

Regulations
for the Determination of Special Aptitude
for studies in the Master's degree program
Economics and Journalism
and the specialization profile Economic Policy and Journalism
with the degree Master of Arts (M.A.)
of the Department of Cultural Studies
at TU Dortmund University
dated 4 August 2026

Based on Section 2 (4) in conjunction with Section 49 (7) of the Higher Education Act of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (*Hochschulgesetz NRW*, HG) of 16 September 2014 (GV. NRW. p.547), last amended by Article 2 of the Act of 19 December 2024 (GV. NRW. p.1222), TU Dortmund University has issued the following regulations:

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Section 1

Scope of validity

These Regulations for the Determination of Special Aptitude govern, on the basis of Section 49 (7) HG NRW, the examination to demonstrate special aptitude for the Master's degree program Economics and Journalism with the English-language profile *Economic Policy and Journalism*, which leads to the degree Master of Arts (M.A.).

Section 2

Purpose of the procedure

- (1) The Master's degree program Economics and Journalism with the English-language profile *Economic Policy and Journalism* is aimed at prospective students with a basic education in economics and journalism who intend to pursue a career in international economic journalism. The aptitude test ensures that applicants have the necessary aptitude and specific prior knowledge to successfully complete the degree program. In addition to the general qualification, proof of special aptitude for economic journalism related to the degree program is therefore a prerequisite for enrollment in the Master's degree program Economics and Journalism with a profile in *Economic Policy and Journalism*. The necessary aptitude for economic journalism is demonstrated by successfully completing an aptitude test in accordance with these regulations.
- (2) Proof of special aptitude for the degree program must be provided before commencing studies and is considered a special enrollment requirement for the Master's degree program Economics and Journalism with a profile in *Economic Policy and Journalism*.
- (3) Certification of this proof must be submitted together with the other documents upon enrollment. Further details on the required proof are regulated in Section 12 of these regulations.

Section 3

Deadlines and dates

- (1) The aptitude test for the Master's degree program Economics and Journalism with a profile in *Economic Policy and Journalism* generally takes place once a year between February and April. Information on the required sample text (Section 8) is usually published on the website of the Institute of Journalism in January at the latest. The dates for the oral part of the aptitude test (Section 9) are agreed individually with the applicants and usually take place in March. TU Dortmund University may schedule a change of date or an additional assessment date at short notice if compelling reasons make this necessary. The relevant information will also be announced in good time on the website of the Institute of Journalism.
- (2) The procedures for the determination of special aptitude will be completed by 15 April of each year at the latest for applications for the following winter semester.
- (3) If the degree program is not commenced in the semester following the examination or in the following year, a new examination to determine special aptitude for the degree program is required.

Section 4 Examination Board

- (1) The Institute of Journalism at TU Dortmund University shall form an Examination Board for the organization and implementation of the aptitude tests and for the tasks assigned by these Examination Regulations.
- (2) The Examination Board consists of three members who are elected by the department council on the recommendation of the Institute of Journalism from among the persons authorized to conduct examinations at the Institute of Journalism and the Department of Economics for a term of two years. The members of the Examination Board must fulfill the requirements of Section 65 (1) of the Higher Education Act of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (*Hochschulgesetz NRW*, HG). A substitute member shall be elected for each member who, as a person authorized to conduct examinations, also fulfills the requirements of Section 65 (1) HG NRW. The Examination Board shall elect a Chairperson, who must be a full-time employed member of TU Dortmund University.
- (3) The Examination Board appoints the examiners for the examinations to be taken in accordance with these Examination Regulations. It decides on admission to the aptitude assessment procedure. It determines the examination results and thus decides on the issuance of the aptitude assessment certificate. It also decides on appeals against decisions made by the Examination Board or its Chairperson.
- (4) The Examination Board has a quorum when all members are present. Decisions are made by a simple majority. The Chairperson may be delegated to handle day-to-day business. The Examination Board may delegate the following tasks to the Chairperson: decisions on admission to the procedure and on the issuance of the certificate of aptitude. If the election of the Examination Board or individual members is declared invalid after they have taken office, this shall not affect the legal validity of the decisions and official acts previously taken; this shall apply *mutatis mutandis* in the event of an incorrect composition of the Examination Board.
- (5) Minutes shall be taken of the examination, containing the date and time of the aptitude test, the names of the respective examiners, the name of the candidate, the results of the examination, and any special occurrences. The minutes shall be signed by the Chairperson.
- (6) The meetings of the Examination Board are not open to the public.

Section 5

Examiners

- (1) The Examination Board appoints the examiners in accordance with the legal requirements. It may delegate the appointment to the Chairperson of the Examination Board. Teachers/lecturers at TU Dortmund University and other persons authorized to conduct examinations within the meaning of Section 65 (1) HG NRW may be appointed as examiners.
- (2) The aptitude test is assessed by three examiners.
- (3) The examiners are independent in their examination activities.

Section 6

Registration and admission

- (1) Registration for the aptitude test must be submitted in writing to the Institute of Journalism, Emil-Figge-Straße 50, 44227 Dortmund, TU Dortmund University, by the deadline. The deadlines will be published in good time, at least four weeks before the deadline.
- (2) The following must be enclosed with the application:
 - A copy of your Bachelor's degree certificate in accordance with Section 3 (1) lit. a or Section 3 (1) lit. b in conjunction with subsection 2 of the Examination Regulations for the Master's degree program Economics and Journalism with an overall grade of at least "good" (2.5 or better) in accordance with Section 3 (6) lit. a of the Examination Regulations for the Master's degree program Economics and Journalism in copy/transcript form. If an applicant does not yet have a Bachelor's degree certificate, the commission may admit this applicant to the aptitude test if they can provide evidence that they have successfully completed all examinations of a Bachelor's degree program in accordance with sentence 1.
 - Completed registration form.
 - Sample text, see Section 7 lit. a.
 - Proof of English language proficiency corresponding to level C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) in accordance with Section 3 (4) of the Examination Regulations for the Master's degree program Economics and Journalism.
 - If applicable, proof or substitute proof in accordance with Section 13 of special aptitude for the degree program, proof of relevant university degrees, relevant international or practical experience.
- (3) Admission shall be refused if the documents referred to in subsections 1 and 2 are not submitted on time or are incomplete, or if individual details are incorrect or incomplete. Incomplete application documents cannot be considered in the further application and subsequent admission procedure.

Section 7

Content of the aptitude test

The aptitude test is divided into the following two parts:

a) Sample text

When registering for the aptitude test, applicants must submit a sample text written independently in English in the field of economic journalism. The sample text must be written as a text that could be published in a journalistic medium and must be 6,000 characters in length. This sample text should demonstrate that the applicant is able to analyze a current economic policy issue and write about it in a clear, understandable, and, if possible, entertaining way. A topic for the sample texts will be published on the website of the Institute of Journalism by January of each calendar year at the latest (e.g., "How to secure financial stability in an era of sky-high debt levels"; "Demographic trends: the economic opportunities of aging"; "Coping with climate change – abatement vs. adaptation"; "Does inflation contribute to the rise of populism?").

b) Oral examination

The oral examination consists of questioning the applicants about the sample text and their academic career to date. The examination is scheduled to last 15 to 20 minutes. The oral examination is usually conducted via electronic communication. Further details on the examination requirements are set out in Section 9 of these Examination Regulations.

Section 8

Sample text

- (1) Together with the submission of the sample text, applicants must submit an affidavit. In this affidavit, they must swear that they have written the sample text themselves and have not used any sources or aids other than those specified, and that they have indicated any direct and indirect quotations.
- (2) If the sample text has been graded as "pass" in accordance with Section 10 (2), applicants will be invited in writing to the oral examination at least one week before the respective examination date. Applicants will be notified of the results of the aptitude test no later than four weeks after the examination.
- (3) If the sample text has already been assessed as "failed," the applicant will receive written notification of this.

Section 9

Oral examination

- (1) The examination interview covers aspects of prior knowledge of economic policy in particular. The examiners are particularly interested in critical reflection on economic policy goals, measures, and public discourse. Knowledge of economics and current issues of economic policy must be demonstrated.
- (2) Applicants will only be invited to the oral examination if the sample text has been graded as "pass." Otherwise, the applicant will receive written notification of failure in accordance with Section 8 (3).
- (3) The oral examination takes place via electronic communication.
- (4) The oral examination of the aptitude test is not open to the public.
- (5) Minutes shall be taken of the oral examination, containing the date and place of the aptitude tests, the names of the respective examiners, the name of the applicant, the content and duration of the examination, the results of the examination, and any special occurrences. The transcript shall be signed by the Chairperson of the Examination Board. If no Examination Board has been formed, the transcript shall be signed by the respective examiners.

Section 10

Assessment of examination performance, passing the aptitude test

- (1) The result is determined separately for each part of the examination. The sample text is assessed by two examiners, and the performance in the oral examination is assessed by three examiners.
- (2) The two parts of the aptitude test are each graded as "pass" or "fail."
- (3) The aptitude test is passed if the applicant meets the performance requirements in both the sample text and the oral examination. The aptitude test is passed overall if the sample text and the examination interview have each been completed with a "pass." A sample text graded as "fail" cannot be compensated for by an oral exam graded as "pass."
- (4) Failure to appear for the aptitude test without giving reasons will be considered a failed attempt.

Section 11

Repeating the aptitude test

If an applicant has not been recognized as having the special aptitude to study the Master's degree program Economics and Journalism with a profile in *Economic Policy and Journalism*, they may repeat the aptitude test once. The aptitude test can only be repeated in its entirety.

Section 12

Proof / certification

- (1) The applicant will receive written certification of the result of the aptitude test. This certification must be signed by the Chairperson of the Examination Board.
- (2) The proof of aptitude for the degree program Economics and Journalism with a profile in *Economic Policy and Journalism* reads as follows:

"The applicant has demonstrated special aptitude for studying the Master's degree program Economics and Journalism with the study profile *Economic Policy and Journalism*."
- (3) If an applicant has failed the aptitude test overall or if the aptitude test is considered failed, the certificate must be accompanied by information on legal remedies.
- (4) As a special enrollment requirement, proof of passing the aptitude test is valid for two years and must be included with the application documents.

Section 13

Substitute evidence

- (1) Achievements at another university at Master's level may be recognized as proof or partial proof of suitability for the degree program. The Examination Board decides on exemptions from the aptitude test and on the recognition of equivalent achievements upon request.
- (2) The applicant shall receive notification of the decision on the application for recognition of substitute evidence in good time before the examination date.

Section 14

Academic accommodation (i.e., compensation for disadvantages)

If applicants can credibly demonstrate by means of a medical certificate that they are unable to take the aptitude test in whole or in part in the prescribed form, duration, or time frame due to a long-term or permanent disability or chronic illness, the Chairperson of the Examination Board shall determine the alternative form, duration, or time frame in which the aptitude test shall be taken. Furthermore, deviations may be provided for with regard to the use of aids or assistants, as well as the number and conditions for retaking the examination. In case of doubt, the person or body responsible for questions relating to disabled students will be consulted (e.g., the Division of Disability and Studies (*Zhb Bereich Behinderung und Studium*, DoBuS). Academic accommodation is granted on a case-by-case basis at the request of the applicant. The applicant's request must be submitted to the chairholder in good time with all necessary evidence and documents, in particular a medical certificate in accordance with sentence 1.

Section 15

Entry into force

These Examination Regulations shall be published in the Official Communications of TU Dortmund University and shall enter into force on the day after publication. They shall be applied for the first time for the application procedure for the Winter semester 2026/2027.

Issued on the basis of the resolution of the Department Council of the Department of Cultural Studies at TU Dortmund University dated 11 March 2026 and the resolution of the Rectorate of TU Dortmund University dated 4 February 2026.

Note:

Attention is drawn to the fact that, pursuant to Section 12 (5) of the Higher Education Act of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (*Hochschulgesetz*, HG NRW), a violation of procedural or formal requirements of the university's regulatory or other autonomous law can no longer be asserted after the expiry of one year from the date of this announcement, unless

1. the regulations have not been duly published,
2. the Rectorate has previously objected to the decision of the committee adopting the regulations,
3. the formal or procedural fault has been notified to the university in advance and the violated legal provision and the fact giving rise to the fault have been indicated, or
4. the legal consequence of the exclusion of the right to complain was not pointed out when the regulations were publicly announced.

Dortmund, 4 August 2026

The President
of TU Dortmund University

Professor Dr. Manfred Bayer