

Questions and Answers

EXAMINATION PERIOD WS 2020/21

INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS & STUDENTS IN TIMES OF CORONA

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Foreword

Compliance with the following regulations serves to ensure that the examinations held on campus during the examination period of winter semester 20/21 are conducted responsibly and in accordance with the current circumstances, taking into account the required hygiene standards.

Failure to appear for an examination will not be assessed as a failed attempt, and a **timely re-examination** will be offered in the **course of the summer semester 2021**. The latter applies to **all types of examinations** (KMP, SMP, FMP). Specific details on this will follow elsewhere.

1 General

Why was the university "stricter" with its requirements regarding on-site lectures and examinations until 31.01.2021 than the containment ordinance of the state of Brandenburg stipulates? Why will the regulations be "relaxed" from 01.02.2021 - i.e. during the examination period?

The respective valid containment ordinance of the state of Brandenburg has always permitted on-site examinations in the current winter semester. Before and after Christmas, the crisis team assessed the situation in such a way that on-site exams and on-site lectures were not permitted until the end of January without exception.

The background to this decision was the expectation that this would significantly reduce movements to and from the university. The disadvantages for students resulting from this decision outweighed the advantages, as the effects on the further course of studies were assessed as less serious.

For the upcoming examination period, this decision must be reviewed. Here, the advantages and disadvantages of a possible continuation of the suspension of on-site examinations must be evaluated again. Since, from a legal point of view, the examinations - which have already been planned for a long time - are possible and every student has a right to an appropriate examination, this must also be offered by the university.

How should I look after my children during the time of the on-site examination?

The use of the (limited) flexible childcare of the TH Wildau Family Service [\[LINK\]](#) is possible in these cases, i.e. a child can be supervised

individually. The TH Wildau would like to support those students in particular who have more difficult general conditions. The family service has its own [hygiene plan](#) for this.

Why is there no so-called free attempt (as is the case at universities in Berlin, for example), i.e. the possibility of writing an exam that is not graded in the event of poor performance or failure?

The Brandenburg Higher Education Act (BbgHG) only provides for a very limited number of free attempts, as is the case in some other federal states (education and science is a matter for the federal states, and each federal state has its own laws). The BbgHG states (§22 Para.3): *"For all suitable degree programmes, the examination regulations shall specify the conditions under which a final examination taken within the standard period of study shall be deemed not to have been taken in the event of failure (free attempt). An examination passed in a free attempt may be repeated to improve the grade."*

Accordingly, this regulation refers to the "final examination" in "suitable" degree programmes and states that such a regulation must be anchored in the respective examination regulations.

The framework regulations of the TH Wildau say on this subject (§21, paragraph 3): *"The study programmes of the TH Wildau are not suitable study programmes according to § 22, paragraph 3, sentence 1 BbgHG for a free attempt regulation."*

It follows that there are no examination regulations at the TH Wildau that would provide for this. Thus, there is no legal basis for a "free attempt" in the sense of the BbgHG*, so that at the moment we only have the possibility to ease the situation by not counting general "non-attendance" for the

examination as a failed attempt and to make repeats possible in a timely manner ([Order P03-2021](#)).

***Note:** This topic was also raised and discussed by the group of university presidents. Notwithstanding the fact that the legal framework is not in place in Brandenburg, everyone agreed that especially in the pandemic situation such a regulation could endanger equal opportunities. Students who do not want to take an exam because they are not going to university due to the pandemic are at a disadvantage compared to those who consider the risk to be lower and simply "try" the exam. Thus, the latter would have an advantage in that they would have a greater chance of doing better in the next attempt with the experience gained from the first.

However, there is currently an opportunity to introduce the topic of "free trial" in the upcoming amendment of the Higher Education Act. The legislative process is of course complex, but the universities have the opportunity to submit ideas for the amendment in the coming weeks and months. The student representatives in the state of Brandenburg will certainly do so, and the TH Wildau presidium will gladly accept the suggestions on this for the further discussion process.

2 Procedure for on-site examinations

What are the basic regulations governing the conduct of the examinations?

- 1) Please allow more time than usual and arrive at the examination room in good time (at least 30 minutes before the start of the examination) and enter it one after the other with the necessary distance to other people.
- 2) In rooms with two doors, the entrance and the exit are marked. Please note this carefully when entering and leaving the room.
- 3) Students should sign the examination protocol at the examiner's desk and use their own pen (no pencil!). It must be avoided that the examination protocol "wanders" through the rows.
- 4) At the end of the examination, also leave the room in as disciplined a manner as when you entered (in rows, one after the other, at a distance).
- 5) All in all, we ask you to avoid "grouping" on campus, to always pay attention to the required distances and to also leave the campus quickly after the exam.

Are students or teachers allowed to take part in the on-site examinations if they have symptoms of a cold?

No. As a student, please refrain from taking the examination if you experience symptoms of illness. Teachers should report this immediately to the respective dean's office so that alternative supervision can be organised as quickly as possible. It is expressly forbidden for persons with symptoms of illness to enter the buildings of the TH Wildau.

If we, as students, do not sit for an examination in this examination period, but for a second attempt, we fear that this will be more difficult. Would this approach be okay?

No, according to the framework regulations, the examination attempts must be comparable in severity. If someone has a reasonable suspicion that this is not the case, the student should contact the examination board with this concern.

As students, we have experienced that online teaching is much more challenging than on-site teaching, much more self-study is required and at the same time sometimes somewhat less teaching content could be taught than in "normal" semesters. However, we have the impression that the examinations do not do justice to this fact and are set as if "normal" face-to-face teaching had taken place. Is this permissible?

Each examination should take into account the circumstances of teaching and be adapted to the particular teaching and learning situation. If other statements have been made in this regard, it is recommended to contact the lecturers or - if this should not be possible - the respective programme spokespersons.

If I, as a student, do not take an examination in this examination period, is it right that I can only repeat the examination in a year's time?

The Vice President for Teaching and Studies is working intensively with the deans to make it possible to take the corresponding catch-up examinations as early as the summer semester of 2021 and not in a year's time.

Nevertheless, the TH Wildau must adhere to the legal framework conditions.

For the so-called "4+1" rule of the Framework Regulations ([Official Notice 42/2019, §20, para. 6](#)), there will be an extension of the examination period. It is important to know that a large number of examinations must be taken into account in the planning, which is a great challenge.

A publication of the regulations will be made via the deans' offices and the website of the crisis team of TH Wildau.

Why is it not possible to switch completely to online exams?

Irrespective of the fact that, from a legal point of view, we have to create an on-site alternative for every online examination (in order to also offer an examination option to students who cannot use a sufficient internet connection), the decision as to whether a digital variant is required from a subject/content point of view is the responsibility of the lecturer. At the beginning of the winter semester, the Vice President for Digitisation and Quality Management, among others, encouraged the lecturers to consider the possibility of a digital examination option. We are pleased that numerous colleagues have already opted for this option. Due to the fact that the way in which an examination is conducted cannot be changed shortly before the examination - because students in particular have a right to know how the examination will be conducted - it is not possible to extend online examinations to other modules for the examination period that is now approaching. In addition, the planning of online examinations requires a longer lead time, test runs must take place with the stakeholders and corresponding support structures must also be established.

Against this background, the examination planning, as now published, will be implemented. If necessary, in very special cases, individual ways can be found to replace attendance formats that are acceptable to all participants. This will be examined in the short term.

The university is currently examining the current range of examinations and is seeking to discuss with lecturers whether alternatives are possible at short notice.

As a student, I live in a hall of residence that does not have wifi access. However, I have to rely on wifi during an online exam. What can I do?

From 01.02.2021, the third floor in the university library will be reserved for the sole use of students who wish to use the tutoring web app for online examinations throughout the examination period.

The 41 workstations (with minimum distances) are numbered from no. 43 to 84 and can be reserved via bibinfo@th-wildau.de or by telephone via 508 123. Reservations can be made by name and by the hour via Nextcloud, a check of the correctness of the details will be made on a trust basis.

The opening hours are Mon-Fri, 9am-8pm. Special arrangements can only be made by arrangement, e.g. from 8 a.m. or on Saturdays.

Appropriate markings on the staircases and lifts indicate this system, and the website of the university library also provides information about special use.

3 Hygiene and other precautions

Where can the current hygiene concept be found?

On the page en.th-wildau.de/corona or directly [here](#).

Where can I find basic information on Corona, related to the TH Wildau?

Here: en.th-wildau.de/corona

Will there be special regulations and arrangements for the on-site exams?

- In the buildings and in the entire premises of the TH Wildau, as well as during the examination, **medical face masks**, e.g. OP masks or FFP2 masks, must be worn in accordance with the currently valid Containment Ordinance.
- **Disinfectant** is provided for hands or for cleaning the tables independently.
- Sufficient ventilation is provided for rooms with automatic ventilation systems. For all other rooms, "shock ventilation" must take place after approx. 45 minutes.
- **Spatial planning** takes into account the applicable distance requirements. You can find them here: [\[LINK\]](#)
- Before and after exams, all participants are encouraged to **avoid forming groups** and to enter and leave the campus as quickly as possible.
- The **web app for contact tracking** is mandatory. When someone enters a room, they must log into the web app. You can find more information here: <https://en.th-wildau.de/contact-tracing>

What has to be considered when occupying the seats in the rooms?

When occupying the seats, please start with the last row and occupy the seats one after the other "from the back to the front" in order to avoid unnecessary encounters. We ask the examiners to carefully observe and influence compliance with this procedure.

Please ensure that you only use the numbered seats in lecture rooms with fixed seating. In the examination rooms with flexible seating, the number of seats corresponds to the maximum possible occupancy. Please do not change the existing furniture. If there are more people in the examination rooms than permitted, the examination must be cancelled.

Is eating and drinking allowed during the exam?

Eating no, drinking yes. However, please try to reduce or avoid it.

Are toilet visits allowed during the exam?

Of course. However, please bear in mind that if you need to go to the toilet, the distance of 1.5 m to other people must be observed.

Who is responsible for compliance with hygiene standards and what happens if rules are broken?

Compliance with hygiene standards during the exam is the responsibility of the exam supervisor and is checked regularly on a random basis.

The examination supervisor is obliged to ensure compliance and to point out corresponding violations in each individual case. In accordance with [decree P06-2020](#), the examination invigilator has the right to decide and enforce decisions in this situation. Thus, in the case of violations that are not remedied despite being pointed out, they have the right to exclude students

from the examination. If this exclusion is not followed, the examination supervisor can request assistance from the President or a representative from the Presidium appointed by her via the Chancellor Thomas Lehne by telephone on 0151 42653149.

If, on the other hand, students discover violations of the hygiene standards by the examination supervisor and the latter does not remedy the violation even after being informed by the students, the students also have the possibility of contacting the above-mentioned telephone number. They will then also receive on-site support from the President or a representative from the Presidential Board appointed by her.

It is to be hoped that the above-mentioned scenarios, which in extreme cases can also lead to the examination being cancelled, do not occur. That is why it is so important that all those involved (students and examination invigilators) pay attention to each other's compliance with the rules. In doing so, they all make a decisive contribution to managing the situation, which is stressful for all students, appropriately and as safely as possible. **Therefore, we appeal: Please behave in solidarity and responsibly.**

As a student, may I point out to examiners and other students if they do not wear a mask during the examination, for example?

Yes. In the case of violations that cannot be clarified directly, also approach the dean of the respective faculty. There must also be no disadvantages if, for example, students point this out to examiners.

Does the TH Wildau provide medical masks?

Yes, students can pick up the blue and white surgical masks at the gatehouse, house 13, to take their exams. The deans' offices also have a basic supply of surgical masks.

I have a medical certificate that exempts me from the mask requirement.

May I take part in an examination in this case?

Yes, you may. However, please note the following procedure:

- Report to the Dean's Office responsible for you at least 3 working days before the examination.
- The Dean's Office will try to organise a separate room where you can write the exam separately and under supervision.

4 Contact persons



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