

Please note that this document is a non-binding convenience translation. Only the German version of the document entitled "Prüfungsordnung der Universität Heidelberg für die Zwischenprüfung im Studiengang Evangelische Theologie (Kirchliches Erstes Theologisches Examen und Fakultätsexamen / Diplomprüfung) der Theologischen Fakultät" [published in the President and vice-chancellor's bulletin (Mitteilungsblatt des Rektors) of 26 September 2001, p. 517, modified on 20 March 2002 (President and vice-chancellor's bulletin (Mitteilungsblatt des Rektors) of 28 March 2002, p. 141) and on 26 August 2003 (President and vice-chancellor's bulletin (Mitteilungsblatt des Rektors) of 19 September 2003, p. 563)] has legal validity.

**Heidelberg University Faculty of Theology examination rules  
and regulations for degree programme in Protestant  
Theology - Intermediate examination  
(First Ecclesiastical Examination in Theology / Kirchliches  
Erstes Theologisches Examen, Faculty Examination /  
Fakultätsexamen and Diplom Examination)**

19 September 2001

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## § 1 Purpose of the intermediate examination

The intermediate examination completes the stage 1 studies. The purpose of the intermediate examination is for candidates to show that they have achieved the objectives of the stage 1 studies, in particular the basics of the subject content, methodological tools and gained a systematic orientation necessary to complete the academic programme successfully.

## § 2 Examination committee for the intermediate examination

- (1) An examination committee is established for the organisation of the intermediate examination and the tasks prescribed to the committee in these rules and regulations. The committee is composed of seven members with voting rights, of which at least one is to be a member of the academic staff. Additionally, the committee should include one student as an advisory member. The members are appointed for two years. The faculty council determines which tasks may be assigned solely to the chairperson.
- (2) The chairperson, deputy chairperson, further members and their deputies are appointed by the faculty council. It is not possible to reappoint members. The majority of members with voting rights must be professors. The chairperson and deputy chairperson must be professors, and therefore civil servants who have been appointed for life. Committee members should represent different subjects.
- (3) Members of the intermediate examination committee have the right to attend examinations. A representative of the Evangelical Church of Baden, who advises the candidate following the examination, may also be present at the examination in Biblical Studies.
- (4) Members of the intermediate examination committee, their deputies and all persons present at examinations are subject to official secrecy. Those who are not civil servants are sworn to secrecy by the chairperson.
- (5) The intermediate examination committee ensures that the examination rules and regulations are respected. The committee reports to the extended faculty council on a regular basis regarding changes to examinations, study periods, subject grades and overall grades. The university publishes this report in a suitable form. The committee gives suggestions regarding changes to the curriculum or the examination rules and regulations.

### § 3 Examiners and observers

- (1) Examiners and observers are appointed by the examination committee. The committee can also confer responsibility for this task on its chairperson. In general, examinations may only be carried out by professors, lecturers, associate professors, or research associates who have been granted the right to examine by the faculty council due to longstanding teaching experience. Research associates, contract teachers and teaching staff for special duties can only be appointed exceptionally as examiners if not enough authorised examiners are available. Observers must have sat the corresponding ecclesiastical examination, Diplom (German university degree) examination or equivalent.
- (2) The examination committee informs the candidate of examiners' names in due time.
- (3) § 2 paragraph 4 applies accordingly for examiners and observers.

### § 4 Orientation examination

- (1) An orientation examination must be taken no later than at the end of the second semester. It is an integral part of the course and consists of successful participation in the course "Introduction to Theology". Successful participation includes an oral examination of around 15 minutes dealing with texts explored in the introductory course. The texts are announced before the examination.
- (2) If the orientation examination is not passed or is considered not to have been passed, it is possible to retake it once during the following semester. If the orientation examination has not been passed by the end of the third semester, the student is not entitled to take the final examinations, unless the student is not responsible for the deadline being exceeded.

### § 5 Structure and form of the intermediate examination

- (1) The intermediate examination consists of one written and two oral examinations. The three examination components must be taken in three different subjects.
- (2) The subjects for the intermediate examination are:
  1. Old Testament
  2. New Testament

3. Church History (History of the Church, Dogma and Theology)

(3) The examination components are:

1. a written examination in either Old Testament or New Testament,
2. two oral examinations, of which one may be taken as an early examination following an introductory lecture or course. The early examination must be registered with the examination committee.

Candidates may replace the oral examination in the biblical subject (Old or New Testament) in which they have obtained a graded certificate with a subject of their choice from the faculty. This applies particularly to the sub-disciplines of Systematic Theology: Dogmatic Theology and Ethics, Philosophy / Philosophy of Religion and History of Religions / Missiology.

(4) By way of derogation from paragraph 2, the following examination subjects are required when studying for a doctorate without taking a postgraduate degree beforehand.

1. Old Testament
2. New Testament
3. History of the Church, Dogma and Theology (including Christian Archaeology)
4. Systematic Theology (including the sub-disciplines Dogmatic Theology, Ethics and Ecumenical Theology)
5. History of Religions and Missiology
6. Practical Theology
7. Philosophy of Religion

(5) By way of derogation from paragraph 3, the following examination components are required when studying for a doctorate without taking a postgraduate degree beforehand.

1. a written examination in one of the seven subjects
2. two oral examinations in two further subjects, of which one may be taken as an early examination following an introductory lecture or course. The early examination must be registered with the examination committee.

(6) The subject examinations relate to current curricula for the stage 1 studies of the individual subjects. The introductory lectures or courses and preparatory seminars are based on the subject examinations.

(7) If candidates provide a medical certificate which plausibly proves that they are not able to take examination components in the form prescribed, completely or partially, due to permanent or sustained

physical impairment, the chairperson of the examination committee must allow them to take an equivalent examination in an appropriate form. This also applies to examination prerequisites.

## § 6 Examination deadlines

- (1) The intermediate examination must be taken at the beginning of the fifth semester at the latest.
- (2) If the intermediate examination, including all retakes, has not been passed by the beginning of the lecture period of the seventh semester, the candidate is not entitled to take further examinations, unless the candidate is not responsible for the deadline being exceeded. On request, the examination committee will take a decision on this matter. For each language that must be learnt, one semester is discounted when calculating the standard period of study. A maximum of two semesters can be discounted for this purpose.
- (3) The intermediate examination can only be taken at the beginning of a semester. Admission to the intermediate examination must be applied for by the end of the previous semester. The date of the intermediate examination and the application deadline for admission must be announced at the beginning of the previous semester, eight weeks before the application deadline at the latest.

## § 7 Admission requirements

- (1) Admission to the intermediate examination is authorised for those who:
  1. hold the general higher education entrance qualification, a relevant subject-linked higher education entrance qualification, or an equivalent university entrance qualification legally recognised by the relevant authorities,
  2. have not lost their entitlement to take the final examinations in the degree programme in Protestant Theology (teaching degree, Magister, Diplom degree programme, ecclesiastical examination),
  3. were enrolled in the degree programme in Protestant Theology at Heidelberg University during the semester preceding the intermediate examination,
  4. have attended the obligatory academic counselling session in their first semester,
  5. have passed the orientation examination in accordance with § 4,
  6. have provided evidence of the required language skills (Classical Hebrew Certificate / Hebraicum, Ancient Greek Certificate / Graecum, Latin Certificate / Latinum),

7. have attended an introductory lecture or course, stated as such in the course catalogue, in each of the subjects Old Testament, New Testament and Church History,
  8. have passed the examination in Biblical Studies (Biblical Studies Certificate) in accordance with § 12,
  9. have attended a preparatory seminar in each of the subjects Old Testament, New Testament, Church History and Systematic Theology and acquired at least two certificates from these preparatory seminars graded "sufficient" or higher. One of the two graded certificates must have been acquired in one of the two biblical subjects.
- (2) The application for admission to the intermediate examination must be made in writing.  
The application must include the following documents:
1. evidence of fulfilment of the requirements in accordance with § 1,
  2. academic records or documents replacing academic records as proof of regular studies,
  3. candidates' declarations stating whether they have already failed an intermediate examination or final examination in a degree programme in Protestant Theology (Diplom degree programme, teaching degree programme, Magister degree programme or the equivalent ecclesiastical examination), and whether they are currently undergoing an examination procedure,
  4. candidates' declarations of the subject of the written examination in accordance with § 5 paragraph 3 no. 1,
  5. evidence of an early oral examination in accordance with § 5 paragraph 3 no. 2, if necessary.
- (3) If candidates are unable to provide the required documents in accordance with paragraph 2, the examination committee may allow other proof to be accepted.

## § 8 Admission procedure

- (1) The application for admission to the examination must be addressed to the intermediate examination committee of the Faculty of Theology. The committee chairperson will take a decision regarding admission of the candidate.
- (2) The application for admission to the examination may only be rejected if
  1. conditions are not fulfilled in accordance with § 7 paragraph 1, or
  2. documents in accordance with § 7 paragraph 2 are not complete and there is no exception in accordance with § 7 paragraph 3, or
  3. candidates have failed their final attempt at an intermediate

examination or final examination in a degree programme in Protestant Theology (Diplom degree programme, teaching degree programme, Magister degree programme or First Ecclesiastical Examination)

4. the candidate is currently undergoing examination procedures in one of the degree programmes listed in no. 3.
- (3) The examination committee will notify candidates regarding admission to the intermediate examination four weeks before the examination at the latest.

### **§ 9 Recognition of study periods, examination prerequisites and examination results**

- (1) Study periods, examination prerequisites completed and results obtained through degree programmes (Ecclesiastical Examination or Faculty Examination / Fakultätsexamen and Diplom Examination) in Protestant Theology at German universities, universities or colleges of equal standing or church examination offices will be recognised without verification of equivalence.
- (2) Study periods, examination prerequisites completed and results obtained in other degree programmes will be recognised, provided there is equivalence. There is equivalence if the majority of the periods of study and examination prerequisites and components correspond to the degree programme in Protestant Theology (Ecclesiastical Examination or Faculty Examination / Fakultätsexamen and Diplom Examination) at Heidelberg University regarding their content, scope and requirements. When assessing equivalence, programmes are not compared schematically, but rather considered and assessed as a whole. When recognising periods of study, as well as examination prerequisites completed and results obtained outside the Federal Republic of Germany, Equivalency Agreements and agreements between partner universities approved by the Conference of German Ministers of Education (Kultusministerkonferenz, KMK) and German Rectors' Conference (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz, HRK) must be taken into account.
- (3) For study periods, examination prerequisites completed and results obtained at state-recognised distance learning institutions, paragraphs 1 and 2 apply accordingly. Paragraph 2 also applies to study periods, examination prerequisites completed and results obtained at universities of cooperative education (state or state-recognised) as well as technical and engineering colleges and military universities of the former German Democratic Republic.
- (4) If examination prerequisites and results are recognised, grades - if

grading systems are similar - must be transferred and used when calculating the overall grade in accordance with these examination rules and regulations. If grading systems are not comparable, examination prerequisites and results are graded as a "pass". This recognition can be stated in the diploma.

- (5) When requirements have been met in accordance with paragraphs 1 to 3, students are legally entitled to recognition of their examination prerequisites and results. Recognition of study periods and examination prerequisites obtained in Germany is carried out ex officio. Students must present the documents necessary for recognition.

## § 10 Written examinations

- (1) The purpose of written examinations is for candidates to show that they are able to recognise problems relating to their subject and find solutions for them, using subject-specific methods with limited time and resources. The candidate selects one of the two topics.
- (2) The written examination lasts three hours. Exceptions in accordance with § 5 paragraph 6 are possible.
- (3) In the Old Testament written examination, candidates are allowed to use a dictionary. The following aids are permitted in the New Testament written examination:
1. a Greek concordance, 2. a dictionary, 3. a Greek synopsis.
- The examination committee will decide on the specific aids permitted.

## § 11 Oral examination

- (1) The purpose of oral examinations is to assess whether candidates are able to identify interconnections within the examination matter and relate special problems to these interconnections. Furthermore, candidates should show that they have a broad basis of knowledge.
- (2) Generally, oral examination components are carried out by a panel of two examiners, or by one examiner and one qualified observer, as a group or individual examination.
- (3) Before determining the grade for the oral examination, the examiner consults all other examiners involved.
- (4) Oral examinations last approximately 20 minutes.



- (5) Important content and the results of the examination must be written in the minutes. Candidates must be notified of examination results following the oral examination.
- (6) Students wishing to take a subject examination at a later examination date are permitted to listen in on the same examination, if room is available, unless the examination candidate objects. However, the listener may not attend the assessment and announcement of the examination result.

## § 12 Examination in Biblical Studies

- (1) Admission to the Biblical Studies examination is only authorised for those who are enrolled at Heidelberg University.
- (2) The Biblical Studies examination consists of a 30-minute oral examination with an observer present and minutes taken. The Old and New Testament must be examined in equal parts.
- (3) In exceptional and justifiable cases, the Biblical Studies examination may be taken as a written examination.

## § 13 Assessment of examination components, grading and passing the intermediate examination

- (1) Examiners receive the written examinations without candidates' names and labelled only with a reference number. Each written examination is assessed by two examiners. The grade is calculated as the mean of the individual evaluations. If the grades differ by more than one grade level, the chairperson of the examination committee designates a third examiner. In such a case, the grade is calculated as the mean of the three evaluations.
- (2) The following grades are used for assessment of examination

components:

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| 1 = very good    | = an outstanding performance;  |
| 2 = good         | = a performance which lies substantially above average requirements;     |
| 3 = satisfactory | = a performance which corresponds to average requirements;               |
| 4 = sufficient   | = a performance which, despite deficiencies, still meets requirements;   |
| 5 = failed       | = a performance which does not meet the requirements due to considerable |

deficiencies.

For more detailed assessment, interim grades may be given by increasing or decreasing the individual grades by 0.3. Grades 0.7; 4.3; 4.7 and 5.3 may not be used.

- (3) The intermediate examination is passed when all examination components have been graded as "sufficient" (4.0) or higher.
- (4) When calculating the overall grade, only the first decimal after the point is taken into account. The other decimals are dropped without rounding.
- (5) The overall grade is calculated as the mean of the three examination component results. The overall grade is as follows:

for an average up to and including 1.5	= very good
for an average between 1.6 and up to/including 2.5	= good
for an average between 2.6 and up to/including 3.5	= satisfactory
for an average between 3.6 and up to/including 4.0	= sufficient

#### **§ 14 Retaking the intermediate examination**

- (1) If examination components are not passed or considered not to have been passed, they may be retaken once. A second retake is only possible in exceptional and justifiable cases. This includes failed examinations at other German universities or universities or colleges of equal standing. It is not possible to retake a subject examination if it has been graded as passed.
- (2) Examinations must be retaken at the next examination date at the latest. If candidates miss this deadline, they lose the entitlement to take the examination, unless they are not responsible for the deadline being exceeded.

#### **§ 15 Unexcused absence, withdrawal, attempts at deception and breaches of regulations**

- (1) An examination is graded as "failed" (5.0) if candidates fail to appear or withdraw after the examination has started, without being able to state a valid reason for their absence or withdrawal. A written examination that was not produced within the allowed time is also graded as "failed".
- (2) Reasons for withdrawal or absence must be stated plausibly and immediately to the examination committee in writing. If the candidate,

or a child for whom the candidate is generally the sole carer, is ill, a medical certificate must be provided. In case of doubt, the examination committee can request a medical certificate from a designated doctor. If the reasons are accepted by the chairperson of the examination committee, a new appointment will be scheduled. In this case, examination results that are already available will be taken into account.

- (3) If the candidate tries to influence the examination results through deception or by using unauthorised aids, the examination component will be graded as "failed" (5.0). If candidates disrupt the proper course of the examination, they may be excluded from taking further part in the examination by the examiner or examination supervisor, in which case the examination component will be graded as "failed" (5.0). In severe cases, the examination committee may exclude the candidate from all further examinations.
- (4) Within a period of two weeks, the candidate may request that the decision be validated by the examination committee in accordance with paragraph 3 sentences 1 and 2. The candidate must be informed of negative decisions immediately in writing, stating the reasons and providing information on the procedure for appeal.

## § 16 Diploma

- (1) After the intermediate examination is passed, a diploma is issued, if possible within four weeks. The diploma states the grades for the subject examinations and the overall grade. The diploma must be signed by the chairperson of the examination committee. It is dated with the day of the last examination component.
- (2) If the intermediate examination is failed or is considered not to have been passed, the examination committee will issue the candidate a written notification. It provides information on retaking the examination components (if this is possible), scope and deadlines. The notification must provide information on the procedure for appeal.
- (3) If the candidate has failed the intermediate examination, a certificate will be issued on request and on presentation of relevant proof, listing passed examination components and the corresponding grades as well as the missing examination components required for passing the intermediate examination. The document must indicate that the intermediate examination was not passed.

## § 17 Invalidity of intermediate examination

- (1) If a candidate has deceived in an examination and this is only discovered after the diploma has been issued, the respective examination grade can be corrected in accordance with § 15 paragraph 3. The subject and intermediate examinations can be declared as "failed", if necessary.
- (2) If the requirements for admission to the subject examination were not fulfilled without any intent to deceive on the candidate's part, and this is only discovered after the diploma has been issued, the passed examination is considered to compensate for this shortcoming. If candidates intentionally gained admission to the subject examination through deceit, the subject and intermediate examination can be declared as "failed".
- (3) Before the decision is taken, candidates are given the right to explain themselves.
- (4) The fraudulent diploma will be confiscated and, if necessary, a new diploma will be issued. In accordance with paragraph 1 and paragraph 2 sentence 2, a decision may not be taken more than five years after the date on the diploma.

## **§ 18 Access to examination documents**

Within a year after the examination procedure has been completed, the candidate can request access to written examination documents and the examination minutes.

## **§ 19 Coming into force and transitional provisions**

- (1) These examination rules and regulations will come into force on the first day of the month following publication in the President and vice-chancellor's bulletin (Mitteilungsblatt des Rektors).
- (2) Student who were enrolled for the degree programme in Protestant Theology (Faculty Examination / Fakultätsexamen or Ecclesiastical Examination) while these examination rules and regulations are coming into effect may apply to be examined under the previous examination rules and regulations of Heidelberg University for Faculty Examination / Fakultätsexamen (Diplom examination) of the Faculty of Theology and intermediate examination in the degree programme in Protestant Theology (Ecclesiastical Examination) of 01 October 1992 (Gazette W.u.K. 1992, p. 331) modified on 19 October 1995 (Gazette W.u.F. 1995, p.618). The application must be made within two years of these examination rules and regulations coming into

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effect and such an application is irrevocable. § 4 is not affected.

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