

These examination regulations are intended as a blueprint and can be used as a basis to formulate an appropriate examination regulations policy document. Some points, however, need to be clarified in accordance with individual university standard practice. For instance, in paragraph 1.3 each institution must decide whether cumulative assessment will be used for the first level or whether a final comprehensive examination at the end of the level will be held instead. The text must therefore be adapted in certain areas.

### § 1 Context and Aims of the Examination<sup>1</sup>

1.1 Within the framework of, or as a complement to, the academic course programmes available at [university XXX], foreign language course programmes are offered in a number of specific languages (see Appendix). These courses lead to UNICert<sup>®</sup> university foreign language certificates, with standards and levels mutually recognised between universities.

1.2 The language teaching unit [Name of Unit] of the university is responsible for running the language courses, which are specifically tailored to the needs and learning styles of (future) academics. In accordance with the facilities available, language course programmes are offered at one or several of four levels (and also for the preliminary preparatory level UNICert<sup>®</sup> Basis) and, in addition to languages for general academic purposes, may also feature a scientific or specialist subject focus (see Appendix).

1.3 Each of the four academic levels covers course programmes lasting XX classroom hours for Level I (YYY contact hours or ZZZ hours' workload) and XX classroom hours (120 to 180 contact hours or 240 to 360 hours workload) for each level between Levels II and IV. Each level has its own individual profile, although the levels are designed to encourage natural progression from one level to the next. The profiles are documented at the end of each level. The certificate for Levels UNICert<sup>®</sup> Basis, I and II is awarded either on the basis of formal examination or by cumulation of all previously attained course marks. A certificate for Levels III and IV, however, may only be awarded on the basis of formal examination. Whereas the Level I (including UNICert<sup>®</sup> Basis) courses principally feature general language training and intercultural aspects, the higher levels may offer variants with a greater bias towards specialist subject areas.

1.4 The academic course programme for UNICert<sup>®</sup> Level I is subdivided for the languages XXX into a preliminary preparatory level UNICert<sup>®</sup> Basis, which is comprised of XX (at least 8) classroom hours or YYY hours of workload, and Level I, which is comprised of XX (at least 4) classroom hours or YYY hours of workload.

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<sup>1</sup> It is important to record the following in this section:

- which language course programmes are to be offered
- which institution is responsible for the programmes
- which languages, levels and academic specializations are to be offered
- how the certificate can be achieved (i.e. examination, cumulative assessment for Levels Basis, I and/or II)

## § 2 Examination Board and Examining Committees<sup>2</sup>

2.1 The members of the Examination Board are responsible for the implementation of UNLcert® examinations. The Board is in charge of the planning, organisation and monitoring of the examinations as well as responsible for dealing with complaints of a formal nature, in keeping with the general practice of the university. The Examination Board has the right to delegate matters of urgency and/or of secondary importance to its chairperson.

2.2 The Examination Board selects and appoints the examiners/assessors for the respective Examining Committees. A university offering UNLcert® language courses will usually appoint examiners from amongst its full-time staff. For the purpose of UNLcert® examinations, the Examination Board may also appoint examiners from amongst the part-time staff, professional freelance personnel, staff from other departments within the same university or from another university<sup>3</sup>.

2.3 The members of the Examination Board are appointed in accordance with usual university practice. As a rule, the following persons should be included on the Board<sup>4</sup>:

2.3.1 The official head of the institution which is responsible for running the language training programmes, ex officio.

2.3.2 An elected member of the institution's language teaching personnel who has examiner status.

2.3.3 A third full-time staff member of the university.

2.4 The Examination Board appoints one of its members as Chairperson. He/She is responsible for the general running of the Board's affairs and represents the Board within and beyond the university. The Examination Board also appoints a Deputy Chairperson.

2.5 The Examination Board acts in accordance with usual university practices. These specify when invitations to Board meetings need to be sent, the number of Board members necessary to establish a quorum; voting procedures, when outside consultation is required, when a vote is to take place and how confidentiality is to be maintained in accordance with the law and/or regulations (the Law on XXX<sup>5</sup>).

## § 3 Admission Requirements<sup>6</sup>

3.1 Any applicant wishing to sit a UNLcert® examination must meet the following requirements:

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<sup>2</sup> It is important to identify here which institution or organisation is responsible for the administration of the examinations and serves as the first point of recourse in cases of complaints. The information related to this point should ideally be modelled on a set of examination regulations already approved at the university (e.g. general study and examination regulations, bachelor's/master's examination regulations or something similar).

<sup>3</sup> Examiners and assessors from other universities must of course be familiar with UNLcert®, its curriculum and regulations.

<sup>4</sup> The make-up of the Examination Board is regulated by each particular university. Please specify accordingly.

<sup>5</sup> It should be stated which state law or university regulation applies here.

<sup>6</sup> Here one should list in detail which papers and documentation must be submitted in order to sit the examination. To preserve the university-specific character of the UNLcert® examinations, as a general rule applicants for the examinations should be students enrolled at the particular university. Of course, exceptions can be made to this rule.

3.1.1 He/she must be registered as a student at the university concerned.

3.1.2 The student must have regularly attended and successfully completed the 120-180-hour course programme. This must have been for the appropriate UNLcert® Level, in the chosen language of study and, where applicable, in the chosen specialist option. The corresponding course programme must have included (at least 12)<sup>7</sup> classroom hours for Level One and (between 8 and 12)<sup>8</sup> classroom hours for each level between Levels II and IV in accordance with § 1.3. Appropriate documentation attesting to the length of the course programme, regular attendance and successful completion of the coursework must be submitted.

3.1.3 Students who switch universities and/or programmes and can attest to previously acquired relevant language knowledge must, nonetheless, successfully complete the last course of the level in question for Levels I and II (as well as for UNLcert® Basis) before they are permitted to sit the examination for that particular level. At Levels III and IV, such students who can attest to previously acquired relevant language knowledge must complete 50% of the coursework of the respective level in order to sit the examination.

3.1.4 The student should not have failed the exam in question (i.e. the same language, level and subject specialisation) at an earlier sitting or elsewhere.

3.2 Under special circumstances the Examination Board may allow for exceptions to 3.1.1 and, in special cases with certified proof of equivalent ability, a student may likewise be exempted from full compliance with the regulations specified in 3.1.2.

#### **§ 4 Registration and Admission Procedures<sup>9</sup>**

4.1 Registration for an examination must be made in writing to the Chairperson of the Examination Board and within the dates specified.

4.2 When registering for a UNLcert® examination, the following documents must be submitted as proof of meeting the prerequisites specified in § 3:

4.2.1 proof of student status at the university concerned,

4.2.2 proof of satisfactory attendance at the relevant UNLcert® Level courses in accordance with the regulations laid down in 3.1.2, and/or 3.1.3,

4.2.3 a declaration as to whether the examination in question has already been attempted, and whether the student has not already been excluded from taking the examinations at an earlier date.

4.3 Admission to the UNLcert® examination is granted by the Chairperson of the Examination Board. Admission can be refused only on the grounds of inadequate documentation (4.2) or if, in accordance with 3.1.4, the student is officially disqualified from the examination in question.

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<sup>7</sup> Please specify in accordance with § 1.3.

<sup>8</sup> Please specify in accordance with § 1.3.

<sup>9</sup> It would be useful also here to model this section on an already approved set of examination regulations at the university.

4.4 The names of the students permitted to sit the examination and the names of the respective examiners/assessors are to be announced in accordance with university practice. The dates and times of the written and oral examinations are to be published in similar fashion. If an applicant is to be barred from taking an examination, notice of this, and the reasons therefore, must be given in writing.

## § 5 Length and Format of the Examination<sup>10</sup>

5.1 If the final grade is to be awarded on the basis of accumulation, this is arrived at by calculating the average of all previously obtained marks for the respective course work<sup>11</sup>. All four language skills must be tested and passed by the exam candidate in the last course of each level if the final grade is arrived at on the basis of accumulation.

5.2 Should examinations be conducted, all four language skills must be assessed equally in the final comprehensive examinations for a particular level. These examinations follow a task-based approach and provide a situational context. The four skills can thereby be assessed separately or integrated in a meaningful way with each other.

5.3 UNlcert® **Basis**<sup>12</sup> may be awarded on the basis of continuous assessment (cf. § 5.1). If the university prefers instead to set a formal examination for this level, the examination should consist of the following sections:

- oral examination lasting 10 minutes
- listening comprehension tasks lasting 15 minutes
- reading comprehension tasks (including language related tasks) lasting 35 minutes
- open writing tasks lasting 35 minutes

These skills/sections may be combined in a meaningful way and thus assessed in combination.

5.4 UNlcert® **Level I**<sup>13</sup> may be awarded on the basis of continuous assessment (cf. § 5.1). If the university prefers instead to set a formal examination for this level, the examination should consist of the following sections:

- oral examination lasting 10 minutes
- listening comprehension tasks lasting 15 minutes
- reading comprehension tasks (including language related tasks) lasting 45 minutes
- open writing tasks lasting 45 minutes

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<sup>10</sup> Should the university elect to award Levels Basis, I and II on the basis of accumulation, it would be helpful in this section to mention briefly that the grade awarded is calculated on the basis of the marks from the individual courses. This is of course not necessary if Levels Basis, I and II require a final comprehensive examination. In this case it would suffice in these examination regulations to specify the formal conditions and framework of the examinations (i.e. how many sections, how long is each section, what is the nature and purpose of each section).

The increasing difficulty across the four levels should be documented here formally (an increase in the number of examination sections and/or in the length of each section, etc.). In keeping with the basic premise of the UNlcert® system, it is important to keep in mind that the four language skills should be represented roughly equally in the examinations. It is advisable not to specify here the aids permitted in examinations (i.e. dictionaries), but rather to leave this decision to the Examination Board.

<sup>11</sup> Please specify here what is meant exactly by the previously obtained marks and how the final grade is calculated.

<sup>12</sup> This paragraph is not applicable if the University X elects exclusively a cumulative process.

<sup>13</sup> This paragraph is not applicable if the University X elects exclusively a cumulative process.

These skills/sections may be combined in a meaningful way and thus assessed in combination.

5.5 UNlcert® **Level II**<sup>14</sup> may be awarded on the basis of continuous assessment (cf. § 5.1). If a formal examination is preferred, the examination should consist of the following sections:

- oral examination lasting 15 minutes
- listening comprehension tasks lasting 15 minutes
- reading comprehension tasks lasting 60 minutes
- open writing tasks lasting 60 minutes

These skills/sections may be combined in a meaningful way and thus assessed in combination.

5.6 The UNlcert® **Level III** examination should consist of the following sections:

- oral examination lasting 30 minutes
- listening comprehension tasks lasting 30 minutes
- reading comprehension tasks lasting 90 minutes
- open writing tasks lasting 90 minutes

These skills/sections may be combined in a meaningful way and thus assessed in combination.

5.7 The UNlcert® **Level IV** examination should consist of the following sections:

- oral examination lasting 30 minutes
- listening comprehension tasks lasting 30 minutes
- reading comprehension lasting 120 minutes
- open writing tasks lasting 120 minutes

These skills/sections may be combined in a meaningful way and thus assessed in combination.

5.8 Topics and formats in the specialist subject options may be chosen in keeping with the subject area concerned.

5.9 The Examination Board decides on the use of aids such as dictionaries, thesauri, etc.

## § 6 Assessment/Grading<sup>15</sup>

6.1 The Examination Board appoints Examination Committees to run the oral examinations. Examination Committees consist of at least two examiners (or one examiner and one assessor) who consult together to decide the final oral grade.

6.2 The other sections of the examination are also marked by two examiners.

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<sup>14</sup> This paragraph is not applicable if the University X elects exclusively a cumulative process.

<sup>15</sup> It should be explained here that all examination sections are to be corrected by at least two examiners (or alternatively an examiner and an assessor). Only in rare exceptional cases can this requirement be waived (with the appropriate decision of the Examination Board). It should also be explained here in which manner the final grade is arrived at using the various examination sections. Furthermore, this is the place where it should be documented whether other university examination sections are to be recognised and integrated into the final grade.

6.3 If a discrepancy exists between the marks of the two examiners, the arithmetical average of the two marks is taken as the final grade.

6.4 If the convening of a second examiner/assessor would cause an unreasonable delay in the examination proceedings, the Examination Board may be entitled to dispense with a second opinion, as an exception.

6.5 The individual marks for the various examination sections are added together to form the total mark, which, if necessary, is rounded up or down in accordance with the grading scale set out in § 7.<sup>16</sup>

6.6 Marks obtained for other university examinations (or for sections thereof) may, on application, be taken over, as substitute for equivalent UNlcert® examinations (or sections thereof), on condition that the mark(s) be converted to the UNlcert® grading system.

## § 7 Examination Results and Form of Certification<sup>17</sup>

7.1 The final examination mark (i.e. after rounding up/down if necessary) is to be graded and expressed as follows:

-	1.0	1.3	very good	an outstanding performance
1.7	2.0	2.3	good	an above-average performance
2.7	3.0	3.3	satisfactory	an average performance
3.7	4.0	-	pass	a performance, which despite inadequacies, can still be considered as meeting the required standard
-	5.0	-	fail	an inadequate performance which does not meet the required standard

7.2 Only grades as listed above may be awarded; no other grades can be used.

7.3 An examination is deemed to be 'passed' as long as no single examination section is marked lower than 4.0.

7.4 The Chairperson of the Examination Board undertakes to inform the examination candidate as soon as possible of his/her final grade. Unsuccessful candidates are also notified in writing, with details of the individual marks awarded.

<sup>16</sup> Please take into consideration here the specific regulations of your university. At many universities the practice is different from that described above: "If an examination consists of several sections (i.e. sub-module examinations), the grade is calculated using the average of the marks earned in the individually graded examination sections. Only the first number after the decimal is to be considered for the calculation of the grade; all further numbers after the decimal are deleted without rounding up."

<sup>17</sup> It is helpful to list here the grades and the description of these grades in detail. The list given here is an example. Again, examination regulations already approved by the university serve as a good guide here. It should be mentioned that all sections are to be passed if a UNlcert® certificate is to be awarded. This restriction is meant to prevent unwanted compensating effects (and thereby possible lopsidedness in the curriculum). It should also be detailed how the examination candidate will be informed of his/her results, what information the certificate will contain and who will sign this document.

7.5 Successful candidates of the UNlcert® examinations and those who completed a UNlcert® level via accumulation receive a bilingual or trilingual certificate. The certificate contains information with respect to the foreign language studied, the level at which the examination was taken, and, where relevant, the chosen subject orientation. In addition to the overall grade achieved and the credit points/ECTS credits obtained, the marks awarded for the individual examination sections are also shown. Details are likewise given (in German, the foreign language in question and English) as to the format of the examination (e.g. on the basis of accumulation or a final comprehensive examination), along with guidelines for the interpretation of the grading system and the correspondence with the particular level of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*. The diploma or certificate is to be signed by both the Chairperson of the Examination Board and the Head of the Institution responsible for foreign language training.

7.6 Candidates are given permission to view their examinations within the three months following the completion of the last section of the examination.

### **§ 8 No-Show, Withdrawal, Unauthorised Behaviour, Breach of Regulations<sup>18</sup>**

8.1 A candidate is deemed to have failed an examination if he/she, without good reason, remains absent from the examination or if he/she, without satisfactory grounds, withdraws from the examination once it has commenced.

8.2 The reasons for the no-show or for the premature departure from the examination must be submitted immediately in writing to the Examination Board, along with evidence of the authenticity of the claim. In the case of illness on the part of the candidate, the Chairperson has the right to request a medical certificate. If the Examination Board accepts the candidate's reasons, he/she is then authorised to take the examination at the next sitting. In this instance, marks already awarded for examination sections previously taken by the candidate are to be carried forward.

8.3 The Examination Board has the right to declare an examination as wholly or partly failed if, during the course of the examination, the candidate takes advantage of unlawful means or otherwise commits a breach of the regulations.

8.4 The Chairperson of the Board must be immediately informed if there are any irregularities in the examination proceedings, if they are disturbed or disrupted or if a candidate becomes physically unable to complete the examination/paper.

8.5 If the Examination Board rejects a candidate's submission or refuses to accept his/her grounds for complaint, it must inform the candidate in writing of its decision and include the reasons thereof.

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<sup>18</sup> It is advisable once again to use the phrasing found in an already approved set of examination regulations at your university. In this section, it is also necessary to explain how an examination candidate can lodge a claim in case of inconsistencies or mistakes in the examination process.

## § 9 Re-Sits<sup>19</sup>

9.1 Having failed the examination for the first time, a candidate has the right to undertake a second attempt within the following twelve months. Following written application, grades for examination sections passed at earlier sittings may be recognized and carried forward by the Examination Board.

9.2 A second retake is only possible after written application and under special mitigating circumstances.

## § 10 Appealing the Decision of the Examination Board

10.1 Within one month of releasing the examination results an appeal of the decision can be made to the Examination Board.

10.2 The Examination Board can decide to redress the situation. In such a case, the Chairperson of the Examination Board issues a notice of redress.

10.3 Should the Examination Board not find in favour of the appellant, the Board of Appeals for Examinations at the University XY decides conclusively on the appeal and issues a statement on its decision.

## § 11 Ratification<sup>20</sup>

These examination regulations come into effect as from the day after their official publication.

## Appendix

A list/table of the languages, UNLcert® Levels and subject specialisations for which the university currently offers UNLcert® language training programmes.

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<sup>19</sup> The usual procedures of the university are to be considered once again here. Generally, a second re-sit is only to be granted in well-justified exceptional cases and is to be requested in written form. A request to gain credit for the previously passed sections of the examination would need to be regulated; we recommend a passage in your examination regulations that would allow for this possibility.

<sup>20</sup> This routine paragraph generally uses the same phrasing: "These examination regulations come into effect upon their publication" or "These examination regulations come into effect upon their publication in the bulletins of the University X".