Study and Examination Regulations
Special Part 0035

Section of the Statutes of the Academic Board at Ferdinand Porsche Fernfachhochschule GmbH (hereinafter „FERNFH“) pursuant to § 10 para 3 subpara 10, of the Austrian University of Applied Sciences Act (Fachhochschulgesetz – FHG), as amended by decision of the Academic Board dated 8 October 2026

Special Section for the Continuing Higher Education Degree Programme 0035 Human-Centred AI & Future Society

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1. Formal Information

Type of study programme	Continuing education master’s programme
Subject orientation (ISCED-F)	068 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving information and communication technologies 038 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving social sciences, journalism and information 048 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving business, administration and law 098 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving health and welfare
Programme level	ISCED-P: 7 QF EHEA: Second cycle
Programme code	0035
Programme title	Human-Centred AI & Future Society
ECTS credits	120 ECTS
Standard duration	4 semesters
Degree awarded	Master of Science (Continuing Education), MSc (CE)
Level of qualification awarded	ISCED-A: 7 QF-EHEA: Master’s level
Fields of application covered by compulsory core modules	Healthcare and Longevity Education and Human Development Smart Cities and Mobility

	Retail, Hospitality and Experience
Mode and organisation of study	Part-time, blended
Admission restricted to a specific target group	No
Transferable credits towards subsequent programmes	95 ECTS (120 ECTS less the 25 ECTS allocated to the Capstone Module)
Minimum and maximum number of admitted participants	–
Language of instruction	English
First academic year approved by the Academic Board	2026/27
Programme Director	Daniela Krautsack, MBA

2. Admission Requirements

Academic Admission Requirements

Applicants seeking admission to the continuing education programme Human-Centred AI and Future Society must meet the following requirements.

Applicants must have completed either:

- a relevant Bachelor's degree programme comprising at least 180 ECTS credits; or
- another relevant programme of study comprising at least 180 ECTS credits, completed at a recognised Austrian or foreign post-secondary educational institution and corresponding to at least the same level of higher education.

In addition, applicants must, by the commencement of the programme, have acquired at least three years of relevant professional experience following graduation at Level 6 of the Austrian National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Relevant professional experience means demonstrable, qualified professional practice in one of the programme's core fields, or in a closely related field. The assessment of such experience shall take account of the complexity of the responsibilities undertaken.

Submission of a formal English-language certificate is not mandatory at the application stage. However, proficiency at a minimum of CEFR Level B2 is required to engage successfully with the programme; Level C1 is recommended. English-language proficiency shall be assessed during the admissions interview. Separate evidence of English-language proficiency is not required where the applicant's preceding programme of study was completed predominantly in English or where English is the applicant's first language.

Supplementary examinations may be prescribed to address substantial differences in applicants' academic backgrounds pursuant to § 9(7) FHG. As part of the admissions procedure, the Programme Director shall determine which supplementary examinations, if any, must be completed in an individual case. Evidence of their successful completion must be provided by the end of the first semester.

3. Admissions Procedure and Admissions Regulations

The Programme Director shall assess whether applicants meet the admission requirements on the basis of a standardised application form, a curriculum vitae and the supporting documentation required for verification, including relevant certificates and transcripts.

Admission is conditional upon fulfilment of the academic admission requirements set out above.

In addition, applicants must submit a motivation letter and attend an interview, during which their professional aptitude and English language skills will be assessed.

Admission to the MSc (CE) continuing education programme may, in an individual case, be granted where complete evidence of the stated admission requirements cannot yet be provided at the time of application, if fulfilment of those requirements by the commencement of the programme can reasonably be anticipated. Complete evidence must be submitted no later than the end of the first in-person study period of the first semester. If the evidence is not submitted by that deadline, admission shall lapse and the programme fee shall be reimbursed on a pro-rata basis in accordance with the provisions of the education agreement.

4. Curriculum

Programme Objectives, Qualification Profile and Graduate Competences

General Programme Objectives

The programme centres on the human-centred design of technology (Human-Centred Design). The MSc programme in Human-Centred AI and Future Society prepares graduates to undertake informed assessment and responsible design of AI and robotic systems in the context of the interdependencies among people, technology, organisations and society. It supports the development of human-centred, ethically defensible and economically viable solutions for a range of fields of application. The programme combines a rigorous academic foundation with applied research, interdisciplinary project work and international knowledge exchange. Graduates are prepared for design-oriented, advisory and leadership roles relating to the introduction of intelligent systems.

Objective relating to subject-specific competences: The programme provides a rigorous understanding of human-centred AI, social robots and sociotechnical systems, including their technical capabilities and limitations. It supports the integration of psychological, societal, economic, organisational, ethical and legal considerations. AI and robotics applications in healthcare, education, public spaces and service settings are examined through evidence-informed approaches. On this basis, students develop context-sensitive, responsible and sustainable deployment concepts.

Objective relating to methodological and applied competences: The programme develops approaches to analysing complex practice-based challenges and addressing them through appropriate research, innovation and design methods. Students plan and implement user-centred development, co-creation, deployment and evaluation processes. Through interdisciplinary projects, they develop, test and assess practicable solutions for real-world contexts of application. The programme further supports transparent justification of methodological decisions and the management of projects from problem definition through to sustained implementation.

Objective relating to social competences: The programme supports professional, collaborative and responsible engagement within interdisciplinary and international teams. Students involve users, practice partners and other stakeholders actively in design and decision-making processes, with due consideration of differing needs, power relations and interests. They develop approaches to communicating complex technological, academic and societal issues clearly and in forms appropriate to different audiences, and to engaging constructively with feedback, conflict, uncertainty and ethically sensitive situations.

Qualification Profile

The qualification profile of the MSc programme Human-Centred AI and Future Society encompasses the following competences.

Subject-Specific Competences

- explanation and critical assessment of foundational concepts, operating principles, capabilities and limitations of AI, embodied AI and social robots;
- analysis of sociotechnical systems with due regard to the interdependencies among human, technological, organisational and societal factors;

- evaluation of human-AI and human-robot interactions from psychological, social and user-centred perspectives;
- evidence-informed evaluation of AI and robotics applications, including differentiation between viable solutions, technological claims, short-lived trends and unsustainable pilot initiatives;
- analysis of markets, value chains, business models and innovation ecosystems, together with the economic conditions required for sustained implementation;

Methodological and Applied Competences

- structuring of complex problems and translation of open-ended practice-based questions into manageable research, design or innovation projects;
- application of design thinking, co-creation and user-centred research methods to the development, testing and iterative refinement of solutions;
- planning of task allocation and handovers between people and intelligent systems, including failure scenarios, escalation procedures and recovery processes;
- management of interdisciplinary projects from problem definition through development and evaluation to sustained implementation;
- critical transfer of international insights and examples of practice to the student's own professional, organisational and societal contexts.

Social Competences

- collaboration within interdisciplinary and international teams and responsible participation in shared processes and outcomes;
- analysis of differing interests, needs, forms of influence and potential conflicts, and their integration into decision-making processes;
- planning and facilitation of participatory, dialogue-based and co-creation formats involving heterogeneous groups;
- clear, transparent and audience-appropriate communication of complex technological and academic content;
- responsible communication of the opportunities, risks, limitations and uncertainties associated with AI and robotic systems;
- early recognition of resistance and conflict and solution-oriented engagement with challenging communication and project situations;

Academic and Reflective Competences

- formulation of relevant and researchable questions within the field of Human-Centred AI and Future Society;
- development and independent implementation of appropriate research designs in accordance with established academic quality criteria;
- consideration of research ethics, data protection, informed consent and the protection of people in vulnerable situations throughout research planning, conduct and documentation;

Graduate Competences in Relation to Potential Professional Roles

The MSc programme is not primarily intended to prepare graduates for technical development roles. Rather, it provides preparation for design-oriented, advisory, coordinating and leadership functions at the interfaces among people, AI, robotics, organisations and society. The professional roles open to individual graduates will also depend on their prior qualifications and sector-specific experience.

Human-Centred AI and AI Governance Manager

Graduates are equipped to evaluate AI and robotics innovations, develop user-centred concepts and provide strategic support for their introduction. The combination of systems understanding, innovation management, economic evaluation, ethics and project management supports the coordination of initiatives from initial concept to sustained implementation.

Responsible AI and AI Governance Manager

The combination of ethical, legal, risk-related and reflective competences provides a foundation for developing responsible governance arrangements for AI systems. Graduates are equipped to conduct impact assessments, clarify responsibilities and embed requirements relating to transparency, fairness, data protection and human oversight within organisations.

Human-Centred AI or HCI/HRI Consultant

The integration of sociotechnical analysis, user research, interaction design and advisory competences provides preparation for internal or external consultancy roles. Graduates are equipped to support organisations in the selection, design and introduction of human-centred AI and robotics solutions.

AI Transformation and Change Manager

Competences in technology acceptance, stakeholder management, communication, participation and organisational change provide a basis for planning and facilitating technology-related transformation processes. Graduates are equipped to foster constructive engagement among management, specialist departments, employees, users and technical experts.

AI and Robotics Project Manager

The project, innovation, communication and collaboration competences developed through the programme provide a basis for structuring and managing interdisciplinary AI and robotics projects. Graduates are equipped to translate open-ended practice-based challenges into project briefs, coordinate stakeholders and support the technical, ethical and economic feasibility of proposed solutions.

Human-Centred Interaction or Service Designer

Design thinking, co-creation, user research, prototyping and interaction architecture provide a foundation for developing intelligible, inclusive and socially appropriate interactions and services. Particular emphasis is placed on the design of interfaces, task allocation and handovers between people and intelligent systems.

Applied Researcher and Evaluation Specialist

The programme’s continuous research strand provides preparation for field research and evaluation at Master’s level. Graduates are equipped to investigate empirically the use, acceptance and effects of intelligent systems, interpret research findings critically and formulate evidence-informed recommendations.

Specialist and Innovation Manager in a Defined Field of Application

The programme’s fields of application—healthcare and care provision, education, smart cities and mobility, and the service and experience economy—support graduates in undertaking digital transformation and innovation responsibilities within their existing professional fields. The programme enables them to combine prior sector-specific expertise with competences in human-centred AI and social robotics.

Policy Advisor or Specialist Officer for AI and Societal Transformation

The combination of academic analysis, ethics, governance, future scenarios and societal reflection provides preparation for advisory and conceptual roles in public administration, politics, professional and sectoral associations, non-governmental organisations and public institutions. Graduates are equipped to evaluate technological developments and formulate well-founded recommendations for decision-making and design.

Positioning of the Professional Profiles

The programme does not educate software developers, data scientists or robotics engineers. Its distinctive profile lies in preparing specialists and leaders who mediate among technology, organisations, users and society. Graduates are therefore equipped particularly for roles involving the selection, evaluation, design, introduction, governance, evaluation or regulation of AI and robotic systems.

Curriculum Overview

	ECTS
Module 1 Technical and Computing Foundations	12
Module 2 Social and Business Psychology	10
Module 3 Communication	10
Module 4 Business and Economics	16
Module 5 Academic and Research Skills	6
Module 6 Robot Ethics and Law	3
Module 7 Healthcare and Longevity	3
Module 8 Education and Human Development	3
Module 9 Smart Cities and Mobility	3
Module 10 Retail, Hospitality and Experience	3
Module 11 Innovation Management	26
Module 12 Capstone Module	25
Total	**120**

Core Curriculum: Modules 1-12

Module 1: Technical and Computing Foundations	**ECTS**
Fundamentals of Human-Centred AI	4
AI and Robotics Literacy: Understanding Embodied Systems	4
Robotic Systems	4
Total	12

Module 2: Social and Business Psychology	**ECTS**
Human Identity, Social Cognition and the AI Mirror	5
Future Society	5
Total	10

Module 3: Communication	**ECTS**
Communication, Acceptance and Public Narrative	5
Stakeholder Communication	5
Total	10

Module 4: Business and Economics	ECTS
From Automation to Intelligence: History, Paradigms and Market Reality	5
Innovation Ecosystems and Business Models for AI-Integrated Services	3
International Learning Trek I	3
International Learning Trek II	5
Total	16

Module 5: Academic and Research Skills	ECTS
Research Methods in Human-AI Coexistence Studies	3
Living Lab I	3
Total	6

Module 6: Robot Ethics and Law	ECTS
Ethics, Governance and the EU AI Act	3
Total	3

Module 7: Healthcare and Longevity	ECTS
Applied AI Deployments in Healthcare: Best Practice	1
Ageing by Design: Social Robotics in Long-Term Care	2
Total	3

Module 8: Education and Human Development	ECTS
Applied AI and Robotics in Education and Human Development: Best Practice	1
Embodied Learning: Robotics, Education and Human Development	2
Total	3

Module 9: Smart Cities and Mobility	ECTS
Applied AI and Robotics in Smart Cities and Mobility: Best Practice	1
Urban Robotics Lab: Social Systems in Public Space	2
Total	3

Module 10: Retail, Hospitality and Experience		ECTS
	Applied AI in Retail, Hospitality and Experience: Best Practice	1
	The Experience Economy meets Robotics: From the Customer Journey to the Robot Journey	2
	Total	3

Module 11: Innovation Management		ECTS
	Innovation Management	4
	Design Thinking and Co-Creation Lab	4
	Industry Challenge Lab	4
	Interaction Architecture and Behavioural Design	4
	Living Lab II	5
	Living Lab III	5
	Total	26

Module 12: Capstone Module		ECTS
	Master’s Thesis	20
	Master's Seminar	3
	Master’s Colloquium	2
	Total	25

An individualised curriculum is not available.

5. Programme-Specific Supplements to the General Examination Regulations

General Assessment Arrangements

The form and method of assessment and the principal assessed components are specified in the Module Handbook. Detailed assessment requirements shall be communicated at the beginning of the respective course.

Assessments shall be conducted in the language of instruction of the course concerned.

For individual courses, prerequisites may be specified in the form of learning outcomes from preceding courses. Any such prerequisites must be stated in the relevant course specification pursuant to Part A, Chapter 4.8, of the FERNFH-Statutes

The courses International Learning Trek I and International Learning Trek II shall be conducted as field trips, and participation is compulsory. Students who are granted exemption from participation for professional, health-related or family reasons pursuant to Part F, Chapter 15, of the FERNFH-Statutes shall be offered an equivalent alternative assessment addressing the same learning outcomes. The nature and scope of the alternative assessment shall be determined by the Programme Director.

The principles of good academic practice set out in Part K of the FERNFH-Statutes must be observed.

Recognition of Prior Certified Learning

The Programme Director shall decide on the recognition of prior certified learning in respect of individual courses based on an application submitted by the students. The Programme Director shall determine and communicate the applicable deadlines and formal requirements for such applications.

The total number of ECTS credits applied to the programme curriculum through the recognition of prior certified learning must not exceed 31 ECTS credits.

Recognition shall be limited to formal academic achievements for which the date of assessment is no more than ten years prior to the application. ECTS credits obtained through mobility programmes shall not count towards this upper limit.

Programme-Specific Provisions Governing the Preparation of the Written Master's Thesis

Through the compulsory Master's thesis, students are required to demonstrate their capacity to address independently an academically relevant research question through a methodologically rigorous approach informed by the current state of research. A Master's thesis may address a topic arising from any module within the programme.

Master's thesis topics must be approved by the Programme Director. Students shall have eight months from confirmation of the topic and supervisory arrangements in which to complete the thesis.

Following submission of the completed Master's thesis, the supervisor shall prepare the assessment within four weeks. In addition to compliance with formal requirements, the principal assessment criteria shall include engagement with the current state of research, a methodologically rigorous approach, and the validity and originality of the findings.

Supervision and assessment of the Master's thesis may be undertaken by members of the programme's teaching staff. In exceptional cases, and subject to consultation with the Programme Director, supervision may be undertaken by external experts who are not members of the full-time or part-time teaching staff. In every such case, appropriate academic qualifications shall be required in addition to relevant subject expertise. The Programme Director shall ensure that each supervisor is responsible for no more than an appropriate maximum number of Master's theses at any one time.

Master's Theses Assessed as Unsatisfactory

If the Master's thesis receives a failing grade, it must be revised and resubmitted for assessment within twelve weeks. A change of topic is not permitted. Students may not take the final comprehensive oral examination before an examination committee until the Master's thesis has received a satisfactory assessment.

Eligibility for the Final Comprehensive Oral Examination before an Examination committee

The Master's degree programme concludes with a comprehensive oral examination before an examination committee. The examination is conducted as part of the course Master's Colloquium in Module 12; the 2 ECTS credits allocated to that course are assigned to this examination. Eligibility for the final comprehensive examination is conditional upon successful completion of all courses other than the Master's Colloquium and a satisfactory assessment of the Master's thesis.

The following requirements must be met to take the final comprehensive oral examination before an examination committee:

1. The student must be duly enrolled in the semester in which the final comprehensive examination is to be taken.
2. No later than four weeks before the scheduled examination date, a statement from the relevant supervisor confirming a satisfactory assessment of the Master's thesis must be available. As a general rule, this requirement is fulfilled through approval of the thesis for final submission or through submission of the assessment report and notification of the grade awarded.

3. No later than three weeks before the scheduled examination date, all courses specified in the curriculum, except for the Master's Colloquium, must have been completed successfully. This requirement may be met through satisfactory completion of all assessments or, where applicable, through recognition of the corresponding ECTS credits and associated learning outcomes as prior certified learning.
4. No later than two weeks before the scheduled examination date, the final version of the Master's thesis must be available in digital PDF format. The document must include, in the designated location, the handwritten signature of its author.
5. No later than one week before the scheduled examination date, the assessment report on the Master's thesis must be available.

Conduct of the Final Comprehensive Oral Examination before an Examination Committee

The final comprehensive oral examination shall be taken before an examination committee with relevant subject expertise, applying § 16 and 17(2) FHG by analogy. It shall comprise an academic discussion of the completed Master's thesis, connections with relevant areas of the curriculum and other content relevant to the programme of study.

The examination committee shall consist of a Chair and two subject examiners and shall be convened by the Programme Director pursuant to Part F, Chapter 17, of the FERNFH-Statutes. Every member of the examination committee must be present throughout the examination. This requirement may also be fulfilled through the use of synchronous electronic communication media.

The examination shall last between 45 and 60 minutes for each candidate. At the beginning of the examination, candidates shall present the principal findings of their Master's thesis in a 15-minute presentation. The presentation must be prepared in a manner that enables members of the examination committee who were not directly involved in supervising the thesis to assess its content.

During the subsequent examination discussion, which shall last no more than 45 minutes, members of the committee may engage the candidate in discussion from the perspective of their respective fields of expertise. The discussion shall establish connections between the Master's thesis, relevant subject areas within the curriculum and other content relevant to the programme of study.

Following the final comprehensive oral examination, the examination committee shall first award a numeric grade (1-5) for the examination performance. The result shall be communicated to the student immediately after the committee's deliberations.

Pursuant to § 17(2) FHG, the comprehensive examination shall be awarded using the following classification:

- An outstanding performance, indicated by the grade "excellent (1)", is awarded as "passed with distinction (mit ausgezeichnetem Erfolg bestanden)".
- A performance considerably above the average standard, indicated by the grade "good (2)", is awarded as "passed with merit (mit gutem Erfolg bestanden)".
- An examination performance, indicated by the grade "satisfactory (3)" or "sufficient (4)", is awarded as "passed (bestanden)".

The final comprehensive oral examination shall be assessed as "failed (nicht bestanden)" when the examination committee determines that the candidate's performance is insufficient (5).

A failed final comprehensive oral examination may be repeated two times.

Failure to Attend a Final Comprehensive Oral Examination before an Examination Committee

Advance registration is required for the final comprehensive oral examination. Failure to attend the notified examination date without sufficient justification shall count towards the maximum number of permitted examination attempts.