

Subject-Specific Regulations for Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programmes in Bioinformatics at Saarland University Supplementing the Joint Examination Regulations for the Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programmes of Faculty 6 (Natural Sciences and Technology Faculty I – Mathematics and Computer Science)

21 January 2016

Please note: This translation is provided for information purposes only. In the event of any discrepancies between the translation and the original German version, the latter shall take precedence.

Pursuant to Section 59 of the Saarland University Act of 23 June 2004 (Official Gazette of Saarland, p. 1782) as amended by the Act of 14 October 2014 (Official Gazette, p. 406) and pursuant to the Joint Examination Regulations for the Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programmes of Faculty 6 (Natural Science and Technology Faculty I – Mathematics and Computer Science) of 2 July 2015 (Official Bulletin No. 72, p. 616) and with the consent of the Saarland University Senate and the University Board, the Center for Bioinformatics at Saarland University hereby issues the following Subject-Specific Regulations for Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programmes in Bioinformatics.

Section 27

Scope

(cf. Sec. 1 of the Joint Examination Regulations)

These subject-specific regulations apply to the Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes in Bioinformatics at Saarland University.

Section 28

General provisions

(1) The Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Bioinformatics at Saarland University are collaborative programmes involving Faculty 2 (Faculty of Medicine), Faculty 6 (Natural Science and Technology Faculty I – Mathematics and Computer Science), Faculty 8 (Natural Science and Technology Faculty III – Chemistry, Pharmaceutical Science, Biosciences and Materials Science), the German Research Centre for Artificial Intelligence (DFKI), the Max Planck Institute for Informatics (MPI-I), the Helmholtz Institute for Pharmaceutical Research Saarland (HIPS) and the Fraunhofer Institute for Biomedical Engineering (IBMT).

(2) The organization of the curriculum, teaching and examinations conducted in these programmes is the responsibility of the Center for Bioinformatics at Saarland University, which was established by a joint resolution of the Deans of Faculty 2 (Faculty of Medicine), Faculty 6 (Natural Science and Technology Faculty I – Mathematics and Computer Science) and Faculty 8 (Natural Science and Technology Faculty III – Chemistry, Pharmaceutical Science, Biosciences and Materials Science) in order to promote teaching and research in the field of bioinformatics.

(3) The Center for Bioinformatics at Saarland University shall confer a Bachelor of Science degree (B.Sc.) or a Master of Science degree (M.Sc.) on students who have successfully completed the respective academic programme in accordance with the assessment and examination procedures set out in the examination regulations.

(4) Unless otherwise specifically provided for in this document, all regulations shall apply equally to full-time and part-time students.

Section 29

The Examination Board

(1) In order to exercise the duties and responsibilities set out in these regulations, an Examination Board shall be constituted whose members are appointed for a term of two years by the governing council of the Center for Bioinformatics (CBI Saar Council). The Examination Board is made up of:

1. three representatives from the group of professorial staff
2. one member of the non-professorial academic staff who holds a full-time position at the Center for Bioinformatics
3. one student.

A deputy shall also be appointed for each member of the Board.

(2) The governing council of the Center for Bioinformatics (CBI Saar Council) shall appoint a Chair and Deputy Chair of the Examination Board from those members of the Board specified in Section 1(1).

(3) The other provisions concerning the Examination Board are set out in Section 7 of the Joint Examination Regulations for the Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programmes of Faculty 6 (Natural Science and Technology Faculty I – Mathematics and Computer Science).

(4) Decisions regarding the recognition of previous periods of study and of earlier academic course and examination credits, as provided for in Section 19 of the Joint Examination Regulations for the Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programmes of Faculty 6 (Natural Science and Technology Faculty I – Mathematics and Computer Science) shall be made by the Examination Board itself or on behalf of the Examination Board by the Board Chair. A competent qualified representative shall be consulted before any decisions regarding recognition are reached.

Section 30

Types of degree programmes

(cf. Sec. 3 of the Joint Examination Regulations)

The Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes in bioinformatics are single-subject degree programmes within the meaning of the Framework Examination Regulations for Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programmes at Saarland University (BMPRO).

Section 31

Student workload

(cf. Sec. 4 of the Joint Examination Regulations)

Course attendance may be compulsory for certain introductory seminars, seminars and practical skills classes. Students will be notified of this by the course coordinator at the beginning of the course.

Section 32

Examiners; thesis examiners; supervisors, observers

(cf. Sec. 8 of the Joint Examination Regulations)

(1) This section replaces Section 8 of the Joint Examination Regulations for the Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programmes of Faculty 6 (Natural Science and Technology Faculty I – Mathematics and Computer Science) governing the appointment of examiners and observers and of thesis supervisors and/or thesis examiners.

(2) Examiners and observers shall be appointed by the Examination Board or by the Chair of the Examination Board acting on the Board's behalf.

(3) The persons appointed to be examiners, thesis supervisors and thesis examiners for the Bachelor's and Master's theses shall be appropriately qualified in the relevant subject area and shall be selected from among the following groups: professors, junior professors, heads of independent junior research groups, senior academic teaching staff, emeritus or retired professors, honorary professors, academics qualified to professorial level, professors on special contracts or co-opted professors who work at the Center for Bioinformatics, the Faculty of Medicine, Faculty 6 (Natural Science and Technology Faculty I – Mathematics and Computer Science) or Faculty 8 (Natural Science and Technology Faculty III – Chemistry, Pharmaceutical Science, Biosciences and Materials Science) at Saarland University. In certain special cases, examiners may also be appointed from members of the full-time teaching staff, academic research staff; short-term contract lecturers who teach in the relevant field, from professorial staff at other faculties at Saarland University or at other universities, and from members of the scientific staff at the Max Planck Institutes for Informatics and for Software Systems, (MPI-I and MPI-SWS), the German Research Centre for Artificial Intelligence (DFKI), the Helmholtz Institute for Pharmaceutical Research Saarland (HIPS) and the Fraunhofer Institute for Biomedical Engineering (IBMT).

One of the two thesis examiners for a Bachelor's or Master's thesis shall be a professor, a junior professor, a member of the senior academic teaching staff, an emeritus or retired professor, an honorary professor, an academic qualified to professorial level, or a professor on a special contract who works at the Center for Bioinformatics and at either the Faculty of Medicine, Faculty 6 (Natural Science and Technology Faculty I – Mathematics and Computer Science) or Faculty 8 (Natural Science and Technology Faculty III – Chemistry, Pharmaceutical Science, Biosciences and Materials Science) at Saarland University.

Section 33
Admission to the Master's programme
(cf. Sec. 12 of the Joint Examination Regulations)

Students seeking admission to the Master's programme shall:

1. have a Bachelor's degree from a German university or an equivalent qualification from a foreign university in bioinformatics or a related field
2. demonstrate particular academic aptitude (see Section 69(5) of the Saarland University Act).

(2) The criteria used to assess particular academic aptitude are:

- a. Proof of advanced proficiency in English (typically level C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages)
- b. Sufficient merit in the applicant's previous academic track record and the appropriate curricular content of the Bachelor's degree. Applicants should demonstrate a level of knowledge and competence that corresponds to that acquired in the Bachelor's degree programme in Bioinformatics taught at Saarland University. Specifically, this requires applicants to show that they have the necessary level of expertise in the following areas:
 - I. Fundamental aspects and methods of mathematics and computer science
 - II. The basics of bioinformatics (sequence analysis, protein structure)
 - III. Fundamental aspects of the life sciences (molecular biology, genetics)
- c. Supporting documents, typically in the form of a personal statement ('statement of purpose') or a portfolio demonstrating the applicant's particular interest in the subject.

The criteria listed above will be used to assess the aptitude of the applicant in terms of the academic profile and requirements of the Master's degree programme in Bioinformatics. The

decision whether the programme admission requirements have been met shall be made by the Examination Board.

Section 34
Procedural elements, presentation and layout of the thesis
(cf. Sec. 23 of the Joint Examination Regulations)

(1) A colloquium lasting 30 minutes shall be held in order to establish that the Bachelor's or Master's thesis is the candidate's own original work. The colloquium serves to present the methods used by the candidate and the results achieved and is usually held after the candidate has submitted the printed version of their Bachelor's or Master's thesis. In the subsequent discussion, the candidate shall demonstrate that they are able to defend their work when it is subjected to critical questioning. One of the colloquium examiners shall be the person who set the candidate's thesis topic. The candidate's performance in the colloquium shall form part of the grade awarded for the thesis project.

(2) Candidates shall supply an electronic version of their thesis in accordance with the provisions of Section 23(2) of the Joint Examination Regulations for the Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programmes of Faculty 6 (Natural Science and Technology Faculty I – Mathematics and Computer Science). Candidates shall grant to the University the right to reproduce the thesis (possibly through conversion into another common file format) and to make it publicly accessible in data networks. A degree can be awarded only after the electronic version of the thesis has been delivered. The student may apply to the Examination Board for exemption from the requirement to supply an electronic version of the thesis and the Board may grant such an exemption where reasonable grounds exist.

Section 35
Successfully completing the Master's programme and overall grade
(cf. Sec. 24 of the Joint Examination Regulations)

The grade 'with distinction' shall be awarded in the Master's degree programme to candidates who attain a final overall grade of 1.1 or better, provided that all of the programme requirements have been met within the standard period of study.

Section 36
Degree qualification and documentation
(cf. Sec. 25 of the Joint Examination Regulations)

(1) The formal graduation certificate shall be signed by the Spokesperson of the Center for Bioinformatics and by the Chair of the Examination Board.

(2) In addition to the information detailed in Section 25(1) of the Joint Examination Regulations for the Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programmes of Faculty 6 (Natural Science and Technology Faculty I – Mathematics and Computer Science), the degree certificate may also list other student attainments and the results achieved.

Section 37
Special provisions for international programmes leading to a double-degree qualification

(1) International versions of the degree programmes that lead to a double-degree qualification are subject to the special provisions set out in the relevant cooperation agreement between Saarland University and the corresponding partner university. The cooperation agreement should contain the special regulations regarding the programme schedule, the modules to be taken at Saarland University and those to be completed at the

partner university, and the joint academic curriculum. The academic study undertaken at Saarland University and that undertaken at the partner university shall each be subject to the study regulations and examination regulations that apply at the respective institution.

(2) In the case of decisions that concern a student taking an international version of the degree programme, at least one member of the university teaching staff from the partner university shall be appointed as an additional member of the Examination Board.

(3) For the international version of the Master's degree programme the provisions governing admission to the programme shall be amended as follows: the requirement that the applicant holds a Bachelor's degree in bioinformatics or an equivalent qualification in a related subject shall be replaced by the requirement that the applicant holds an academic qualification from the partner university in a subject area specified in the cooperation agreement.

Section 38 **Commencement and transitional arrangements**

(1) These regulations shall come into force on the day after they are announced in the Official Bulletin of the Institutions of Higher Education in Saarland (*Dienstblatt der Hochschulen des Saarlandes*).

(2) Students who began studying for their Bachelor's or Master's degree in bioinformatics (at the Center for Bioinformatics) before these regulations entered into force shall continue to study under the study and examination regulations applicable at the time they began the programme, but shall complete their studies including the final academic assessment and examination phase by the end of summer semester 2020.

Saarbrücken, 19 April 2016

President of Saarland University
Univ.-Prof. Dr. Volker Linneweber