



Provisions of April 14, 2020 regarding different performance assessment methods in distance learning and replacement services

The **Rectorate of the University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences Vienna** supports the regulation on various methods of performance assessment in distance learning and alternative methods for certain types of courses as decided on April 14, 2020.

The **Senate of the University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences Vienna**, instructed the Dean of Studies as decided on April 9, 2020 to provide different methods of performance assessment and alternative services for certain types of courses until September 30, 2020, in order to minimize the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student success. Based on these decisions, the following has been prescribed:

1. Non-continuous assessment courses

In the case of course exams ("lecture exams" as the only exam procedure), three exam dates are also given the go-ahead in the 2020 summer semester.

In a deviation from the regulations on course exams, non-continuous assessment courses may also be assessed on the basis of several partial performances or on the basis of a written work. The partial performances or the written work are to be scheduled in such a way that they can be completed by June 30, 2020. The course leader is entitled to allow the completion of a partial performance until February 15, 2021, provided there is a valid admission to the course of study at the time of submission. This means:

- Students who have rendered at least a partial performance or the written work are to be assessed.
- Students who have not done a partial performance or have not submitted written work are not to be assessed. The examination does not count towards the number of examination attempts. There is no freeze period for examinations.

If a written work or partial performance is scheduled, a special registration for this examination method must be provided as with course examinations on BOKUonline, independent of course registration.

Exams via video conference are permitted and can be a single examination process or a partial performance. Regulations for conducting video conference exams must be observed.

2. Continuous assessment courses

For as long as this situation is in effect, only performance conditions that do not require physical presence are to be provided. Courses that in previous semesters largely or exclusively consisted of practical performances must also be essentially converted to distance learning.

This means in particular that the option to complete exercises without being physically present and without a practical component is made available.

In contrast to this, the following courses cannot be completed without physical attendance:

- Courses in which students learn how to deal practically with potential hazards (e.g. hazardous substances such as chemicals, explosive and shooting exercises).
- Courses in which the learning of practical skills is a prerequisite for acquiring competencies (especially federally regulated professional qualifications).

In the case of courses that cannot be completed without being physically present, the course leaders should enable completion in individual cases if the student can demonstrate that postponement would delay graduation.

3. Field trips

For excursions in the 2020 summer semester that were scheduled up to June 30, 2020 and that cannot or could not take place, the provision of an alternative for already-registered students or for a number of students based on the average number of participants in previous semesters is to be made available (e.g. virtual excursion, portfolios or homework, alternative methods as with mandatory internships).

The alternative option is to be determined in such a way that it can be provided by June 30, 2020. The course leader is entitled to allow the replacement performance to be completed until February 15, 2021, provided there is a valid admission to the course of study at the time of submission.

4. Mandatory internships

In the case of compulsory internships that cannot be started by September 30, 2020 or that have to be discontinued, an alternative arrangement for part or all of the mandatory internship still to be completed should be made available.

An alternative arrangement for the entire mandatory internship is to be made available in all cases in which a student is able to demonstrate that postponement would delay graduation.

The following are particularly suitable as alternative arrangements:

- working as a harvest helper on a farm,
- practical activities in connection with the COVID 19 pandemic and practical activities with little or no subject relevance,
- a recorded professional exchange with practitioners and
- written work.

5. Examination resits

For as long as this situation is in effect, resit exams are only to be carried out if the student is convincingly able to show that postponement would be disadvantageous to the course of the study.

The exam procedure is to be determined taking into account the protective measures in effect at the time. Lecturers are not obliged to participate in an examination board. An examination date is only to be set by the Dean of Studies if the student expressly agrees to the examination procedure on offer.

6. Introduction and orientation phase

Before the completion of the introduction and orientation phase, further courses to a maximum of 36 ECTS points from the first and second semester can be completed by September 30, 2020.

7. Submission of master's theses and dissertations

Master's theses must be submitted electronically to Study Services no later than three weeks before the date of the defense, for as long as this situation is in effect. The final documents are only to be issued after a bound copy has been submitted.

Dissertations are also to be submitted electronically; the regulation regarding the final documents is to be applied analogously.

8. Notification of changed examination methods

Changed examination methods and assessment criteria must be entered in BOKUonline by the lecturers and communicated by email to the students. In case of doubt, the last methods to be announced are applicable.

9. International study program

In the case of international study programs that require a compulsory semester abroad, the Dean of Studies may cancel this if students had scheduled the semester abroad in the summer semester 2020 or in the winter semester 2020/2021.

If graduation is not possible without a semester abroad, the Dean of Studies has to determine suitable courses at the home university at the request of the student for students whose home university is the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna. A statement from the course supervisor must be obtained.

10. Keeping the changed examination methods

If restricted or full normal service resumes before the end of the 2020 summer semester, the notified examination methods and already-scheduled alternative exam dates should not be altered to the detriment of the students.

11. Coming into effect

This regulation enters into effect on the day following the announcement in the newsletter.

12. Abrogation

This regulation is to be applied to all examinations and alternative methods undertaken by September 30, 2020 or by February 15th, 2021, even if the course certificate is only to be issued at a later date.

In the case of international study programs, this regulation is to be applied to all study requirements that are met in place of a semester abroad planned for the 2020 summer semester or the 2020/2021 winter semester.