

Exam Regulations

Swiss Professional Degree «Dipl. Hôtelière-Restauratrice/Hôtelier-Restaurateur HF»

**College of Professional Training and Education (HF)
SSTH Swiss School of Tourism and Hospitality Ltd.**



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1. General

Grades and exams are used to monitor students' learning success and instructors' teaching success, and they form proof of success to the outside world. Monitoring the learning objectives frequently and extensively enables timely overall evaluations of instructors, students, classes and programs.

Poor results are primarily an indication of the need to implement corrective measures and are only secondarily intended as a selection tool.

The overriding priority is to offer pedagogical advice, educational support, improvements in teaching methodology and other measures that assist the students.

2. Rules of progress

2.1. Basic principle

The rules of progress govern the criteria for successful completion of a semester and determine the cases where make-up exams are required for retrospective successful completion of a semester. One repeat is permitted of any semester that has not been completed successfully. If a semester is definitely failed, it is not possible to progress to the following semester and thus also not possible to continue studying for the degree.

2.2. Criteria for progress

In order to progress, a student needs to achieve an average grade of 4.0 and to have attained no more than two unsatisfactory grades throughout all the previously completed semesters. No distinction is made here between completed and uncompleted subjects in this respect. Progression permits the student to enter the next highest class or to sit the final exam.

2.3. Graduation

In order to earn the Swiss Professional Degree «Dipl. Hôtelière-Restauratrice/Hôtelier-Restaurateur HF», no more than two unsatisfactory grades are allowed across all subjects during the four theory-based study semesters. The overall average for all subjects¹ must be a grade of at least 4.0, bearing in mind that decimal places will be calculated precisely. The diploma paper must achieve a grade of at least 4.0 in every case.

2.4. Conditional progress

Conditional progress is granted to a student who has achieved a grade average of 4.0 and has attained unsatisfactory grades in no more than three subjects. A student granted conditional progress must sit at least one make-up exam (see *Chapter 4*) and pass this in order to progress.

If an internship follows the study semester in question, then the make-up exam must be passed before the student can progress to the subsequent theory-based semester. In this case, make-up exams are required for completed and also uncompleted subjects. If a further

¹ See Subjects outline in Appendix 1

study semester follows, the criteria for progress must be fulfilled by no later than week 8 of that semester.

2.5. Failure to progress

Any student failing to fulfill the criteria for progress or conditional progress will not be allowed to progress. A student should generally be aware of the potential failure to progress (performance grades are evident in the internal school management system Care, potentially alerts from the instructors involved or, in individual cases, on the basis of a discussion with the Director of Studies). If a student fails to progress, the semester can be repeated once if an application is made in writing to the Director of Studies.²

3. General exam regulations

3.1. Conducting exams

All exams are to be conducted in a way that can produce clear evidence of acquired skills and achieved study aims.

Students who fail to attend an exam are awarded a grade of 1. It is not possible to repeat the exam in such a case, unless proof is provided of extraordinary circumstances (e.g. death of a relative, accident). The Director of Studies decides in such a case if a repeat exam is to be permitted within two weeks of the missed exam.

Written exams are to specify tasks in an unambiguous and clear manner and should not require any further clarification for the students. The exam papers are collected at the end of the exam. Instructors are to provide written notification of any admissible aids and required documentation in advance of the exam. Talking and communication between students is strictly prohibited during exams. Cell phones and other technical aids are forbidden (except for any previously advised aids authorized by instructors).

At least one co-examiner is present at oral and practical exams.

In practical exams, theoretical questions can only be asked if they bear a direct relation to the procedure being examined. The required task must be entirely practical.

Any student expelled from an exam for using unauthorized aids or other dishonesty will be awarded a grade of 1 for that exam. The exam cannot be repeated in this case.

Instructors are to discuss exam results as quickly as possible, and generally within two weeks of the event.

Any exams that take place during the semester are returned to the student as teaching material once they have been discussed with the student.

² See Chapter 8: Objections and Appeals

3.2. Conducting semester exams

Semester exams are conducted in accordance with the special regulations contained in this section. The general regulations remain valid wherever they are applicable.

Semester exams can be conducted orally and/or in writing and be theoretical and/or practical. The same formal criteria apply as for conducting exams (Chapter 3.1). The following additional criteria apply to semester exams:

- In semester exams, the entire syllabus for one semester is covered
- A semester exam accounts for at least 50% of the final grade for that subject
- Semester exams are not discussed
- Semester exams are not returned to the students and are stored in the SSTH archive until students have completed their training and the period of appeal has expired

Calling in experts for semester exams

External experts are called in, if required, for oral and practical semester exams. Together with the School's own instructors, they form the expert group and can also inspect the written exams. They have equal rights in regard to preparing, conducting and evaluating the exam.

These experts are appointed by the Director of Studies. They are to be practice-based professionals with a high level of expertise and good standing in tourism and hospitality, who also possess the necessary methodological and pedagogical experience.

Exams Board and Director of Exams

The independent Exams Board oversees the preparation, conducting and evaluation of exams. In cases of dispute, it delivers the final ruling.

The Exams Board³ consists of:

- Representatives of professional organizations
- External and internal experts
- Representatives of the industry

The Director of Exams, who is accountable to the Director of Studies, is responsible for the administrative and organizational preparations for and conducting of the exam.

3.3. Basic principles of evaluating performance

Students' performance is evaluated on the basis of regular graded assessments and interim exams (performance grades) during the ongoing semester and the grading of semester exams at the end of the semester.⁴

Performance grades are awarded (mathematically in 1/10 grades) on the basis of:

- Short tests (on the material covered in two lessons), approx. 20 min. duration
Short tests can also be held without advance notice
- Assessed assignments

³ The current members of the Exams Board can be found in the Infopool.

⁴ In this regard, please also note the absence regulations contained in Chapter 8 of the Study Regulations.

- Oral exams (e.g. answering questions)
- Interim exams (on the material covered in several lessons up to one quadmester)
Interim exams are always announced in advance and can take any of the forms outlined in Chapter 3.1

Semester exam grades (mathematically in 1/10 grades) are awarded as part of the qualification process at the end of a semester.

Semester grades (mathematically rounded to 1/1 or 1/2 grade) are derived from:

- At least one interim exam and a further grade plus the semester exam
- For subjects with a below-average number of hours, a reduced number of performance grades can suffice
- The weightings of the individual grades will be announced in the teaching program. The semester exam accounts for 50% of the semester grade.

Any exceptions must be authorized by the Director of Studies.

Degree grades (mathematically rounded to 1/1 or 1/2 grade) are derived for each subject and generally correspond with the semester grade. The exceptions are combined subjects and the grades for foreign languages. In these cases, the degree grade is derived as follows:

- For foreign languages, the semester grade for the final theory-based semester of the course applies
- The method for aggregating grades for combined subjects is described in Appendix 1: Subjects outline

3.4. Progress

The grade for the semester exam is combined with the performance grades to produce the semester grade that is considered for progress. Subject to prior authorization by the Director of Studies, the semester grade for each subject can instead be derived using alternative methods (e.g. semester paper, oral and written part-exam, case study, networked exam).

The method for deriving the semester grade is presented in the teaching plan and handed to the students and/or posted on Moodle at the start of the semester.

The following grades are awarded:

Grade	Signifies	Award
6	Very good	Pass
5.5		Pass
5	Good	Pass
4.5		Pass
4	Satisfactory	Pass
3.5 – 1.0	Unsatisfactory – very unsatisfactory	Fail

Grades other than full or half grades are not admissible.

Additional remarks, absences, warnings, notes (e.g. regarding work ethic) can be recorded on the semester transcript. Further details can be put forward verbally at the grades conference. The grades for the final qualification, which are recorded on the semester transcripts or grades record, can only be communicated by the School.

4. Make-up exams

A fee is levied for make-up exams, which address subject matter that has been previously examined. They carry the same weight as a semester exam. A make-up exam is not a repeat of a mid-semester exam; instead, its exclusive aim is to re-examine a semester exam or comparable performance test if the semester grade was unsatisfactory for a particular subject.

There can only be one make-up exam for a subject⁵ or specific exam topic. Make-up exams generally take place one week after the end of a semester. Under certain conditions,⁶ make-up exams can also take place at times fixed in advance to fit the schedule of subsequent semesters.

Make-up exams for any subject in the entire course where a student has received an unsatisfactory grade can be taken on the scheduled make-up exam dates, right up till the final qualification procedure. After this cut-off point, make-up exams are no longer possible.

There might be cases where make-up exams for subjects where the involvement of external experts is envisaged can only take place at the next officially scheduled degree exams.

Make-up exams are no longer possible after the final qualification procedure.

If an internship follows the study semester, then students will need to consult the Director of Studies before deciding whether to take the make-up exam immediately after the end of the semester, or during or following the internship.

Students register for make-up exams with Student Services. Payment of the exam fee counts as registration. The costs for the newly compiled make-up exam will be charged to the student per exam⁷.

The make-up exam carries the same weight as the respective semester exam for that subject. The semester grade for the subject is based on this grade combined with the performance grade for the semester. The grade for the make-up exam is valid in all instances and counts towards the semester grade.

⁵ See Table of examined subjects

⁶ Such conditions might be e.g. postponement due to starting an internship, or a subsequent desire to improve an unsatisfactory grade.

⁷ The costs for make-up exams are specified in the SSTH AG price list.

5. Final qualification procedure & awarding of degrees

5.1. Basic principle

The final qualification procedure for the course takes into account the full range of fundamental managerial, business, specialist, sector-specific and general skills required for the profession. In particular, there must be evidence of a student's capacity for critical self-reflection of his or her own professional competence and ability to assume managerial responsibilities.

Students are eligible for inclusion in the final qualification procedure once they have fulfilled the progress criteria from the prior semesters and can prove at least two years of professional employment in the hotel and/or gastronomy industry. Time spent on supervised internships, pre-internships and in apprenticeships in the hospitality sector count in full as professional employment.

Students must also write a practice-based diploma paper as part of their final qualification procedure.

5.2. Awarding of degrees

For a degree to be awarded, the following minimum requirements must be fulfilled:

- School attendance and internship in accordance with the regulations
- Grade average of at least 4.0 and no more than two unsatisfactory degree grades in total
- The diploma paper must in any case be considered at least satisfactory and thus be awarded a grade of at least 4.0

5.3. Diploma paper

All students must write a diploma paper as a compulsory element of the final qualification. This is an individually composed piece of written work. A declaration that this is the student's own, independent work must be attached. The diploma paper can also be written in English on request.

The topic can be proposed by the student or commissioned externally. It must relate to a subject studied on the course. The topic must be approved by the Director of Studies.

The diploma paper is completed over the course of two semesters with an interruption during the second internship. Students devise and submit topics in the fourth semester as part of the subject Academic Practice III. Coaching sessions take place during the sixth semester while the diploma papers are being written. Time is allocated for working on the diploma paper during independent study. Diploma papers are presented during the exam period.

The Director of Studies allocates students a supervisor once they have submitted their topic. At least two consultations take place with the supervisor, at which the formal criteria and content can be discussed. The supervisor does not perform any proofreading or make any corrections to the style, form or orthography.

It is imperative that sources are cited and an academic referencing system used. Papers with sound evidence of plagiarism are rejected and are awarded a grade of 1.

Once the topic has been approved, students complete the diploma paper within the prescribed time frame laid out in the schedule.⁸

Late submission of topics will incur a half-grade penalty on the overall grade for the diploma paper. Diploma papers that are submitted after the deadline or are incomplete⁹ will inevitably be rejected. An extension can be granted under extenuating circumstances on written application to the Director of Studies prior to the deadline. The Director of Studies decides on the extension.

The supervisor and a second expert assess the diploma paper. The supervisor and second expert evaluate the diploma paper according to the criteria listed in the Infopool and award marks accordingly and independently from one another (80% of the grade). These evaluations carry the same weight. If the evaluations differ by more than one grade, the Director of Studies instructs the supervisor and second expert to consult with one another. The oral exam lasts 30 minutes and includes a presentation and questions.

If a written diploma paper is unsatisfactory, the earliest a new topic can be submitted is the following semester. After this, the student commences the diploma paper process afresh in accordance with the schedule.¹⁰

If the second paper is also definitely unsatisfactory, then the diploma paper element has been failed. In this case, the degree will not be awarded.

A diploma paper can only be repeated once. This repeat attempt must be registered within two years and completed no later than three years after the unsatisfactory attempt.

5.4. Exams for external qualifications

It is possible to sit exams in various subjects (e.g. languages) for external qualifications.

External exams in the subject of foreign languages (English and Italian or French) are mandatory. Students must have gained an external language certificate of at least level B2 prior to the final qualification procedure.¹¹ The result of the external exam will be converted into the school's own grade scheme.

The criteria for other external exams and qualifications are set out in the appropriate module descriptions.

Registrations are organized and passed on by the School or instructor. Students must bear the costs of these external exams.

⁸ Student Services advises students of the schedule via email once the topic has been confirmed.

⁹ The requirements for a complete diploma paper thesis can be found in the schedule.

¹⁰ In this case, the student must remain registered at the School for two further semesters and bear the corresponding costs (See SSTH AG price list).

¹¹ Dispensations are regulated in Chapter 7.3 of the School Code.

6. Objections and appeals

6.1. General

Objections and appeals are used to clarify any actual or suspected shortcomings in the operation of studies. In order to ensure a swift and correct outcome, objections and appeals are to be conducted promptly.

Complaints can be made against admissions decisions and the conducting of exams, and objections and appeals can be submitted against evaluation decisions.

A letter of complaint must include the petition and briefly explain the reason. The disputed decision and any evidence in possession of the complainant must be enclosed.

6.2. Objections

An objection can be raised with the Director of Studies to instructors' or experts' decisions within 3 days of disclosure. The objection must be submitted in writing and state the reason. The Director of Studies reaches a decision after consulting with the objector and the person whose decision is concerned.

6.3. Resolution

The SSTH takes care to respond to complaints and objections swiftly and comprehensively. The SSTH reserves the right to select the form in which it responds (orally, in writing, privately or in class).

6.4. Appeals procedure

An appeal can be lodged with the Director of Studies against evaluations of performance and semester grades within 10 days of their announcement. An appeal must contain a written petition and explanation. Appeals submitted via e-mail will not be accepted. An advance payment for the administration fee¹² must be submitted to the front office at the time of submitting the appeal to the Director of Studies. This payment is refundable if the appeal is successful.

A complaint against a decision made by the Director of Studies can be made to the Exams Board within 10 days.

Individual grades that form part of the final qualification procedure (diploma paper, business plan, project, written degree exam) can be disputed by appeal to the Exams Board within 10 days of being announced.

¹² The cost of an appeal is specified in the SSTH AG price list.

6.5. Administrative complaint

In accordance with the Cantonal Law on Vocational Training and Further Training (BwBG) dated April 17, 2007, art. 50, section 2, decisions affecting non-admission, failure to progress or failing final exams (non-graduation) can be disputed with the Graubünden Canton's Department for Education, Culture and Environmental Protection within 10 days of being announced.

6.6. Guarantee against repercussions from complaints, objections and/or appeals

A correctly conducted complaint or objection, or a correct appeal, must not disadvantage anyone as a result, even if the claim must be rejected.

6.7. Improper complaints

Improper complaints are any that bypass the complaints procedure or are directed to and conducted by non-involved parties (the press, authorities, etc.). Improper complaints will give rise to disciplinary action.

Spreading untruths can result in prosecution.

7. Commencement of validity

The exam regulations of the SSTH AG College of Professional Training and Education (HF) have been approved by the management and will come into force as per 24.05.2017 for students commencing studies in or after the fall semester, 2015. They replace all previous regulations.

8. Glossary

Field of work	Incorporates at least one work process into an overarching field of work.
Work process	Incorporates at least one subject into an overarching work process.
Subject	A subject lasts at least one semester and results in a semester grade. Once a subject has been completed, the semester grade becomes a degree grade
Combined subjects	Subjects that run for more than one semester are called combined subjects. The degree grade comprises the combined semester grades (See Appendix 1)
Qualification procedure	Semester exams phase at the end of a theory-based semester
Final qualification procedure	Semester exams phase at the end of the final theory-based semester (normally the 6th semester)
Final qualification	The final qualification combines all qualification procedures. If a student passes the final qualification, that student is awarded the degree issued by the College of Professional Training and Education
Degree grade	Grade marked on the grades record
Performance grade	Grade resulting from exams that have taken place during the semester
Semester exam grade	Grade resulting from a semester exam that has taken place during a qualification procedure
Semester grade	Transcript grade, as derived from the performance grades and the semester exam grade (in accordance with the teaching plan)