

**Regulations for the *Deutsche Sprachprüfung für den Hochschulzugang* (DSH)
(German Language Examination for Entry to Higher Education
for applicants who have gained their university entrance qualification abroad)
at the University of Duisburg-Essen**

dated 13 December 2012

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Most recently amended by Art. I of the first amendment dated 04 November 2014
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and corrected on 08 June 2017 (Gazette, Vol. 15, 2017 Page 485 / No. 86)

Under the provisions of Article (§) 2 Para. 4 and § 49 Para. 13 Sentence 2 of the Higher Education Act of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (*Hochschulgesetz* - HG) dated 31.10.2006 (Law and Ordinance Gazette, GV. NRW. p. 474), last amended by the Act of 31.01.2012 (GV. NRW. p. 90), the University of Duisburg-Essen has issued the following Regulations.

Content

A. General Examination Provisions

- § 1 Scope
- § 2 Purpose of the examination
- § 3 Admission, examination fee, examination dates
- § 4 Structure of the examination
- § 5 Assessment and grading of the examination
- § 6 DSH Commission
- § 7 Absence, withdrawal, cheating, breach of regulations
- § 8 Resitting the examination
- § 9 Examination results
- § 10 Examination certificate

B. Special Examination Provisions

- § 11 Written examination
- § 12 Oral examination

C. Concluding Provisions

- § 13 Entry into force, publication

A. General Examination Provisions

**§ 1
Scope**

(1) University applicants who have not gained their university entrance qualification at a German-speaking institution must provide evidence that they have a sufficient level of proficiency in German before beginning their studies. DSH level 2 is the minimum requirement.

Evidence to this effect is provided by the *Deutsche Sprachprüfung für den Hochschulzugang* (DSH, German Language Examination for Entry to Higher Education), unless an exemption in accordance with paragraphs 2 to 4 applies.

(2) Passing the DSH examination at level DSH-2, the TestDaF at level TDN-4 in all its parts or the "German" section of the *Feststellungsprüfung* assessment test at a higher education institution or on a *Studienkolleg* foundation course is recognised as evidence of the required level of language proficiency for study purposes in accordance with the regulatory framework of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK).

(3) Applicants are exempted from the DSH examination if they

- a) provide evidence that they have attained the required level of language proficiency for study purposes as part of a school-leaving qualification which corresponds to a German university entrance qualification;
- b) have passed Stage II of the *Deutsches Sprachdiplom* (DSD II, German Language Diploma) from the German Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KRK) (Resolution of the KRK of 6 December 1996 in the current version);
- c) have passed the Goethe Certificate C2: *Großes Deutsches Sprachdiplom* (GDS, Major German Language Diploma) from the Goethe Institute;

- d) have passed the *Zentrale Oberstufenprüfung* (ZOP, Central Advanced Level Examination), the *Kleines Deutsches Sprachdiplom* (KDS, Minor German Language Diploma) or the Major German Language Diploma (GDS) from the Goethe Institute, however only up to 31.12.2016;
- e) have German language skills which have been acknowledged under bilateral agreements or other agreements reached by the KMK and HRK as sufficient evidence of the required language proficiency for studying at a higher education institution.
- (4) The following are also exempted from the DSH examination:
- a) students who are enrolled for a limited period of time on recognised international exchange programmes or exchange programmes by separate agreement with the University of Duisburg-Essen and are not working towards a formal degree qualification at the University,
- b) applicants who have already successfully completed a degree programme in German at a higher education institution in the Federal Republic of Germany;
- c) applicants who have already completed a degree in German Studies (*Germanistik*) at a higher education institution in one of the states party to the Agreement of 11 April 1997 on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (Lisbon Convention), as long as there is no evidence of a significant difference between the applicant's final qualification and the requirements of the DSH examination;
- d) applicants who are taking up a doctoral programme at the University of Duisburg-Essen and provide written evidence that the responsible doctoral committee approves the doctorate being taken in a different language, or where this is expressly provided for by the relevant doctoral regulations;
- e) applicants who have passed a DSH examination at level DSH-1 or a TestDaF at level TDN-3, on condition that the examination regulations for the study programme guarantee the acquisition of further language skills and DSH-2 level proficiency;
- f) applicants who are taking up the International Studies in Engineering (ISE) programme at the University of Duisburg-Essen;
- g) applicants taking up a foreign language degree programme at the University of Duisburg-Essen in accordance with § 60 Para. 2, for which the examination regulations state that teaching takes place exclusively in the foreign language and examinations can similarly be taken in the foreign language;
- h) applicants who in special cases have been exempted on application from the examination by the DSH Commission.

§ 2

Purpose of the examination

(1) The examination enables the candidate to demonstrate that he or she has the general and academic written and spoken language skills to take up his or her chosen course of study. He or she must be capable of understanding and processing written and oral texts relating to the study situation and of independently producing such texts.

(2) The DSH provides evidence of the candidate's language proficiency for study purposes in the following sections: listening comprehension, reading comprehension, academic language structures, writing, and oral expression. The examination certificate shows the overall grade of the oral and written examination as DSH-3, DSH-2 or DSH-1 and the scores achieved in the separate sections of the examination; DSH-2 is the general level of language proficiency required for studying. The examination certificate documents the candidate's language proficiency with scores in the separate sections of the examination.

§ 3

Admission, examination fee, examination dates

(1) The DSH Commission sets the upper limit for the number of admissions to the relevant DSH examination according to the available capacity.

(2) An examination fee in accordance with the provisions of state law can be charged for taking the DSH examination.

(3) In order to be admitted to the DSH examination, candidates must have registered by the deadline set ahead of the examination, submitted all the necessary documents, received a payment request and paid the fee referred to in (1), and received confirmation of admission to the examination.

(4) If a candidate can show when registering for the examination that he or she is unable to meet the examination requirements fully or in part in the manner intended on account of enduring or permanent physical incapacity, it is permitted for the examination requirements to be met in an extended period of time or in a different but equivalent form. The applicant may be required to submit a medical certificate in this case.

(5) The examination dates are announced at the latest two weeks before the beginning of the examination.

§ 4

Structure of the examination

(1) The DSH examination is made up of a written and an oral examination. The written examination takes place before the oral examination. Both components of the examination are to be taken in the same period of time and at the same venue.

(2) The written examination is divided into the parts shown in § 11 (1).

(3) The applicant must pass the written examination in accordance with § 5 (2) in order to be admitted to the oral examination.

§ 5

Assessment and grading of the examination

(1) The candidate must pass both the written and the oral examination in order to pass the DSH examination.

(2) In order to pass the written examination, the candidate must complete at least 57 % (DSH-1), 67 % (DSH-2) or 82 % (DSH-3) of all the requirements set in all parts of the examination in accordance with § 11 (1). The listening comprehension, reading comprehension, academic language structures and writing parts of the examination are weighted 2:2:1:2.

(3) In order to pass the oral examination, the candidate must complete at least 57 % (DSH-1), 67 % (DSH-2) or 82 % (DSH-3) of requirements.

(4) The overall result of the examination in accordance with (1) is graded as follows:

- DSH-1 if the candidate has completed at least 57 % of requirements in both the written and the oral examination;
- DSH-2 if the candidate has completed at least 67 % of requirements in both the written and the oral examination;
- DSH-3 if the candidate has completed at least 82 % of requirements in both the written and the oral examination.

§ 6

DSH Commission

(1) A DSH Commission (examination board) is appointed by the Rector of the University of Duisburg-Essen, acting on the proposal of the Faculty Board of the Faculty of Humanities, for the proper conduct of the DSH examination and to undertake the duties delegated through these Regulations.

(2) The DSH Commission is made up of representatives from the following groups: higher education teachers, academic staff, and students, in a ratio of 2:1:1. The Chair should come from the group of higher education teachers. The Chair and the majority of other members of the Commission should be full-time teaching staff in German as a Foreign Language/German as a Second Language.

The period of office for representatives from the group of higher education teachers and academic employees is three years and one year for student members. Reappointments are permitted.

(3) The DSH Commission is an official body within the meaning of administrative procedural law.

(4) The meetings of the DSH Commission are not open to the public. The members of the DSH Commission are subject to official secrecy. In the event that they are not members of the public service, they are sworn to secrecy by the Chair of the examination board in accordance with

the law on the formal obligation of persons who are not public servants (*Verpflichtungsgesetz*).

(5) The Chair of the DSH Commission convenes and coordinates the DSH Commission.

(6) The DSH Commission instructs a board of examiners to conduct an examination; the DSH Commission is responsible for ensuring the professional competence of the members of the board of examiners.

(7) The DSH Commission establishes the framework for the oral and written examination and monitors the conduct of both. The members of the DSH Commission are entitled to be present when examinations are being held.

(8) The DSH Commission determines pass or fail in the DSH and certifies the result in accordance with § 10.

(9) The DSH Commission is responsible for decisions on exemptions from the DSH in accordance with § 1 (4) and on any appeals against the DSH examination.

§ 7

Absence, withdrawal, cheating, breach of regulations

(1) An examination is graded a "Fail" if the candidate does not show up for an examination without valid reason or withdraws without valid reason after the examination has commenced.

(2) The reasons given by a candidate for his or her withdrawal or absence from the examination must be presented immediately to the DSH Commission in writing and with supporting evidence. In the case of illness, the candidate may be required to present a medical certificate. If the DSH Commission accepts the reasons, the candidate is notified accordingly and a new date for the examination set. In this case, the existing examination results are taken into account.

(3) If the candidate attempts to influence his or her examination score by cheating and/or using unauthorised means, the examination in question will be graded a "Fail". A candidate who disrupts the proper course of an examination may, after receiving a warning, be prevented from continuing with the examination by the invigilator. In this case, the examination will be graded a "Fail". If the candidate is excluded from continuing with the examination, he or she may request to have the decision reviewed by the DSH Commission.

(4) The candidate must be notified immediately, with reasons, of any decision against him or her by the DSH Commission. The candidate should be given the opportunity to put forward his or her case.

§ 8

Resitting the examination

The DSH examination can be resat at the earliest on the next scheduled examination date.

§ 9
Examination results

(1) A certificate is issued for passing the DSH. The certificate is signed by the Chair of the DSH Commission or a representative. The certificate shows the overall level achieved (DSH-1, DSH-2, DSH-3) and the scores in the separate parts of the examination.

(2) A document certifying that the candidate has not passed the DSH examination can be issued at the candidate's request.

§ 10
Examination certificate

An examination certificate corresponding to the sample attached is issued.

B. Special Examination Provisions

§ 11
Written examination

(1) The written examination is made up of the following parts:

- Understanding and completing tasks on a listening text
(Time allowed: 10 minutes after the first reading and 40 minutes after the second. The listening time itself – a maximum of two times 15 minutes – and any pre-listening times do not count towards the time allowed for completing the tasks),
- Understanding and completing tasks on a reading text and on academic language structures
(Time allowed: 90 minutes including reading time),
- Controlled writing
(Time allowed: 70 minutes).

(2) The tasks may be thematically connected and at least two thematic areas should be addressed. Candidates may use a general language monolingual German dictionary to work on the texts. Electronic and other tools or materials are not permitted.

(3) The entire written examination takes a maximum of four clock hours (including presentation of the listening text).

(4) Parts of the examination:

1. Understanding and completing tasks based on a listening text

This part of the examination tests the candidate's ability to follow and understand lectures and talks on scientific or academic topics and make and work with constructive notes on them.

a) Type and scope of the text

The examination should be based on a text that appropriately reflects the communication situation of a lecture/exercise. The text should not call for any specialist knowledge. Depending on redundancy, the text should be equivalent to a written text no shorter than 5500 and no longer than 7000 characters (with spaces).

b) Procedure

The listening text is presented twice. Notes may be taken during presentation. Before the examination text is presented, information may be given on its thematic content. Names, dates and difficult specialist terms may be provided and illustrated by visual means. The manner of presentation should appropriately reflect the communication situation of a lecture/exercise.

c) Task

The task depends on the structure of the examination text. It should especially focus on understanding content and recognising thematic structure and text organisation. Different types and combinations of tasks may be set, e.g.

- answering questions,
- structural outline,
- summary,
- outline of main idea.

Coherent reproduction of the content of an extract of the presented text is a key part of the task.

d) Assessment

The candidate's performance in the examination is assessed according to how fully and appropriately he or she completes the set tasks.

2. Understanding and completing tasks on a reading text and on academic language structures

The examination tests the candidate's ability to understand and work with a given written text.

a) Type of text

The text should be largely authentic, study-related and of an academic or scientific nature and should not call for any specialist knowledge. The text may be accompanied by an illustration, chart or diagram.

The text should be no shorter than 4500 and no longer than 6000 characters (with spaces).

b) Task

The reading comprehension task depends on the structure of the examination text. The following types of task can be used to test understanding of and the ability to work with the text:

- answering questions,
- outlining the argumentative structure of the text,
- outlining the structure of the text,
- explaining passages of text,
- formulating headings,
- summarising.

The task relating to academic language structures includes recognising, understanding and using structures that are relevant to academic or scientific language. This task should focus on the special features of the text on which it is based (e.g. syntactically, morphologically, lexically, idioms, text type) and may include exercises such as text completion, questions on understanding complex structures, and different types of transformations, paraphrasing, etc.

c) Assessment

Performance in the examination is assessed according to how fully and appropriately the candidate completes the set tasks. In reading comprehension, aspects relating to content carry more weight than linguistic accuracy; the structural tasks are assessed according to linguistic accuracy.

3. Controlled writing

The examination tests the candidate's ability to express an opinion independently and coherently in writing on a study-related theme of an academic or scientific nature.

a) Task

The candidate should produce a text of around 250 words. It should include at least one of the language activities from the following groups:

- description, comparison, exemplification,
- argumentation, commentary, appraisal.

The following may be used as a basis for production of the written text: illustrations, charts, diagrams, bullet point lists, quotes.

The written text must not have the character of a free essay. The task should be formulated in such a way as to make it impossible for the exercises to be completed using pre-formulated passages.

b) Assessment

Performance in the examination is assessed according to aspects of content (appropriateness, text structure, coherence) and language (accuracy, choice of words, syntax). The linguistic aspects carry the heavier weighting.

§ 12

Oral examination

The examination tests the candidate's ability to perform and reciprocate linguistic activities, explaining, appraising, exemplifying, informing, etc.) spontaneously, fluently and appropriately and to apply relevant interaction strategies (turn-taking, cooperating, asking for explanations, etc.).

a) Task and performance

The examination should take no longer than 20 minutes.

Oral examinations in groups are not permitted.

The oral examination is a dialogue lasting a maximum of 20 minutes and comprising a short and as far as possible descriptive talk of 5 minutes in length and a subsequent dialogue with the examiner of no longer than 15 minutes.

The basis of the oral examination should be a short, not too complex and linguistically not too difficult text and/or a diagram/illustration. The candidate should be given 20 minutes to prepare the short talk.

b) Assessment

Performance in the examination is assessed according to how appropriately to the content, comprehensibly and independently the candidate expresses him or herself, behaviour during the conversation, linguistic accuracy and lexical differentiation, pronunciation and intonation.

C. Concluding Provisions

§ 13

Entry into force

These Regulations for the German Language Examination for Entry to Higher Education for Foreign Students (DSH) enter into force on the day after their publication in the Official Notices section of the University of Duisburg-Essen Gazette (*Verkündungsblatt - Amtliche Mitteilungen*).

The Regulations for the German Language Examination for Entry to Higher Education for Foreign Students (DSH) at the University of Duisburg-Essen dated 13 September 2005 (Gazette p. 301) expire on the same date.

Issued on the basis of the resolution of the Senate of the University of Duisburg-Essen of 07 December 2012.

Duisburg and Essen, 13 December 2012

For the Rector
of the University of Duisburg-Essen
The Chancellor
per pro
Eva Lindenberg-Wendler

Appendix



Offen im Denken

DSH Certificate®

Mr/Ms

Date of birth Place of birth

achieved the following results in the *Deutsche Sprachprüfung für den Hochschulzugang* (German Language Examination for Entry to Higher Education, DSH):

Overall grade: DSH- ... [DSH-3/DSH-2/DSH-1]

The scores in the different sections of the examination:

Written examination: % overall
Listening comprehension: % in this part of the examination
Writing: % in this part of the examination
Reading comprehension: % in this part of the examination
Academic language structures: % in this part of the examination

Oral examination: % overall

An overall grade of DSH-2 indicates a level of language proficiency suitable for admission to or enrolment on all study programmes and for all degrees at all higher education institutions. Attainment of DSH-3 indicates an especially high level of proficiency in German. DSH-3 is above the level required for admission or enrolment. An overall score of DSH-1 indicates a limited level of language proficiency for study purposes. This level may be accepted for admission to or enrolment on certain study programmes or for certain degrees at the discretion of the higher education institution. (Please see overleaf for a description of the language skills tested in the examination)

Essen, _____

Signature
(DSH Commission)

(Seal)

Signature (Board of Examiners)

The examination was subject to the DSH Examination Regulations of the [University of Duisburg-Essen] dated 13.12.2012. The Examination Regulations correspond to the *Rahmenordnung über Deutsche Sprachprüfungen für das Studium an deutschen Hochschulen* (Framework Regulations on German Language Examinations for Study at German Higher Education Institutions) dated 10.11.2015 and is registered with the German Rectors' Conference (registration number 71-12/15). DSH examinations taken in accordance with the Framework Regulations are recognised by all higher education institutions and *Studienkolleg* foundation course providers in Germany in accordance with § 7 of the Framework Regulations.

The DSH examination provides evidence that a candidate has the necessary language proficiency to study at a higher education institution. It comprises a written examination (including listening comprehension, reading comprehension, academic language structures, and writing) and an oral examination (oral expression). The weighting ratio between the written examination parts is as follows: listening comprehension, reading comprehension, academic language structures, and writing, 2:2:1:2, respectively.

(1) The overall score reflects the candidate's language proficiency on three levels:

Overall grade		Admission
		(in accordance with the <i>Rahmenordnung über Deutsche Sprachprüfungen für das Studium an deutschen Hochschulen</i> dated 10.11.2015, § 3, Para. 3 to 5)
DSH-3:	Very high level of written and oral skills (at least 82 % of requirements in both the written and the oral examination)	(Para. 3) Achieving an overall score in the DSH examination of at least level DSH-2 is evidence that the candidate has the necessary language proficiency for admission to or enrolment on all programmes and degrees at all higher education institutions.
DSH-2:	Differentiated written and oral skills (at least 67 % of requirements in both the written and the oral examination)	
DSH-1:	Basic written and oral skills (at least 57 % of requirements in both the written and the oral examination)	(Para. 4) Achieving level DSH-3 is evidence of a particularly high level of proficiency in German. DSH-3 is above the level required for admission or enrolment. (Para. 5) If for certain study purposes a higher education institution has standards of language proficiency other or lower than DSH-2, admission or enrolment based on those lower standards is not binding for admission to or enrolment on a different programme at the same higher education institution or for admission to or enrolment at other higher education institutions if they are subject to different language proficiency standards.

(2) Language proficiency by sections

Section	Overall grade		
	DSH-3 Very high level of proficiency ...	DSH-2 Differentiated proficiency...	DSH-1 Basic proficiency...
Written			
Listening comprehension	in following and understanding presented facts and their explanation in typical study contexts (lectures, talks) and taking coherent and well-structured written notes in those contexts (outline, content structure and summary of main ideas,...)		
Reading comprehension	in understanding and working with study-related texts of an academic or scientific nature: grasping the content of presented facts, recognising main ideas and argumentative structures and their organisation, synopsis.		
and			
Academic language structures	in understanding and using typical academic language forms: sentence structure, terminology and word formation, vocabulary and forms of expression in different contexts, such as lectures, argumentation,...		
Writing	in addressing study-related and academic or scientific facts and topics in writing: description, comparison, commentary, argumentative assessment.		
Oral			
Oral skills	in addressing study-related and academic or scientific facts and topics orally: - in a monologue (explaining, appraising, exemplifying, informing,...); - in linguistic interaction: speaking and reciprocating spontaneously, fluently and appropriately; possessing relevant interaction strategies (turn-taking, cooperating, asking for explanations,...).		