

*This document is a translation of a legally binding document originally written in Norwegian. If a dispute arises in the interpretation of this document, the Norwegian version takes precedence.*

## **Regulations for examinations and admission rights at Vestfold University College**

Laid down by the board of Vestfold University College on 30 April 2009 pursuant to section 3-9 (7) of the Norwegian Act relating to Universities and Colleges.

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### **§ 1. Scope of application**

1. The provisions in these regulations apply to admission rights and examinations at Vestfold University College.

2. If the provisions in these regulations are not in accordance with provisions laid down by the Ministry in the national curriculum for a course of studies, the provisions in the national curriculum take precedence over these regulations.

### **§ 2. Definitions**

The following definitions are used in the regulations:

#### *The Act*

*The Act* refers to the Norwegian Act no. 15 of 1 April 2005 relating to Universities and Colleges.

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### Student

A *student* is regarded as a person who has been admitted to a course of studies or to a subject at the university college, in accordance with sections 3-6 and 3-7 of the said Act.

### Private candidate

A *private candidate* is a person who sits the examination pursuant to section 3-10 of the Act relating to Universities and Colleges, but who has not been admitted to a course of studies.

### National curriculum

*National curriculum* is the term used for a national plan that describes the objectives, scope, content, organisation and assessment scheme for a course of studies or a subject. National curricula are laid down by the Ministry.

### Programme curriculum

A *programme curriculum* is a specification of a single course, subject or combination of courses in a course of studies that is governed by national curricula.

### Study plan

*Study plan* is the term used to describe the objectives, scope, content, organisation, credits and assessment scheme for a course of studies or subject that is *not* governed by national curricula. College study plans are laid down by the board of the university college.

### Subject and single course specifications

*Subject and single course specifications* describe the academic content of a study plan and programme curriculum and details such as learning objectives, method of study, organisation and assessment scheme.

### Study programme

*Study programme* is the term used for a given collection of individual subjects to which students can be admitted and be awarded student admission. A study programme is characterised by the fact that it is not necessary to re-apply for admission in order to study new individual subjects within the study programme. Study programmes may be both diploma-based and non-diploma-based and lead to a degree, profession or only a final examination.

### Credits

*Credits* are a measuring unit for the scope of the studies where 60 credits represents the standard for a full academic year.

### Compulsory assignments

*Compulsory assignments* are student requirements where the result is not shown on the diploma, but the assignments must be approved to allow students to sit an examination, take practical studies or continue normal study progress.

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#### Assessment base

*Assessment base* is the work that the student submits in connection with an examination and that must be assigned a grade.

#### Ordinary examination

An *ordinary examination* is the first time a student is assessed in a single course, subject or combination of courses and is the term used for an examination held in connection with nominal study progress.

#### New examination

A *new examination* is second and third time an examination is held in the same single course, same subject or same combination of subjects. Examinations are normally held in the following term.

#### Education plan

An *education plan* is a plan for completion of a study programme, drawn up in collaboration between the individual student and the university college. The point of departure for the individual plan is the standard plan for the study programme, based on the normal study duration. The plan contains provisions concerning mutual obligations regarding study progress.

### **§ 3. Ordinary examination**

1. The ordinary examination is usually held at the end of the term in which tuition is concluded. Within the same term, only one ordinary examination shall normally be held in the same subject or single course subject.
2. To be eligible to sit the examination, students must have paid their semester fee and private candidates must have paid the examination fee.
3. The duration of each examination and the form of assessment must be indicated in the programme curriculum or the study plan. Applications for postponing the submission of assignments must be made in writing with the appropriate documentation attached. Such applications must be made to the student administration/person responsible for the examination before the submission deadline.

### **§ 4. New examination**

1. The new examination is usually held in the first semester that follows the ordinary examination if at least one student who has received the grade F/"Fail" or has valid absence at the ordinary examination, has registered. The same study plan/programme curriculum applies for a new examination in this following semester as the one used for the last ordinary examination. On subsequent registration for a new examination on a single course, subject or combination of courses, it is the responsibility of the student to find out which syllabus applies. This means that the form of examination and the assessment criteria may be changed in connection with a new examination. In certain study plans or programme curricula, requirements may be made for students to take a new examination.

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2. When a subject or a single course is discontinued from the education offered, the university college is obliged to hold a new examination in the following semester. If registered candidates still remain who have the grade F/”Fail” for a single course, subject or combination of courses that have been discontinued, the new examination is held for the final time in the next following semester.

3. A student can sit the examination up to three times in the same subject, regardless of whether the examination has been passed or not.

In special circumstances, a dispensation can be given for a student to sit the examination for a fourth time, provided written grounds are submitted.

Bachelor assignments, major project assignments and other large-scale project assignments that require individual or group-based supervision can only be repeated once.

A student may submit a reworked/revised master’s thesis once if the master’s thesis is awarded a “Fail” grade. A master’s thesis cannot be re-assessed in the same programme of study, if it has previously received a pass grade.

4. In the event of a «Fail» grade for the practice period, the student can repeat the process only once.

5. The right to continue a course of study can be regulated by special requirements for each course of study. If the programme curriculum or study plan stipulates that certain examinations must be passed before other examinations, the new examination shall – as far as is reasonable when taking the specific form of the examination into consideration – be held early enough in the following semester to avoid unnecessary obstruction to the students’ study progress.

6. Students who must take parts of the course of studies abroad and who wish to improve a grade must as a general rule do this during the periods they are in Norway.

## **§ 5. Registration and cancellation of registration**

1. Registration for an ordinary examination is made on the basis of the approved individual education plan.

An education plan must be drawn up by each student who has been admitted to a course of study comprising 60 credits or more. Individual courses of study comprising fewer credits may also have an education plan.

The education plan must be devised so that the student is capable of completing his or her planned programme or course of study in normal

2. Unless another deadline has been announced, students must cancel their registration for the examination at least two weeks before the examination date.

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3. Anyone who fulfils the requirements in section 3-10 of the Act, but who has not been granted admission to the course of study, can apply for admission to single subjects. Such an individual is deemed to be a student and shall pay the ordinary semester fee. If for reasons of capacity a person is not admitted as a student, he or she can apply to take the examination as a private candidate.

Anyone who fulfils the requirements in section 3-10 of the Act, but who has not been granted admission to a course of study or to a single subject, can apply to take an examination in a single subject, course of study as a private candidate. The rights of a private candidate are limited to taking part in public lectures and to sit for examinations provided an application has been granted. Private candidates must pay a set examination fee for each examination attempt. The deadline for registering for examination is 1 October for the autumn term and 1 March for the spring term.

4. A student at the university college who wishes to sit an examination in a subject to which he/she has not been granted admission rights is assessed according to the rules in section 5, item 3 of these regulations. Examination fees cannot be requested from candidates who are registered as students at the institution.

## **§ 6. Assessment base**

1. The assessment base must be described in the programme curriculum or the study plan. The Act's requirements concerning impartial and academically sound testing of students' knowledge and skills must be satisfied. Students' knowledge and skills must be assessed in accordance with the description of objectives and method in the programme curriculum or the study plan.

2. The programme curriculum or the study plan shall indicate the assessment base that is to be included in the final grade.

3. Oral examinations shall be public unless regard for the examination arrangements indicates otherwise. Exceptions to this rule may be made in particular cases on written application from the examination candidate concerned when particularly weighty reasons so indicate.

4. Project work that is carried out in collaboration with an external partner can be subject to rules of confidentiality. In such cases if the oral examination is included in the assessment, it may be decided that the examination is not to be open to the public

## **§ 7. Language variant and language**

1. Examination questions in Norwegian must in general be given in both language variants. If all the students concerned have expressed a wish for the same language variant, the question shall only be given in that variant.

2. The examinations questions must be given in the language of instruction.

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3. Applications can be made to submit examination answers or other written assignments that are included in the assessment base in a language other than Norwegian or the language of instruction. The deadline for submitting applications is 1 October and 1 March.

## **§ 8. Aids for examinations**

The programme curriculum or the study plan shall indicate the aids that are permitted for examinations. Candidates are themselves responsible for finding out which aids are permitted and for bringing them to the examination.

## **§ 9. Special arrangements**

Students who require special arrangements in connection with the examination must apply for these by 1 October and 1 March. Special arrangements can be granted for an individual examination, for a certain period of time or for the entire study period if the documentation indicates that the requirement is permanent. The deadline for the application can be waived on submission of a certificate that shows that the need arose after the expiry of the deadline.

Special arrangements must not lead to a reduction of the specialist requirements made in connection with each examination.

## **§ 10. Grading system and scope of examinations**

1. The grades A – E are normally used for examinations to indicate a pass, while F indicates a fail. The grades “Pass” and “Fail” can be used for subjects, single courses and combinations of courses for which other forms of grading are difficult to implement or inappropriate and when this is laid down in the programme curriculum or the study plan.

The grades “Pass” and “Fail” can only be used where the scope does not normally exceed 25% of the credits comprising the theoretical part of the relevant study programme. The total scope of “Pass”/“Fail” examinations must not exceed 50% of the credits comprising the course of study.

When awarding “Pass”/“Fail” grades, the limit for a “Pass” grade shall be set by the subject teacher and the examiner for each single subject, and shall indicate that the assignment has attained a satisfactory level of expertise.

2. The procedure for setting grades, including common weighting for single examinations etc., shall be laid down in the programme curriculum and the study plan. When determining a final grade on the basis of several separate examinations, all the examinations involved must be passed before the final grade is awarded.

An examination shall, as a main rule, comprise a minimum of 10 credits in the ordinary study programmes. Single courses/subjects courses comprising between 31 and 60 credits can have a maximum of four separate examinations.

The principal can grant a dispensation from this requirement, on the basis of guidelines in the national curriculum or special professional/educational considerations.

It must be stated in the programme curriculum or study plan if such separate examinations must be taken in a specific order.

3. Grades are essentially set for the individual student. This also applies to both oral and written group assignments. If it can be shown or seems probable that one or more of the group participants have not contributed to the assignment as required, it suffices that one student requests the grades to be set individually. This request must be made at the latest on submission of the assignment.

The examiner can also require individual grades to be awarded when it is apparent that the prerequisite for group participation has not been fulfilled. In such cases, and in consultation with the relevant teaching staff, a decision can be made to adjust grades for group assignments individually after the oral examination even though this is not required by the programme curriculum or the study plan. Such forms of examination are regarded as examinations in relation to the rules concerning marking and public access to information. In this event, the mark for the candidate concerned is not given until the matter has been resolved.

4. If a candidate has taken the same examination several times, the best grade achieved applies, and only this grade must be shown on the transcript of grades and the diploma.

5. Special rules apply for assessing compulsory practical tests and aptitude for each of the courses of study that include such elements. These rules are partly laid down in section 4-10 (6) of the Act and partly in the national curricula or other provisions. The university college can provide supplementary provisions.

## **§ 11. Marking**

1. An external evaluation shall be made of the assessment or the assessment scheme, *cf.* section 3-9 (1) of the Act.

2. For all study programmes of 60 credits or more, an external examiner shall evaluate the assessment base in at least one subject or single course per academic year.

3. External examiners

- shall be appointed by the Dean of each individual department.
- cannot be employed at the university college, or be responsible for single courses, subjects or combinations of courses at the university college in the same academic year that the evaluation takes place.
- must be employed at the level of at least assistant professor at a university college or at a university, college or other research institution.

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- or must have alternative documented scientific competence at a corresponding level in the relevant subject, or through professional practice be specially qualified within the appropriate discipline.

4. Internal examiners will normally be the teacher/teachers responsible for the subject concerned. In special cases the Dean can appoint another qualified examiner.

5. Those who assume an examiner assignment undertake to comply with the main rule of the Act concerning announcing the results within three weeks. The term *three weeks* is understood as 15 working days. The board can pass a resolution to extend the deadline for announcing the results by up to two weeks for certain single courses, subjects or combinations of courses. In the event of new marks that result from an appeal, a change of examiner due to unforeseen inability to take on the assignment or circumstances described in item 7 of this section, the deadline is calculated from the date a new examiner or examiners are appointed.

6. There must be a minimum of two examiners, at least one of whom must be external, when assessing a candidate's independent work for higher degrees. The deadline for announcing results in the case of master's degrees and other major written examinations comprising 30 credits is six weeks (30 working days) and eight weeks (40 working days) for work comprising more than 31 credits.

7. When two examiners are to set the grade together and it proves impossible for them to reach agreement on a joint decision, the grade is decided by a third external examiner. The third examiner must be informed of the two first examiners' suggestions as to grades and their reasons for these suggestions.

8. Results must always be announced by on Studentweb.

9. Compulsory assignments that form part of a subject, single course or combination of courses must be approved before the final grade can be given and the result for the student concerned can be announced.

10. When assessing oral examinations and evaluating practical tests or similar that form part of the assessment base and that due to their nature do not allow verification, two examiners must be used – either two internal examiners or one internal and one external.

## **§ 12. Explanations for and appeals against marks**

1. Rules for explaining and appealing are given in section 5-3 of the Act. For circumstances that are not specifically discussed in the Act or in these regulations, the principles stated in the Norwegian Public Administration Act are used as a basis.

2. For oral examinations or assessments of practical skills, a request for such an explanation must be made immediately on notification of the mark. For other examinations, requests must be submitted within one week of the results being announced.

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3. The explanation can be given orally or in writing by the examiner(s) at their discretion. In the event of an oral explanation being given, the student must receive written documentation giving the date of the explanation. The explanation must be given within two weeks of the candidate's request (*cf.* section 5-3 (2) of the Act). If a student declines an oral explanation, the explanation is deemed to have been given and the student will receive written confirmation giving the date when the explanation was declined.

4. The request for an explanation shall not normally lead to a change in the mark. However, such changes can be made in favour of the candidate if it is clear that a formal error or errors have been made on the initial setting of the grade and if the original examiners agree to the change.

5. Appeals concerning marks must be submitted in writing within three weeks of the announcement of the results. If the candidate has submitted a request for an explanation, the three-week deadline commences on the date the explanation was requested. If the appeal concerns the mark, re-marking is undertaken by at least two new examiners, one of whom must be external. The result of re-marking can be that the mark remains unchanged, or a change can be made in favour or disfavour of the appellant.

The right to lodge an appeal also applies to compulsory assignments/preliminary examinations prior to an examination (*cf.* sections 5-2 and 5-3 of the Act).

6. Appeals may not be lodged against marks awarded for oral examinations or assessment of practical skills or the like since the nature of these tests makes it impossible to verify the assessment (*cf.* section 5-3 (5) of the Act).

7. In the case of group answers, appeals against marks must be signed by all members of the group.

8. If an appeal is lodged against a mark awarded for a subject that is included in a certificate or transcript of grades that has already been produced after completion of a course of education, this document must be returned to the university college before the appeal can be considered.

9. Appeals cannot be lodged against marks awarded following re-marking pursuant to this section (*cf.* section 5-3 no. 6 of the Act).

### **§ 13. Complaints against procedural errors of assessment**

1. A candidate who has taken an examination may complain of procedural errors that may have had significance for the assessment of one or more examples of the candidate's performance. Such complaints, with accompanying grounds, must be submitted within three weeks of the date when the candidate became or should have become aware of the circumstances on which the complaint is based.

2. For group assignments, complaints about procedural errors of assessment must be signed by all members of the group.

3. The Director of the university college can decide that the assignment is to be re-marked if it is clear that the complaint is justified and that this can reasonably be supposed to have affected the complainant's grade. If the Director of the university college does not find in favour of the complainant, or if there is reason to believe that the error may have been of significance for students other than the complainant, the case shall be submitted to the appeals committee of the board.

If the appeals committee finds that procedural errors have been committed that may have been of significance for one or more examples of the candidates' performance or the assessment of this, the decision may be made to carry out a new assessment either for the complainant or for all candidates who have taken the examination concerned or to annul the examination and hold a new examination.

4. Appeals can be lodged against marks awarded following re-marking pursuant to the rules laid down in section 5-3 of the Act.

#### **§ 14. Valid/invalid absence in connection with examinations**

1. Students who fail to report for an examination or who do not complete another form of assessment within a stated deadline and who claim valid grounds must as soon as possible, and at the latest within one week, notify the student administration/person in charge of the examination in writing about this, attaching relevant documentation. In the event of their own illness or illness in the immediate family, a doctor's certificate must be submitted. Absence that is due to the student's personal activities will not be approved.

2. Approved absence is not regarded as the object of assessment in relation to the provision in section 4 item 3 of these regulations. Such absence is registered as "valid absence".

3. Candidates who withdraw after the stated deadline, or who fail to report for the examination, will be regarded as having sat the examination and be registered with "invalid absence".

Candidates who report for the examination but who become ill during proceedings, must choose whether they wish to submit their examination answers or withdraw from the examination. If the examination answers are submitted, the examination answers will be submitted for assessment. If the candidate chooses to withdraw from the examination, the candidate must submit a doctor's note to the student administration no later than one week after the examination date, in order to avoid use of one examination attempt.

Candidates who do not submit a home examination or other written examination answers within the deadline for submission, and who do not have valid grounds for this, are regarded as having sat the examination and are registered with "invalid absence".

#### **§ 15. Exemption and specific recognition of other education**

1. Applications for specific recognition pursuant to section 3-4 and section 3-5 of the Act that concern exemption from an examination are decided by the appropriate academic environment/student tutor.

2. Exemptions must be shown on the diploma and the grounds for exemption must be stated. Credits must be awarded.

## **§ 16. Reduction in credits**

If a student has taken examinations in different subjects the contents of which completely or partly overlap, and if these form part of the same course of studies, a reduction must be made in the number of credits. The appropriate academic environment/student tutor decides the extent of the reduction in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. non-compulsory single courses, subjects or combinations of courses take precedence over compulsory.
2. subjects that have received specific recognition or exemption take precedence over the university college's own single courses, subjects or combinations of courses.
3. single courses, subjects or combinations of courses that have been discontinued take precedence over those that are still taught.

In cases that are not covered by these guidelines, reductions are made in the subject that has been awarded the poorest grade.

## **§ 17. Diplomas and transcripts of grades**

1. Diplomas can be issued on completion of the degree or study programme that the university college has the right to give. For other study programmes, a transcript of grades is given. In order for the university college to award a degree or issue a diploma for a completed course of education, at least 60 credits comprising part of the basis for assessment must have been taken at the institution (*cf.* Regulation no. 412 of 10 April 2006 relating to the recognition of higher education).

The diploma/"diploma base" or transcript of grades shall state which examinations/tests/practical studies have been taken, indicating the scope, result and term in which these were taken. If the student is exempted from an examination pursuant to section 15 of this regulation, this must be stated.

A transcript of grades is given as documentation for examinations passed that form part of a study programme.

2. Only one diploma per candidate is normally issued. Diplomas are issued in Norwegian. For study programmes where the language of tuition is English, diplomas are issued in English. A candidate can request a new diploma or diploma base when improving a grade that is included on the diploma if this improvement has taken place through an assessment made at Vestfold University College. When a new diploma is issued in accordance with this item, any previous diploma must be returned.

3. If it has been documented or appears probable that a diploma has disappeared or been destroyed, a new diploma can be issued. Such diplomas must bear the word "DUPLICATE" along with the original validity date and date for the issue of the duplicate. The board can set a fee for duplicate diplomas.

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4. Additional elective subjects will normally be included on the “diploma base” unless the student requests within one week of the final results being publicised that such subjects be excluded. Separate examinations that form part of a combined grade are not specified on the diploma. Exemptions to this can be made in cases where separate single courses contain both numerical and letter grades.

5. Transcripts of grades will normally cover all the examinations the student concerned has taken and passed at the university college. Grades for separate examinations are only given if all the parts of a total assessment base have been passed. On request students can be given the documented basis for examinations that have been taken but not passed. In addition the transcript of grades shall show the information that is described in section 17 item 2 of these regulations as far as this is appropriate.

6. The Diploma Supplement is an international supplement to the diploma. It gives a more detailed description of the qualifications that the student has attained. The English version of the Diploma Supplement is issued to all students who receive a diploma from Vestfold University College.

7. In the event of an appeal according to section 12 or complaints about procedural errors in the examination according to section 13, the diploma or a transcript of grades can be retained until the appeal or complaint has been resolved. If such documentation has already been sent, its return may be required before the appeal can be handled.

## **§ 18. Academic misconduct, annulment, s assessment of suitability and police certificate of conduct**

1. The use of aids at the examination other than those that are listed on the front page of the examination paper is regarded as academic misconduct. This also applies if the student has such aids in his/her possession once the examination has been started, even though it was not proven that the aid was put to use.

2. For written assignments that are included in the assessment base, copying, quoting and duplicating professional literature and the work of others without providing references to the source will be regarded as academic misconduct. This also applies to compulsory assignments.

This may also apply if the answer is characterised by a lack of independent work, the answer closely resembles another answer (the student’s own or that of another person), or if it is clear that it has been produced by another person or persons.

3. If the suspicion of academic misconduct, complicity to academic misconduct or attempted academic misconduct arises in connection with an examination, the candidate must immediately be informed that the matter will be reported. The candidate then decides him/herself whether to complete the examination or to discontinue it.

4. Candidates who are discovered committing academic misconduct or attempting to commit academic misconduct in connection with an examination, test or compulsory assignments can be excluded from the university college and denied the right to take examinations at other higher education institutions for up to one year.

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The decision to annul an examination or exclude a student is made by the appeals board of the university college. The National Appeals Board deals with complaints concerning decisions made by the university college's appeals board (*cf.* section 4-7 and section 4-8 of the Act).

5. The right to annul an examination has no time limit (*cf.* section 4-7 (4) of the Act).

6. The university college shall consider whether a student is suited to the profession in accordance with the programme of study to which he/she has been admitted. At Vestfold University College the following courses of education are subject to an assessment of suitability: Teacher training for lower level education – grade level, general teacher, pre-school teacher, subject teacher, practical education, midwifery, nursing and dental hygienist (*cf.* Regulation no. 765 of 30 June 2006)

7. In connection with studies requiring a police certificate of conduct, such certification shall be submitted within the deadlines stipulated in connection with admission to the course of study, and no later than 1 September. At Vestfold University College the following courses of education are subject to an assessment of suitability: Teacher training for lower level education – grade level, general teacher, pre-school teacher, subject teacher, practical education, midwifery, nursing and dental hygienist (*cf.* Regulation no. 1191 of 10 October 2005 with amendments in Circular F-10-05).

## **§ 19. Loss of admission rights and leave**

1. Admission rights to study programmes for which students have enrolled are terminated: 1.1. If there has been no activity in the form of study progress or no leave has been taken for one year.

1.2. If a student receives an F or "Fail" grade three times in an examination in the same single subject, subject or combination of studies, and he/she has not been granted a dispensation to take the examination for a fourth time.

1.3. If a student receives a "Fail" grade twice in the same practical subject/period/clinical studies.

1.4. When the student confirms in writing that he/she is withdrawing from the study programme before it has been completed

2. Written application must be made for leave from the course of studies accompanied by the reasons for the leave and any appropriate documentation. Resumption of the course of studies is conditional on there being a vacant place in the relevant semester/student group. In the event of there being no spare capacity, a priority waiting list will be made. Students who take maternity/paternity leave have preferential rights for resumption of studies. When resuming a course of studies after other forms of leave, those who have followed normal study progress will be given priority (*cf.* section 4-5 (2) of the Act).

3. In courses of study without compulsory study progress, students who after normal study duration still have examinations to complete must complete these within three years after the last examination taken. After this time the student must apply for

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admission in the ordinary way and then apply for the inclusion/adaptation of any relevant subjects.

4. Students who lose their admission rights pursuant to items 1.1–1.3 of this section can apply for admission to the same course of study after a period of three years.

## **§ 20. Supplementary provisions and instructions**

The Director of the university college or a person to whom he/she delegates authority can provide supplementary provisions and instructions to these regulations. Such provisions cannot take precedence over existing provision in the regulations.

## **§ 21. Implementation**

These regulations come into force on 1 August 2009. The Regulation of 22 June 2005 for examination and admission rights at Vestfold University College is repealed from the same date.