



# **Excerpt of Statutes: Legal Regulations for Academic Affairs**

**of**

## **Graz University of Technology**

SA 92000 STSR 124-03

The Senate of Graz University of Technology agreed the Excerpt of Statutes: Legal Regulations for Academic Affairs of Graz University of Technology in its present form in the meeting dated 7 November 2022 on a proposal by the Rectorate.

This Excerpts of Statutes comes into force on 17 November 2022 (following the announcement in the TU Graz University Gazette).

*(Please note: The English version of this document is a courtesy translation. Only the German version is legally binding.)*

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## Preamble

TU Graz offers its students an excellent education that can compete with that offered by other top universities. Thus, high-quality degree programmes, internationality, and the possibility of completing the degree programmes in a reasonable time must be ensured.

The degree programmes at TU Graz enable students to carry out scientific work, to critically assess their scientific findings and to act with professional and ethical responsibility. To this end, students are provided with the necessary specialist knowledge, skills and methods as required by the job market. In addition, the aim is to strengthen the initiative and independence of the students.

### I. General Provisions and Terms

#### § 1. Officers responsible for study matters

The officers responsible for study matters at TU Graz are defined and described in the Excerpt of Statutes: Organisation of Academic Affairs (Officers).

*Regulations regarding curricula that are changed by this Excerpt of Statutes are only to be applied to curricula that come into force from the academic year 2023/24.*

#### § 2. Modules

(1) Degree programmes are subdivided into modules. Modules are thematically related parts of the degree programme, the content and methods of which are generally taught in several courses. Modules are characterised primarily by the didactic connection between the grouped courses.

(2) Compulsory modules constitute a prerequisite for completing a degree programme and listed as in the curriculum accordingly. Courses that a part of these modules must be offered at least once per academic year.

(3) Elective modules are modules from which the students must select courses according to the regulations defined in the curriculum, as well as modules for which courses are to be selected according to the regulations defined in the curriculum or from specified catalogues and which are not modules within the meaning of § 2. Elective modules may be combined into specialisation catalogues or used to structure the degree programme into a major and a minor.

### § 3. Free-choice courses

Free-choice courses can be freely selected by the students from the courses offered by any recognised Austrian or foreign universities, as well as any recognised Austrian or foreign institutes of post-secondary education. Courses that were completed to obtain the qualification for the degree programme pursuant to the Higher Education Entrance Act (StudBerG) or to obtain the general or special university entrance qualification (§ 64 (2) or (3) Universities Act 2002 (UG)) are excluded therefrom. For all bachelor's, master's programmes, free-choice courses make up at least 5% of the total sum of ECTS credit points needed to complete the degree.

*Regulations regarding curricula that are changed by this Excerpt of Statutes are only to be applied to curricula that come into force from the academic year 2023/24.*

### § 4. Types of courses

(1) In the curricula, the following types of courses may be offered:

1. VO ... lecture: Lectures introduce sections of the subject and its methods in a didactically well-prepared way. The contents and methods of a subject are presented.
2. UE ... exercise: In exercises, the students' skills for applications of the subject to concrete problems are developed.
3. KU ... design exercise: In design exercises skills and abilities are imparted and applied, experimentally or constructively in order to deepen and/or widen the material taught in the corresponding lectures in accordance with scientific vocational education. Special equipment or a special spatial equipment is required.
4. LU ... laboratory course: In laboratory courses skills and abilities in the context of scientific vocational training with particularly intensive supervision are imparted in practical, experimental and/or constructive work in order to deepen and/or widen the material taught in the respective lectures. The preparation of protocols is included as an essential part of laboratory courses.
5. PT ... project: In projects, experimental, theoretical and/or constructive, applied work or small-scale research work is carried out taking into account all necessary work steps. Projects are completed with written work that forms part of the assessment. Projects can be carried out as a team work or as individual work – in a team work, the individual performance must remain assessable.
6. VU ... lecture with integrated exercises: In addition to the introduction in sections of the subject and its methods, lectures with integrated exercises (VU) offer instructions for independent knowledge acquisition or independent application in examples.
7. SE ... seminar: Seminars serve to present scientific methods, to develop and critically evaluate own work results, special chapters of the scientific literature and to practice the expert discussion. Papers are written, presented and discussed.
8. SP ... seminar project: In seminar projects, scientific methods are used to deal with experimental, theoretical and/or constructive applied problems and small

research projects are carried out, taking into account all necessary work steps. Seminar projects are completed with a written paper and an oral presentation that forms part of the assessment. Seminar projects can be carried out as a team work or as individual work, whereby the individual performance must remain assessable in a team work.

9. EX ... excursion: Excursions by means of their practical relevance serve to illustrate contents developed in other types of courses.
10. OL ... orientation course: Orientation courses serve as an information opportunity and should provide an overview of the curriculum.
11. PV ... exclusive tutorial: The exclusive tutorial is a research seminar within the scope of the doctoral programme.
12. FU ... field exercise: Field exercises are held outside the premises of TU Graz in the field (e.g., road area, construction sites, alpine terrain, forest, tunnels) and sometimes even in inhospitable weather conditions. The students carry out the exercises essentially independently after appropriate preparation.
13. KV ... supplementary tutorial: Supplementary tutorials support other courses by offering a forum for students to discuss their questions and for the exemplary review of basic concepts.

(2) The courses named in § 4 (2) to (13) are courses with continuous assessment (§ 5 (2) 3b).

(3) When participating in courses in general and especially in laboratory exercises (LU) and field exercises (FU), special caution and responsibility is required from students when working with hazardous equipment, materials and substances, or when teaching the course takes place in the field.

(4) The scope of a course is stated in semester course hours (SSt). One semester course hour is equivalent to 45 minutes per week of the semester.

*Regulations regarding courses and examinations that have been changed by this Excerpt of Statutes only apply starting from summer semester 2023.*

## **§ 5. Examination methods and types**

(1) Within the scope of the course description of a lecture, a distinction must be made between the following examination methods:

1. Oral examinations are examinations in which the examination questions must be answered orally. They are publicly accessible, and admission restrictions are permissible for reasons of spatial conditions.
2. Written examinations are examinations in which the examination questions must be answered in writing.
3. Written and oral examinations are examinations that include both a part pursuant to (1) and a part pursuant to (2).

4. Written or oral examinations are examinations which have either a part according to (1) or a part according to (2). Whether it is an appointment with an oral or written examination method is to be determined by the course management when entering the examination in TUGRAZonline.

(2) A differentiation must be made between the following types of examinations:

1. Individual examinations are examinations held by individual examiners.
2. Examinations before a committee of examiners are examinations that take place before examination committees.
3. Course examinations are examinations that serve to test the knowledge and skills acquired by students during a single course:
  - a) Lecture-type courses are assessed by means of a single examination (lecture examination). If the examination method according to (1) 3 is selected, the examination process consists of both a written and an oral part, separated by a maximum of 10 working days.
  - b) Courses with continuous assessment are assessed by means of regular written and/or oral and/or practical contributions by the participants (continual monitoring of progress).

(3) Students retaking a course with continuous assessment may, from the second retake onwards, apply to be assessed by means of an examination process in accordance with (2) 3a, at the request of the student.

## **§ 6. Structure of the academic year**

Beyond the legal regulations on the structure of the academic year (§ 52 Universities Act 2002 (UG)), the following applies:

1. The academic year must consist of 30 course weeks, whereby 15 course weeks must generally be provided for per semester.
2. An uninterrupted period of at least eight weeks must always be provided as a semester break between the summer semester and the winter semester. The lecture-free period between the winter and summer semesters must last at least two weeks.
3. The Senate determines the exact subdivision of the academic year according to the rules laid out in (4) to (9) and published in the TU Graz University Gazette.
4. The courses of the winter semester begin on 1 October and end on 31 January of the following year. Excluded from this are the Christmas holidays, which start on 21 December and end on 6 January.
5. The lecture-free period between semesters begins on 1 February and ends on 28 or 29 February.
6. The courses of the summer semester begin on 1 March and end on 30 June. Excluded from this are Easter holidays, which begin a week before Easter Sunday and end a week after Easter Sunday.

7. The summer break begins on 1 July and ends on 30 September.
8. Further lecture-free days are 2 November (All Souls' Day), the Tuesday after Pentecost, Rector's Day, and all Sundays and public holidays.
9. Examinations may be held on Saturdays. Lectures may only be held on Saturdays in exceptional cases.

## **II. Degree Programmes**

### **§ 7. Types of degree programmes**

The types of degree programmes that may be established at TU Graz are defined and described in the Excerpt of Statutes: Degree Programme Development.

### **§ 8. Establishing new degree programmes**

The establishment of new degree programmes is regulated in the Excerpt of Statutes: Degree Programme Development.

*Regulations regarding curricula that are changed by this Excerpt of Statutes are only to be applied to curricula that come into force from the academic year 2023/24.*

### **§ 9. Curricular content for bachelor's or master's programmes**

The contents for bachelor's and master's degree programme curriculars are specified in the Excerpt of Statutes: Degree Programme Development.

### **§ 10. Curricular content for doctoral programmes**

The contents for doctoral degree programme curriculars are specified in the Excerpt of Statutes: Degree Programme Development.

### **§ 11. Overall assessment**

An overall assessment must be given in the final degree certificate of bachelor's and master's degree programmes. It is "Passed" if each module, the bachelor's or master's thesis and the master's examination have been assessed positively, otherwise it is "Failed". The overall assessment is "Passed with distinction" if none of the abovementioned achievements were awarded a grade lower than "Good" and at least half of the study achievements were awarded the grade "Excellent". The free-choice courses are not taken into account when determining the overall assessment.

## **§ 12. Legal validity of the curricula**

Provisions on the legal validity of curricula are specified in the Excerpt of Statutes: Degree Programme Development.

## **§ 13. Discontinuation of degree programmes**

Provisions on the discontinuation of degree programmes are specified in the Excerpt of Statutes: Degree Programme Development.

## **§ 14. Admission periods**

Regulations on admission periods are specified in the “Regulation of the Rectorate concerning Admission to Degree Programmes.”

## **§ 15. Mandatory attendance**

Attendance is mandatory for courses with continuous assessment. Students may be exempted from mandatory attendance for individual course units by the course instructor.

## **§ 16. Internships**

It can be specified in the curriculum that upon request, students can replace individual courses listed in the curriculum with the completion of a professional (subject-relevant) internship. This application can be approved by the officer responsible for study matters if the internship is a useful addition to the degree programme.

*The following § 16a only comes into force on the date when the joint guideline by the Senate and the Rectorate on recognitions referred to in § 16a (1) comes into force.*

## **§ 16a Recognition of other professional or non-professional qualifications**

(1) The recognition of professional or non-professional qualifications other than those specified in § 78 (1) and (2) Universities Act 2002 (UG) requires prior validation of the skills acquired in the form of a validation process. As part of the validation process, the university must carry out a preliminary review, which includes reviewing the prerequisites and identifying and documenting the learning outcomes to be validated. The officer responsible for study law reviews the application in a quality-assured process, the details of which are regulated in a joint guideline by the Senate and the Rectorate on recognition of these other professional or non-professional qualifications.

(2) Only qualifications from the field of formal or non-formal learning may be recognised. Recognition of informally acquired skills is not possible. The definitions of formal, non-formal and informal learning are based on the European Council

recommendation 2012/C 398/01 of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning, OJ 2012 C 398/Annex.

### **§ 17. Taking examinations from a master's degree programme before completing the bachelor's degree programme**

Bachelor's degree students may, after completing the orientation period (STEOP), join courses from a consecutive master's degree programme and complete them prior to admission to the master's degree programme, unless the curriculum for the master's degree programme provides otherwise for individual courses.

*Regulations regarding courses and examinations that have been changed by this Excerpt of Statutes only apply starting from summer semester 2023.*

### **§ 18. Orientation period (STEOP)**

(1) Pursuant to § 66 (1) and (2) Universities Act 2002 (UG) on the Study Starting and Orientation Period (STEOP), the following applies:

1. According to § 66 (1) UG, the Study Starting and Orientation Period (STEOP) must be designed in such a way that it provides students with an overview of the essential contents of the respective degree programme and its further development and forms an objective decision-making tool for the individual evaluation of the students' choice of degree programme.
2. It must be ensured that a sufficient number of course and examination dates are offered so that all students can take the STEOP courses in their first semester. STEOP courses must be offered in both the winter and summer semesters.
3. For STEOP lectures, at least two examination dates must be offered following the final lecture unit, with at least two weeks between the announcement of the examination results and the next examination date. A maximum of one of these examinations may also be held during the lecture-free time.
4. a) For degree students of bachelor's degree programme according to a version of the curriculum that is valid before 1 October 2016 (irrespective of versions where only minor changes were made), the following applies:

In addition to the courses assigned to the STEOP, courses with continuous assessment of the first academic year (first and second semester) may be completed. Successfully completed examinations for these courses that do not count for the STEOP do not become valid for the respective degree programme until after the STEOP has been successfully completed.

- b) For students to whom a) does not apply:

In addition to the courses and examinations that are assigned to the STEOP, only courses with a maximum workload of 22 ECTS credit points pursuant to the registration requirements named in the curriculum may be completed.

### **§ 19. Degree programmes and courses in a foreign language**

(1) For degree programmes held in a foreign language within the meaning of § 63a (8) Universities Act 2002 (UG), the curriculum may stipulate that individual courses assigned to a catalogue of electives, and which are not compulsory to complete for the choice of this catalogue may be held in German. There must always be a sufficient choice for the individual specialisation.

(2) For degree programmes that are not held in a foreign language within the meaning of § 63a (8) UG, the course instructors are entitled to hold and examine their courses in a foreign language if this is approved by the officer responsible for study matters and the students have sufficient command of the language. For examinations held in a foreign language, command of the teaching material and not the level of the language skills must form the criterion for the assessment, provided that this foreign language is not the subject of this course.

(3) Degree students are entitled to write theses (i.e., master's and doctoral theses) in a foreign language with approval by the supervisor.

## **III. Examinations**

*Regulations regarding courses and examinations that have been changed by this Excerpt of Statutes only apply starting from summer semester 2023.*

### **§ 20. Registration and deregistration for course examinations**

(1) Students are entitled to register for the course examinations within the specified registration period with the course instructor. Registration must be accepted if the student fulfils the registration requirements specified in the curriculum and the registration for the continuation of studies for the relevant semester is present.

(2) With their registration, students are entitled to apply to take the examination using an alternative examination method to that of the examination method specified in the curriculum. Applications for a deviating method of assessment are approved if the student in question demonstrates a persistent inability to attend, thus preventing him/her from taking the examination in the stipulated manner and if the content and requirements of the examination are not affected by a different method of assessment.

(3) If registration and application for an alternative examination method from the second retake of a course examination are not accepted, the officer responsible for study matters must decree this by means of a notice after consultation with the course instructor if the student submits a written application for a notice to be issued.

(4) Deregistration from examinations must be carried out no later than 48 hours before the time of the examination, with any Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays that occur within this period extending it by 24 hours.

(5) At the beginning of the registration period, the examiner or the chairperson of the examination committee may determine that students who fail to attend the examination without a comprehensible reason are to be blocked from registering for the same examination for a maximum duration of eight weeks or for the next examination date. If the student concerned is able to provide the examiner with a comprehensible, important reason for non-attendance, the examiner must revoke this registration block immediately. As a consequence, students may also be placed towards the bottom of the list when the examination places for the course concerned are allocated. The stipulations in (5) do not apply for courses with continuous assessment.

## **§ 21. Information requirements**

(1) The content, form, method, dates, permitted aids, assessment criteria and assessment standards of the courses and course examinations must be announced to the students in the course description in TUGRAZonline before the beginning of the semester.

(2) If changes must be made to any course and examination information announced in accordance with (1) during the semester for compelling reasons to be determined by the Rectorate, any changes must be communicated to the students immediately and in a suitable manner. In any case, students who no longer wish to take part in a course with continuous assessment under the changed framework conditions must be given the right to deregister within 48 hours of notification of the changes without this deregistration being counted towards the total number of permitted examination attempts. In the case of a lecture examination, such a change represents an important reason for deregistration within the meaning of § 20 (4).

## **§ 22. Course examinations**

(1) Course examinations must be held by the course instructor.

(2) If required, the officer responsible for study matters must appoint another professionally qualified examiner.

(3) In the case of exercises (UE), design exercises (KU) and lectures with integrated exercises (VU), students must be able to repeat specific partial course requirements (e.g. written exams, tests, oral examinations, presentations, etc.), the negative assessment or non-submission (except for negative assessments of examinations within the meaning of § 27) of which would lead to an overall negative assessment of the course or which make a contribution of at least 40% to the overall assessment, once in a suitable form within four weeks of the end of the course by students who would otherwise receive a negative assessment. All individual partial course requirements to be completed on the same day are to be added up with regard to the possibility of repetition. This repetition is not to be counted as a further attempt at the examination and is not to be sanctioned by restricting the achievable points or

deducting points. If the registration period for a course which builds upon the content of this course ends within this time frame, this possibility must be extended until the end of the registration period.

(4) The data on which the assessment is based (assessment documents) must be kept for at least 6 months and up to a maximum of one year after the examination. Excluded from this is data storage as part of the electronic plagiarism check.

### **§ 23. Final examination before a committee**

(1) If the completion of final examinations before a committee is stipulated in the curriculum, students are entitled to register for an examination with the officer responsible for study matters within the specified registration period. The officer responsible for study matters must accept registration if the student has provided proof that he/she fulfils the registration requirements specified in the curriculum.

(2) Along with their registration, students are entitled to submit applications for:

1. The members of the examination committee,
2. the examination date, and
3. holding the examination using an alternative method to the examination method specified in the curriculum.

(3) The applications submitted by the student with regard to the members of the examination committee and the examination dates must be taken into account, if possible. Applications for an alternative examination method are approved if the student in question demonstrates a persistent inability to attend, thus preventing him/her from taking the examination in the stipulated manner, and if the content and requirements of the examination are not affected by a different method of assessment.

(4) If the registration, the application for a specific examiner from the second retake or the application for an alternative examination method is not accepted, the officer responsible for study matters must decree this by means of a notice if the student submits a written application for a notice to be issued.

(5) Students must be notified in a suitable manner of the assigned members of the examination committee and examination dates by no later than three weeks before the examination is held. In the event of an examiner's incapacity, he/she may be replaced by a substitute.

(6) Deregistration from final examinations before a committee are only permissible if important reasons are given.

(7) The methods and the type of examinations are defined in the curriculum.

(8) The officer responsible for study matters must include members of TU Graz with a subject-relevant teaching qualification at Graz University of Technology in final examinations before a committee.

(9) The officer responsible for study matters is entitled to also appoint persons with "venia docendi" teaching qualification at another recognised Austrian or foreign university as members of the examination committee for final examinations before a

committee if their teaching qualification is equivalent to a “venia docendi” teaching qualification pursuant to (8).

(10) In the case of master’s examinations, the officer responsible for study matters is also entitled to consult academic staff with a subject-relevant doctorate from TU Graz or from universities with which jointly offered degree programmes exist.

## **§ 24. Examination committees**

(1) The officer responsible for study matters must form examination committees for examinations before a committee.

(2) Such a committee must consist of at least three persons.

(3) If the examination is the last possible retake of an examination, it must be held in the form of a single examination and the officer responsible for study matters must be the chairperson of the examination committee.

(4) The consultation and agreement on the assessment of an examination before a committee – for each subject in the event of several examination modules – must take place in a closed session of the examination committee after a discussion between the members. The examination committee’s decisions must be made by majority vote, and the chairperson must exercise his/her right to vote as the other members of the committee but must vote last. The examination committee must reach a decision regarding the assessment, otherwise the chairperson’s vote decides. Every member of the examination committee must also take into consideration the overall impression of the examination when the vote is taken on the result in the individual subjects.

*Regulations regarding courses and examinations that have been changed by this Excerpt of Statutes only apply starting from summer semester 2023.*

## **§ 25. Examination dates for lecture examinations**

(1) The officer responsible for study matters must determine examination dates for lecture examinations in such a way that students are able to adhere to the duration of study defined in the curriculum. The officer responsible for study matters must be responsible for the coordination of the examination dates. The three statutory examination dates must be distributed appropriately throughout the semester. They must be announced before the start of the respective semester and at least four weeks before the respective examination date.

(2) In so far as possible, the officer responsible for study matters is entitled to transfer the responsibility for determining examination dates to the course instructors.

(3) The officer responsible for study matters must determine a registration period of at least two weeks for examinations. In so far as possible, the officer responsible for study matters is entitled to transfer the responsibility for determining the registration periods to the course instructors. The registration periods for examinations must end no earlier than one week before the examination date.

(4) Mutual personal agreements about additional examination dates between students and examiners are permitted, even during the time when there are no lectures. Additional examination dates may also be scheduled at any time, even during the time when there are no lectures.

(5) Examinations must always be offered until the end of the third semester following the lecture.

(6) For examinations with a limited number of examinees, the officer responsible for study matters must ensure that a waiting list is managed in the electronic system. Students must be admitted to the earliest possible examination date according to this waiting list, but no later than within a period of two months.

## **§ 26. Holding examinations**

(1) In the examination, students must be given the opportunity to demonstrate their acquired level of the knowledge and skills. In this context, the content and scope of the course material must be taken into account.

(2) In the case of examinations conducted in a foreign language within the framework of degree programmes pursuant to § 63a (8) Universities Act 2002 (UG), the examination must also be conducted entirely in that foreign language.

(3) For oral examinations before a committee, every member of the examination committee must be present for the entire duration of the examination. For examinations which include a presentation and/or questions on the content of a restricted thesis in accordance with § 86 (4) UG, this part of the examination must not be public upon request by the student.

(4) The examiners must test the students' knowledge and skills in a transparent and comprehensive manner and evaluate these in the assessment. Every examiner must announce the knowledge and skills expected from the students in the respective course description in TUGRAZonline, so that the requirements of the examinations are clear to the students. When announcing the examination requirements, care must be taken to ensure that these are consistent with the teaching content. In addition, the examination mode and the weighting of partial course requirements must be defined and made public. The examiner or the chairperson of the examination committee must ensure that examinations are conducted in an orderly manner and must make records of the examinations. The examination records must include the examination subject, the time and place of the examination, the examiner's name or the names of the members of the examination committee, the student's name, the questions asked, the assessments awarded, and, if applicable, the reasons for a negative assessment and also any unusual occurrences. Upon application, the student must be notified in writing of the reasons for a negative assessment. The examination records must be kept for at least six months from the time that the assessment is announced.

(5) The assessment of an oral examination must be announced to the student immediately after the examination. Degree certificate are to be issued in accordance with (6). If the examination is assessed negatively, the reasons for the negative assessment must be explained to the student.

(6) Written examinations must be assessed in such a way that it is possible to issue degree certificates in accordance with § 76 (4) UG immediately, but by no later than within four weeks after completion of the achievements to be assessed. If the examiner exceeds the four-week deadline and if completion is a registration requirement for course examinations, the course is deemed to have been completed and the ECTS credit points are taken into account in the ranking regarding the assignment of places in courses.

(7) Partial course requirements within the framework of courses with continuous assessment are to be assessed immediately, at the latest within four weeks after completion, and the students must be informed of their results in a suitable manner.

(8) If a student abandons an examination that he/she has begun and does not give an important reason for this, the examination must be assessed negatively. The officer responsible for study matters must determine whether an important reason exists by means of a notice upon application by the student. The application must be submitted within four weeks from the time that the examination was abandoned. An examination must be considered to have been begun if the first question has been asked in the case of an oral examination, or the examination questions or tasks have been received in the case of a written examination. For courses with continuous assessment, the demonstrable acceptance of the first subtask (which is announced by the course instructor in the course description and in the first course unit) is equated with beginning the examination. If the student does not complete the further partial course requirements and does not have an important reason for this (e.g., medical certificate), this must be considered an abandonment of the examination, and the examination must be assessed negatively.

(9) If there are repeated examinations for a course, in which the proportion of negative assessments exceeds 80% of all students who have taken the examination, the respective officer responsible for study matters must examine the cause, document it in writing and take appropriate measures.

## **§ 27. Use of prohibited aids in examinations**

For regulations on the use of unauthorised aids, see Excerpt of Statutes: Plagiarism.

## **§ 28. Retaking course examinations**

(1) Students are entitled to retake negatively assessed course examinations four times in total. If the examination was held in the form of a single examination, the third, fourth and fifth attempt always take place before a committee. Upon written application by the student, the second attempt may also be an examination before a committee.

(2) Deviating from (1), negatively assessed examinations of the Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree programme Teacher Education for Secondary Schools (General Education) may only be retaken three times.

(3) In the case of a repeat attempt before a committee, the examination method according to § 5 (1) 1–3 is retained, unless the course management has specified a different examination method for the examination before the committee in the course

description. In the case of the examination method according to § 5 (1) 4, the examination before a committee oral is conducted as an oral examination.

(4) Should the last retake of the last course examination of the degree programme be assessed negatively, the student is entitled to one more retake in front of an examination committee of at least five members, deviating from § 24 (2). An examination is considered the last examination in a degree programme if all other courses and examinations defined in the curriculum of the respective degree programme as well as the final thesis according to § 80 Universities Act (UG) or the scientific or artistic work according to § 81 UG have been positively assessed.

## **IV. Virtual Teaching and Online Examinations**

### **§28a. Support for virtual teaching and online examinations**

(1) TU Graz provides central support by offering alternative study and examination environments – including the use of (computer/study) rooms on the TU Graz campus – for students who cannot or do not wish to participate virtually from home for technical or other reasons.

(2) TU Graz explicitly prefers to hold both oral and written examinations in person.

### **§28b. Virtual teaching**

(1) Teaching staff may use digital teaching and learning elements and formats as didactic tools in their courses. These should also make it possible for students to interact with one another.

(2) Synchronous virtual teaching is a form of teaching that makes it possible for all virtual participants to interact simultaneously (e.g., through video conferencing). Asynchronous virtual teaching is a form of teaching that makes asynchronous interactions possible.

(3) The contact hours correspond to the semester course hours planned for the course.

(4) Teaching staff may hold the contact hours set for the course in the form of synchronous virtual teaching unless another form is dictated in the curriculum.

(5) In individual cases, the officer responsible for study matters may approve holding the contact hours planned for the course in the form of asynchronous virtual teaching as a substitute.

(6) Students who participate in a course with continuous assessment via video conferencing are considered as being present in person, in the sense of § 15 Excerpt of Statutes: Legal Regulations for Academic Affairs, as long as they are able to communicate using an audio-visual connection.

(7) Before the beginning of the semester, students will be informed in the course description available in TUGRAZonline about the course concept and the planned use of digital teaching and learning elements and formats as well as virtual teaching.

### **§28c. Online examinations**

- (1) Online examinations are examinations given with electronic communication.
- (2) The students' contributions (partial course requirements) in courses with continuous assessment may be made entirely or partially as online examinations. Here, § 28d and § 28e apply mutatis mutandis.
- (3) In order to hold an online examination, all examinees must have access to a suitable examination environment. For this purpose, TU Graz provides the examinees with access to the alternative examination environments described in § 28a if required.

### **§28d. Oral online examinations**

- (1) Oral lecture examinations and examinations before a committee (including master's and doctoral examinations) that are held as online examinations must be conducted by video conference using software provided by TU Graz or another solution that is approved by TU Graz and conforms to the data protection regulations.
- (2) Before the examination begins, the examiner must be presented with clear proof of the student's identity. The student ID or an official photo ID serves as such proof. The process of establishing the student's identity with an identity card must, if possible, take place such that the identity card data is only visible to the examiner.
- (3) The examiner must publish information in a suitable place and well ahead of time about whether and which aids may be used during the examination, enabling the students to properly prepare for the examination. In addition, reference must be made to these general conditions during each examination. Both before and, if necessary, during the examination, the examiner can request the student to show by means of a sweeping camera shot that the examination environment is free of unauthorised aids and that no persons who could provide unauthorised assistance are in the room. During this process, the examiner should display the greatest possible consideration for the student's privacy. In turn, the students may request that the video feed of any spectators be switched off during the sweeping shot.
- (4) In order to enable public access, the examiner may enable further persons to participate as listeners or spectators. In order to ensure that the examination is carried out in an orderly manner and to optimise the transmission quality, the number of persons added may be limited to a number appropriate for the technical conditions. The student is entitled to name at least one person of trust who may access the examination in any case. No additional persons who could provide unauthorised assistance may be present in the room with the student.
- (5) Recording the video conference in oral online examinations is prohibited. The examiner must also inform the listeners or viewers of this at the beginning of the examination.
- (6) If the video conference is interrupted for technical reasons, the examiner will decide whether the examination should be continued or cancelled after the interruption. The examination process must be continued as soon as possible, but in any case, within ten working days. If technical problems for which the student is not responsible result in the abandonment of the examination, this attempt will not be counted towards the

permissible number of examinations. If the performance up to the point that the examination was abandoned is sufficient for a positive assessment to be made, the examination attempt may be assessed upon the student's request.

(7) The examiner will announce the assessment immediately after the end of the examination. This does not apply to partial course requirements in courses with continuous assessment, which are taken in the form of an examination discussion as an online examination. In the case of examinations before a committee, the video/audio feeds of the student and any listeners or spectators will be switched off during the deliberations of the examination committee and then switched on again for the announcement of the assessment.

### **§28e. Written online examinations**

(1) Written examinations for lecture courses held as online examinations need to be conducted using the software provided by TU Graz or a solution which is approved by TU Graz and complies with the data protection regulations. The students should be informed before the beginning of the semester in the course description about the selected electronic examination environment as well as about standards the technical devices that may be used by students must meet.

(2) The examiner will verify the students' identities. The identity can be established by using the student account data and – at least on a random basis – by checking the student ID card or an official photo ID.

(3) The examiner must publish information in a suitable place and well ahead of time about whether and which aids may be used during the examination, enabling the students to properly prepare for the examination. In addition, reference must be made to these general conditions during each examination.

(4) In order to ensure that the students carry out the examination independently, the examiner or professionally qualified persons commissioned by him/her may hold discussions with students within three working days after the examination to check the plausibility of their answers. The content of the interview is limited to questions that have already been posed in writing. The interviews may be conducted randomly and without any specific suspicion, but they must be announced in advance. The students are required to cooperate. The time window during which the student must make him/herself available for an interview must be announced at the beginning of the registration period and may not exceed three hours. The interviews serve to check whether the student has truly carried out the examination independently and are not used to assess the examination content. A record of the interview must be made and attached to the assessment documents. If academic misconduct is suspected, the procedure according to the Excerpt of Statutes: Plagiarism will be followed.

(5) In order to supervise the examination or to ensure that the students carry out the examination independently, the examiner can use certain obligatory data processing software functions described below in a software provided by TU Graz. The examiner should base their decision whether to use this software on the examination scenario and after carefully considering the individual case, also taking into account how easy it may or may not be to cheat on the individual online examination. In each case, the examiner should strive to protect the student's privacy:

1. The examiner or the supervisory staff may request that an identity check be carried out by asking the student to show their student ID or official photo ID during an examination held as a video conference. The process of establishing the student's identity with an identity card must, if possible, take place in such a manner that the identity card data is only visible to the examiner or the supervisory staff.
2. Before the examination begins and, if any doubt exists, during the examination, the examiner or supervisory staff may ask the student to demonstrate with a sweeping camera shot that the examination environment is free of unauthorised aids and that no persons who could provide unauthorised assistance are in the room. It must be ensured that the sweeping shot is only visible to the examiner or supervisory staff.
3. The examiner may require a video-audio transmission from one or two cameras, directed to show the student's face and work area (such as the sheet of paper or computer monitor upon which the examination is taking place), to supervisory staff shortly before, after and during the examination, in order to reduce the possibility that the student is cheating by communicating with another person on site and/or using unauthorised aids or other electronic devices. Depending on the technical and organisational possibilities, precautions will be taken to ensure that only the examiner or the supervisory staff can view the student's camera transmission. This video transmission and any randomly taken photos may be recorded and must be deleted after three working days at the latest. The storage of videos and photos must be announced to the students when the examination date is announced. An equivalent in-person examination that takes place at the same time or within 10 working days or another form of online examination (carried out without the measures listed in point 3) must be offered as an alternative.

(6) Data processing measures that go beyond those described in (5) for the purpose of supervising the examination are inadmissible.

Exceptions may be made after a legal and ethical review is conducted by the Committee for Online Examinations established for this purpose by the Senate and the Rectorate (consisting of one Senate member from each represented group/curia, with the exception of the curia of the non-academic staff, and the Rectorate member responsible for academic affairs as well as another Rectorate member). The Senate's rules of procedure will be applied *mutatis mutandis*. The committee will examine whether a pilot phase can be initiated in a real examination based on the research results submitted from data-processing measures that have not previously been used to verify whether the examination can be carried out independently. The pilot phase includes selected examinations, is limited to a maximum period of three academic years and is subject to ongoing evaluations. Participation in the pilot phase is voluntary for teaching staff and students. The Committee may propose to transition from the pilot phase into normal examinations and anchor these measures in the statute.

(7) If unauthorised aids are used during the examination or if the rules of good scientific practice are violated by copying text passages or source code in an unauthorised manner (plagiarism), by carrying out unauthorised group work (collusion), or other

forms of falsifying performance, action will be taken in accordance with § 7 Excerpt of Statutes: Plagiarism.

(8) The examiner or a person appointed by him/her must be available to the students for the entire duration of the examination. The communication channels that should be used for this must be chosen by the examiner and announced to the students at least one day before the examination. If internet connection interruptions occur, students must be able to reach the examiner by telephone.

(9) If students are unable to access specific information about the examination or turn in the examination on time due to the lack of an internet connection, they must immediately contact the examiner, or the person appointed by him/her to obtain this access or turn in the examination. If it is not possible to (completely) submit the examination due to a lack of an internet connection, and the examiner is immediately informed of the problem, this is treated as abandonment of the examination for which the student is not responsible. This examination attempt will not be counted towards the number of examination attempts. If the performance up to the point that the examination was abandoned is sufficient for a positive assessment to be made, the examination attempt may be assessed upon the student's request.

## V. Supervising Theses

### § 29. Theses

(1) More detailed provisions on the topic of the bachelor's, master's, diploma or doctoral thesis must be determined in the curriculum.

(2) Members of Graz University of Technology with a teaching qualification at the Graz University of Technology are entitled to supervise and assess theses from the subject of their "venia docendi" teaching qualification.

(3) The officer responsible for study matters is also entitled to appoint persons with a teaching qualification at a recognised Austrian or foreign university to supervise and assess theses if their "venia docendi" teaching qualification is equivalent to a "venia docendi" teaching qualification pursuant to (2).

(4) The officer responsible for study matters is also entitled to appoint suitable academic staff with a doctorate from TU Graz or from universities with which jointly offered degree programmes exist, to supervise and assess master's theses.

(5) Positively judged scientific and artistic works are to be published by handing over the thesis or the documentation of the artistic work to the library of the TU Graz. This handover must take place in electronic form (PDF format). The publication must be made electronically in a publicly accessible repository.

(6) Restricted work according to § 86 (4) Universities Act 2002 (UG) is not published for the duration of the exclusion of use. The maximum duration of the exclusion of the use of academic work is five years (§ 86 (4) UG). The restriction of use is initially imposed for two years and can be extended once for a maximum of three years if an

application in this regard is submitted in due time before expiry of the first exclusion period and the conditions pursuant to § 86 (4) UG are still given.

### **§ 30. Master's theses**

(1) Subject to the provisions of the curriculum, the student is entitled to propose the topic for the master's thesis or to choose the topic from a number of proposals made by the available supervisors pursuant to § 29. The supervisors of master's theses must ensure that the topic and content of the thesis correspond to the stipulated workload.

(2) The student is entitled to choose a supervisor for the master's thesis, depending on the availability. If this is not successful, the student has the right to be assigned a supervisor by the officer responsible for study matters. The student must notify the officer responsible for study matters in writing of the topic and the supervisor of the master's thesis before beginning work on the thesis. The topic and supervisor are considered to be accepted if the officer responsible for study matters does not prohibit this acceptance by means of a notice within one month after receiving the announcement. A change of supervisor must be permissible up until the master's thesis is submitted (3); the officer responsible for study matters must be notified of any change made.

(3) The completed master's thesis must be submitted for assessment to the relevant officer responsible for study matters via the Dean's Office. The assessment of the master's thesis must take place within two months from its submission. If the master's thesis is not assessed in a timely manner, the officer responsible for study matters must refer the master's thesis to another professor pursuant to § 29 for assessment, upon application by the student.

### **§ 31. Doctoral theses**

(1) The student is entitled to choose a supervisor of the doctoral thesis, depending on the availability.

(2) Subject to the provisions of the curriculum, the student is entitled to propose the topic or to choose the topic from a number of proposals.

(3) To ensure the quality of the doctoral programmes offered at TU Graz, supervision for the doctoral thesis must be confirmed at the time of admission to the doctoral programme. The topic and supervisor are considered to be accepted if the officer responsible for study matters does not prohibit this acceptance by means of a notice within one month after receiving the announcement. A change of supervisor must be permissible up until the doctoral thesis is submitted (4); the officer responsible for study matters must approve of any change made.

(4) The completed doctoral thesis must be submitted to the officer responsible for study matters. The officer responsible for study matters must submit the doctoral thesis to two professors pursuant to § 29 (2) and (3), who must assess the doctoral thesis within a maximum of four months. The second assessor may be taken from a subject closely related to the subject of the doctoral thesis. The publication of completed parts in international publication media is recommended, including before the assessment of the doctoral thesis. If proof of such publications cannot be provided at the time that the

assessors are appointed, a minimum of three reviews must be obtained for assessments of the doctoral thesis, at least one of which must come from a Graz University of Technology-external assessor.

(5) If an assessor awards the doctoral thesis a negative assessment, the officer responsible for study matters must appoint another assessor pursuant to § 29 (2) and (3), who must be from at least one closely related subject. He/she must assess the doctoral thesis within two months. The assessors must subsequently make a joint decision on the grade. If more than one assessor awards the thesis a negative assessment, the overall assessment must be negative.

(6) If the assessors award the thesis different grades in their assessments made independently of each other and are then not able to agree on a grade with a majority, the proposed assessments must be added together, the result of the addition must be divided by the number of the assessors and the result must be rounded to a whole-numbered grade. The grade must be rounded up if the decimal place exceeds 0.5. A majority assessment (grade) must exist if the majority of the assessors vote for a particular assessment (e.g. two assessors vote for “Unsatisfactory”, and one for “Excellent”: the majority voted for “Unsatisfactory” and a decision is made; if, however, one assessor votes for “Unsatisfactory”, one for “Sufficient” and one for “Excellent”, there is no majority for an assessment and therefore no decision is made; the assessment must be determined using the calculation specified here). An averaging process must only take place for cases in which there is no majority for a particular assessment.

(7) The officer responsible for study matters must inform the university professors from the subject area and the tenured habilitated staff members from the subject area immediately upon receipt of the assessments that these have been received and are ready to be viewed. These persons must be demonstrably informed that they are subject to the confidentiality obligation. The abovementioned persons are entitled to submit statements on the assessments to the officer responsible for study matters within a period of two weeks.

(8) The doctoral candidate may view the assessments pursuant to § 84 Universities Act 2002 (UG) after the grade has been announced.

### **§ 32. Ensuring good academic practice**

Students must comply with the rules of good academic practice. Compliance must be verified, in particular to prevent plagiarism. More detailed provisions can be found in Excerpt of Statutes: Plagiarism.

## **VI. Nostrification of Foreign University Degrees**

### **§ 33. Nostrification application**

(1) In the application for nostrification, the applicant must indicate the Austrian degree programme that is comparable to the foreign degree programme he/she has completed

along with the Austrian university degree pursued for nostrification. The following proof of the fulfilment of the prerequisites pursuant to § 90 Universities Act 2002 (UG) must be submitted with the application:

1. passport;
2. proof from a recognised Austrian institute of post-secondary education of comparable quality to the recognised foreign institute of post-secondary education;
3. proof of the studies completed at the recognised foreign institute of post-secondary education, and
4. the certificate issued as proof of the university degree awarded or if, however, no such degree was to be awarded, then the certificate issued as proof of the proper completion of the degree programme.

(2) If required, the applicant must submit authorised translations of certificates in a foreign language. English-language certificates do not need to be translated. The certificate pursuant to (1) 4 must be submitted in the original.

(3) The officer responsible for study matters is entitled to waive the obligation to submit some documents if it is established to his/her satisfaction that it would be impossible or excessively difficult to obtain them within a reasonable period and that the documents submitted are sufficient for a decision.

### **§ 34. Investigation procedure**

(1) While taking into consideration the valid curriculum at the time of the application, the officer responsible for study matters must verify whether the foreign degree programme was structured in such a way as to make it equivalent to the Austrian degree programme named in the application with regard to the result of the overall education. A sampling test must also be permissible as proof, to obtain more detailed knowledge about the content of the foreign degree programme.

(2) If the degrees are generally equivalent and only certain supplementary qualifications are required for full equivalence, the officer responsible for study matters must admit the applicant to the degree programme as a non-degree student by means of a notice and prescribe the completion of examinations and possibly of a thesis to achieve equivalence within a reasonable period to be determined in the notice.

(3) The provisions regarding the recognition of examinations do not apply.

## **VII. Tuition Fees**

### **§ 35. Tuition fees**

(1) Students must pay the prescribed tuition fees pursuant to § 91 Universities Act 2002 (UG). Tuition fees that have not been paid in full must be considered as not having been paid. In the case of tuition fees that have not been paid in full, students

must have the possibility of paying the difference. In the event of payment within the extended admission period, the difference must be based on the increased fees.

(2) Upon application, semesters in which study periods or internships of at least two weeks were demonstrably completed within the framework of transnational EU, state or university mobility programmes (carried out by TU Graz / University of Graz in case of NAWI Graz degree programmes) must not be taken into account in the calculation of the duration of study when calculating the scheduled period of study pursuant to § 91 UG. Self-organised mobility programmes require prior approval by the officer responsible for study matters.

(3) A mobility programme that takes place during the holidays and the lecture-free period between semesters can only be used for the assessment of the duration of the study if at least two weeks of the mobility programme do not fall into the lecture-free period between semesters or summer holidays.

(4) If participation begins in the lecture-free period between semesters or summer holidays, it is to be allocated to the following semester. If a mobility programme extends over several semesters, the mobility programme must be taken into account for all semesters.

(5) Study periods in the context of mobility programmes in bachelor's degree programmes can also be claimed as part of the consecutive master's degree programme.

### **§ 36. Waiver and reimbursement of tuition fees**

(1) In addition to the facts for the waiver of tuition fees named in § 92 (1) Universities Act 2002 (UG), the Rectorate may waive tuition fees for the current semester upon application, if the student loses his/her status as a student subject to tuition fees before the end of the extended admission period of the relevant semester for one of the reasons below:

1. completion of studies that would also have been possible on the basis of the continued effect of the registration for the continuation of studies for the previous semester without the payment of tuition fees for the current semester, or
2. abandonment of studies, provided that the student was registered for the continuation of studies in the immediately preceding semester, or
3. abandonment of studies, provided that the student took no examinations and submitted no thesis for assessment in the relevant semester.

(2) In the event of the student's death, the tuition fees must be waived under the conditions named in (1) 3 and must be reimbursed.

(3) Upon application by the student, the difference may be reimbursed for the current semester if

1. higher tuition fees were paid than the prescribed tuition fees, or

2. the tuition fees that had already been paid were waived as a result of an application submitted by the end of the extended admission period of the relevant semester, or
3. tuition fees were paid that did not have to be paid or that were not valid for use as registration for the continuation of studies as a result of their late receipt.

(4) Tuition fees must be waived for foreign degree students pursuant to § 91 (2) UG, whose most recently attended university concluded a university partnership agreement with TU Graz, which also provides for the reciprocal waiver of tuition fees.

(5) Upon application, tuition fees must be waived for students who can provide proof of periods served as a student representative pursuant to the Students' Union Act 2014 (HSG) during their bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree programme at TU Graz. The waiver may be claimed for a maximum of four semesters throughout the entire duration of study at TU Graz.

(6) Degree students of certain nationalities – Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine and Belarus – during their bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree programme at Graz University of Technology with appropriate study progress can have their tuition fee reimbursed on application, with the implementing provisions to be published in the University Gazette.

(7) Degree and non-degree students who, as asylum seekers, are entitled to stay in Austria due to asylum law provisions, can apply for a waiver of the tuition fee.

(8) For students who, during the last two years of their bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree programme at TU Graz, have periods of at least two semesters as employees in a management function of a student team, which is formed annually and participates in international competitions and is therefore funded by the Rectorate, the tuition fee can be waived on application. The waiver may be claimed for a maximum of four semesters during the entire duration of study at Graz University of Technology, whereby in the course of each application two further semesters of participation in the management function of a student team have to be proven. For each semester only one waiver per student team is available.

## **VIII. Special Provisions**

### **§ 37. Jointly offered degree programmes**

Provisions on jointly offered degree programmes are specified in the Excerpt of Statutes: Degree Programme Development.

### **§ 38. Degree certificates, records, academic celebrations**

(1) Upon completion of a master's or doctoral degree programme, a certificate of completion ("degree certificate") must be issued in addition to the notice of awarding of the academic degree. The degree certificate must bear the seal of Graz University of Technology.

(2) In the case of jointly offered degree programmes, degree certificates bear the logos of all partner universities.

(3) The certificate according to (1) may be handed over informally, delivered by post or awarded as part of an academic celebration (“graduation ceremony”).

(4) The names and academic degrees awarded to graduates of master’s and doctoral degree programmes must be published once per semester in the TU Graz University Gazette.

(5) Further provisions (design, organisation, deadlines, participation, etc.) for academic celebrations must be announced in a directive from the Rectorate.

### **§38a. Academic leave**

(1) In addition to the reasons for academic leave in accordance with § 67 (1) Universities Act 2002 (UG), students can also apply for a leave of absence due to gainful employment that prevents them from progressing with their studies. Gainful employment amounting to 20 hours per week or less is not assumed to prevent students from progressing with their studies.

(2) Gainful employment must be substantiated by a corresponding confirmation (or in the case of self-employment by means of an affidavit), which must be submitted in advance by 30 September for the respective winter semester and by 28 or 29 February for the respective summer semester of the respective calendar year.

### **§38b. Recordings**

Recordings of courses (photos, audio or video recordings) by students are only permitted with the express consent of the lecturer. Any disclosure or publication of such a recording is only permitted with the express consent of all recorded persons.

## **IX. Transitional Provisions and Entry Into Force**

### **§ 39. Transitional provisions for curricula**

(1) The curriculum must stipulate that, once a new curriculum has come into force, degree students are entitled to complete the degree programme that has not yet been completed at the time of the coming into force within the legally stipulated period of study plus one semester per stage of the degree programme. In the case of degree programmes with only one stage (bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral programmes), two semesters must be allocated in addition to the scheduled duration of study according to the curriculum.

(2) If the degree programme is not completed in time, the student is subject to the new curriculum for the rest of their degree programme. Students are entitled to voluntarily switch to the new curriculum at any time within the respective admission periods.

(3) The curriculum must determine specific provisions on equivalency of positively assessed examinations for the expiring and the new curriculum. In these provisions, care must be taken to ensure that students do not suffer from any major disadvantage regarding academic progress as a result of the change.

(4) Care must also be taken to ensure that students have the possibility of completing their degree programme according to the expiring curriculum. The officer responsible for study matters must ensure that courses offered in the expiring curriculum are still offered after the new curriculum has come into effect, if necessary and if it would not otherwise be possible to complete the degree programme according to the expiring curriculum.

(5) Degree students who are subject to the new curriculum pursuant to (2) are entitled to submit applications to the officer responsible for study matters for the recognition of positively assessed examinations that deviate from or supplement the provisions determined pursuant to (3).

#### **§ 40. Entry into force and expiration**

(1) This Excerpt of Statutes, unless otherwise specified, comes into force on 17 November 2022 (following the announcement in the TU Graz University Gazette). At the same time, the Excerpt of Statutes: Legal Regulations for Academic Affairs (published in the TU Graz University Gazette on 18 July 2021, Issue 22, No. 223) expires.

(2) The following deviations from (1) apply:

1. Regulations regarding curricula that are changed by this Excerpt of Statutes are only to be applied to curricula that come into force from the academic year 2023/24.
2. Regulations regarding courses and examinations changed by this Excerpt of Statutes are only applicable from the summer semester 2023.
3. § 16a only comes into force on the date on which the joint guideline by the Senate and the Rectorate on recognitions referred to in § 16a (1) comes into force.