson and documents the course of study in which the student has

graduated with a list of his individual course achievements. The report bears the date on which the student did his final piece of exam work.

(2) Candidates who have ultimately failed the Master's programme are given, on request, an official record documenting the course work that they did.

§ 17 Certificate

(1) At the same time as being given the final report, the candidate is also given a certificate, which is dated with the date of the report. This document certifies the degree the student is awarded. The certificate is issued in both English and German.

(2) The certificate is signed by the Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration and the Chairperson of the Examining Board. It also carries the university seal.

IV. Final provisions

§ 18 Special examination conditions

(1) If, by means of a doctor's report, a candidate clearly demonstrates that due to a long-term or permanent physical handicap he is not able to take the exam in its proposed form, either in part or in whole, the Examining Board Chairperson is obliged to permit the candidate, if asked, to do comparable examination work in another form. The same applies for course work.

(2) In designing course work schedules and producing examination tasks, the university already tries in all instances to take into account the specific needs of handicapped students.

§ 19 Pregnancy and legal protection of mothers' rights

Students who claim the statutory period of protection provided for by the law protecting expectant and nursing mothers or who claim their right to maternity leave are in no way disadvantaged.

§ 20 Invalidity of the examinations of the Master's course of study

(1) If a candidate cheats in the exam and this fact only comes to light after the final report has been issued, the Examining Board can subsequently amend grades accordingly for those parts of the exam in which the candidate cheated and declare the candidate to have failed the exam either in part or in whole.

(2) If, with no intent to deceive, the candidate fails to comply with all of the conditions for sitting the exam, and this fact only comes to light after the final report has been issued, a passed exam is sufficient for such a shortcoming to be overlooked. However, if the candidate deliberately gained fraudulent admission to the exam, the Examining Board shall decide the case.

(3) The candidate is to be given a chance to explain himself before any decision is made.

(4) The incorrect exam report is to be retrieved and, if appropriate, to be replaced with a new one. If as a result of cheating or deception an exam is deemed to have been 'failed', then the exam certificate is to be retrieved along with the exam report. All decisions in respect of sub-paragraph (1) and sub-paragraph (2)

sentence 2 above, must be taken within a period of five years from the date on which the exam report was produced.

§ 21
Viewing examination files

For a period of one year after completion of the examination process, candidates requesting to do so and giving reasonable notice have the right to view their written exam papers, the reviews made on them by the examiners, and the official examination minutes.

§ 22
Effective date

These regulations become effective from the day they are published in the official announcements of the European University Viadrina ("Amtliche Bekanntmachungen der Europa-Universität Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder)").

Appendix 1

Obligatory subjects

Elementary Business Informatics
Business Informatics Technology
Advanced Business Informatics
Enterprise Applications of Business Informatics

Electives

Business and Information Systems Modeling
IT-based Management
Advanced Information Technology
Business Information Systems
Contextual Issues of Information Systems