

Guidelines on

Viewing Examination Scripts

Part of the Handbook for Study, Teaching, and

Learning Version 2.0

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Please note that the English version of this guideline is purely for your convenience and is not legally binding. Only the German version is legally binding.

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1. Legal Basis

Section 64, para. 2, 10 of the Higher Education Act – HEA of North Rhine-Westphalia stipulates that the university examination regulations must specify the process for viewing examination scripts. This is implemented in Section 22 of the General Exam Regulations (GER) and Section 25 of the GER LAB (Bachelor’s in Teacher Training) and the GER M.Ed. (Master’s in Teacher Training) 2017, and Section 26 of the GER M.Ed. 2014 at RWTH.

Every student has the right to view their examination scripts, regardless of whether they passed the respective examination. Without sufficient information on the procedure determining their performance and the corresponding evaluation, students are unable to verify whether their right to equal opportunities in examination law has been respected. They therefore cannot adequately substantiate a possible objection to the evaluation and claim a reassessment. Since the guarantee of effective legal protection under Article 19.4 of German Basic Law is compromised here, students must be given the opportunity to view their examination scripts.

2. Subject of the Examination Viewing

The right to view an examination ensues after each completed examination. This not only includes the final examination for a module, but also any oral or written partial examinations. The documents that may be viewed include

- assessed written examinations
- any related evaluation by the examiners
- the examiners’ reports, and
- any copies of work that the examiners have made comments on.

The **grading system** is also a key part of the examination evaluation and must be disclosed in accordance with examination law. In addition, statistics on the distribution of grades and a scale of the individual grade ranges must also be published.

On the other hand, students are not entitled to view

- **any handwritten notes** made by examiners during oral examinations,
- sketches or notes of **preliminary considerations** for the evaluation of written or oral examinations,
- **sample solutions** or general proposed solutions. These do not relate to the evaluation of the individual examination, but rather give examiners general and non-binding guidance.

3. Implementation

An examination viewing may take place after each completed examination and after the examination has been returned or the result of an oral examination has been announced. If an examination consists of several parts, the viewing might also take place after all the parts have been completed.

The viewing session must be held under appropriate conditions for students, for example:

- There must be sufficient space and staff to make it possible for all students to sit and view their examination scripts without long waiting times.
- The period of time each student is granted to view their examination scripts is defined in the examination regulations according to the duration of the respective examination, see Section 22 (1), sentence 5 of the GER, Section 25 (1), sentence 5 of the GER LAB, Section 25 (1), sentence 5 of the GER M.Ed. 2017, or Section 26 (1), sentence 5 of the GER M.Ed. 2014.

This means the viewing lasts:

- at least 10 minutes if the duration of the written examination is up to 60 minutes
- at least 20 minutes if the duration of the written examination is between 60 and 120 minutes
- at least 30 minutes if the duration of the written examination exceeds 120 minutes.

The duration and place of the viewing is determined by the examiner, who will announce this information when the examination takes place, or at the very latest, when the grades are announced.

- Students may take notes during the viewing session. **It is recommended to provide students with suitable, recognizable writing material such as colored pens**, as this can reduce the risk of documents getting manipulated.
- Corrections must be explained at the viewing or in writing at a later stage.
- Students must present a **photo ID** (BlueCard or an official photo ID) prior to the viewing for identification.
- If a large number of students attend the viewing session, it is recommended an issuing and return list of the examination scripts is carried out or a pre-registration system with appointment allocations is put in place.

4. Viewing Examination Scripts Outside the Official Session

If it is not possible to attend the official viewing for significant reasons, where for example a medical certificate or proof of participation in a simultaneous viewing session is provided, the original examination scripts can be viewed at the office in charge, which is usually the respective chair or institute.

5. Authorizing a Representative

In principle, only the student may view their own examination script. However, they can nominate an individual to represent them in their place at the viewing with a written authorization. A template for this is in the appendix.

The representative is to be admitted to the examination viewing upon presentation of their photo ID (BlueCard or an official photo ID). The representative is granted the same rights as the examinee in the viewing session. It should be noted, however, that **either** the student **or** the authorized representative may attend the viewing session, but not both.

6. Manipulation Attempts in an Examination Viewing

Since the original examination scripts are made available during the viewing session, there is a risk of the original examination being manipulated. This cannot lead to the assumption of an attempt at deception resulting in a subsequent grade of 5.0 for the examination, since the examination and evaluation process is already finished by the time of the viewing session.

If there is suspicion that a script has been manipulated, criminal charges can be filed on account of forgery of documents. Division 1.5 – Examination and Statutory Law will report this to the Department of Public Prosecution.

Appendix 1: Authorization of a Representative

Authorization of a Representative

Examination (Date): _____

Examiner: _____

Student Requesting a Representative

Last Name: _____

First Name: _____

Student ID Number: _____

Authorized Representative:

Last Name: _____

First Name: _____

Student ID Number (if applicable): _____

The representative must present their photo ID (BlueCard or an official photo ID) to be admitted to the viewing session.

Declaration

I hereby authorize the person specified under "Authorized Representative" to exercise my rights to view the written examination mentioned above.

Place, Date: _____

Signature: _____