

# Rules and Guidelines for the Faculty of Social Sciences Examination Board 2021-2022

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## **1. Scope of application**

The Rules and Guidelines referred to in Article 7.12b, third paragraph, of the Higher Education and Research Act (*Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek*, WHW) are adopted by the Examination Board and further clarified as the Rules and Guidelines of the Examination Board.

These Rules and Guidelines apply to the examinations in the Bachelor's/Master's degree programmes **and** pre-Master's programmes of the Faculty.

These regulations apply to anyone following a degree programme during this academic year, irrespective of when he or she started the degree programme.

## **2. General**

1. The terms used in the Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER; Dutch acronym OER) also apply to this Rules and Guidelines document. All other terms have the meanings ascribed to them in law.
2. Should any conflicts emerge between these Rules and Guidelines and a degree programme's Teaching and Examination Regulations, the stipulations of the latter shall have precedence.

## **3. Composition of the Examination Board**

1. Provisions for the organic composition of the Examination Board are outlined in the Internal Regulations for the Faculty of Social Sciences Examination Board (See Appendix 1).
2. The distribution of tasks between the different bodies of the Examination Board is established in the Internal Regulations for the Faculty of Social Sciences Examination Board (See Appendix 1). These bodies include the Chair, Core Committee, Central Examination Board, special sub-committees for the degree programmes and the Official Secretariat.
3. The Central Examination Board will include at least one external (not from FSS) member.
4. The Chair is responsible to oversee the Examination Board's daily tasks. During periods of absence, the Chair will assign one of the remaining two Core Committee members to function as his/her replacement.
5. The Faculty Board (FB) will appoint the Examination Board's Chair and the other Core Committee members in line with proposals from the Central Examination Board.
6. With the exception of the members of the Core Committee of the Examination Board, the members of the Central Examination Board and the members of the special sub-committees for the degree programmes are appointed on a proposal from the Core Committee.
7. Examination Board members are appointed for three years and can be re-appointed.
8. VUweb contains a current list of all Examination Board members.
9. The FB is responsible to ensure that the Examination Board maintains its independence and professionalism in performing its duties.

#### 4. Duties of the Examination Board

The duties of the Examination Board are regulated by law. These include drawing up rules for the performance of duties and responsibilities and taking measures with regard to:

- determining in an objective and expert manner whether or not a student meets the conditions set in the Teaching and Examination Regulations relating to the knowledge, insight and skills necessary to be awarded a degree;
- safeguarding the quality of examinations;
- determining guidelines and instructions to assess and determine the results of examinations within the framework of the Teaching and Examination Regulations;
- drawing up rules for proper procedures during examinations;
- granting exemptions for one or more examinations;
- initiating an investigation in the case of reports of suspected academic misconduct by a student and determining the severity of the penalty for academic misconduct.
- appointing examiners to administer examinations and record the results. See Appendix 2 for the Regulations on appointing examiners;
- issuing degree certificates and accompanying diploma supplements as testimonials to successful completion of degree programmes;
- issuing permission to students wishing to pursue an Individual Programme in one of the Bachelor's degree programmes, which if successfully completed, culminates in a degree;
- issuing documentation of completed course work to students who have passed one or more courses, but who have not yet met the requirements for a degree certificate;
- granting permission, in accordance with the relevant articles in the Teaching and Examination Regulations, for students to:
  - deviate from the way in which an examination is held;
  - undergo an oral examination in a non-public session;
  - take optional subjects;
  - take (partial) examinations in a language other than the course instruction language, or the language designated by the course instructor;
- adapting the procedure for an examination to take a student's physical or sensory disability into account;
- extending the validity of an examination result at a student's request, in accordance with the relevant article in the Teaching and Examination Regulations;
- assessing applications for the confidential publication of a Bachelor's or Master's thesis in accordance with the relevant articles in the Faculty's regulations on Bachelor's theses and Master's theses, at the request of a student;
- appointing a third assessor at the request of the thesis supervisor, in accordance with the relevant article in the Faculty's regulations on Bachelor's and Master's theses;
- writing an annual report on its activities;
- testing the Dutch language skills of students admitted to the programme on the basis of a foreign qualification, and testing the English language skills of students admitted to the English programmes;

## **5. Working method of the Examination Board**

1. The working method of the Examination Board is laid down in the Internal Regulations for the Faculty of Social Sciences Examination Board referred to in art. 3.1.
2. The official secretariat of the Examination Board is located at the Education Office.
3. The academic advisor may act as an advisor for the Examination Board on requests from students.
4. The Examination Board can grant mandates for tasks to be performed by one member, several members, a subcommittee, examiners, the official secretary and the Education Office.
5. The official secretary of the Examination Board has the mandate to:
  - a) adapt the procedure for an examination in order to take a student's physical or sensory disability into account;
  - b) issue a certificate at the written request of a student who cannot be awarded a degree certificate, stating which examinations the student has passed;
  - c) allow enrolment in optional courses and confer exemptions and/or substitutions in accordance with the precedent of previous decisions;
  - d) deal with amendments to an Individual Programme, in accordance with the precedent of previous decisions;
6. Any requests or complaints involving an Examination Board member will be handled in the absence of that member if an objective review of the case would not otherwise be sufficiently guaranteed.
7. Requests and complaints must be expressed in clear language and accompanied by a concrete explanation of reasons. Students who fall short of these requirements will receive a second opportunity to submit a clear description and concrete explanation of their request or complaint. Complete or insufficient compliance with these requirements in second submissions of requests and complaints may result in a declaration of inadmissibility from the Examination Board. On receiving requests and complaints, the Examination Board will, as a rule, present those submissions to the lecturer or examiner concerned, for his/her response and accompanying explanation.
8. The Examination Board preferably makes a decision within 20 working days, though in any event no later than within 30 working days of receiving a request or complaint. The Examination Board may, for compelling reasons, postpone this decision and will inform the interested parties of this in writing.
9. The Examination Board demarcates its powers as much as possible by formulating policy regulations on how it makes use of its powers. These policy regulations cover a range of issues, including the possibility of granting additional examination opportunities (see Appendix 3).
10. Students taking a course outside the Faculty of Social Sciences as part of their degree programme, shall address their request for an additional examination opportunity for that course to the Examination Board of the degree programme of which the course is part.
11. In the case of suspected academic misconduct, the following applies for students taking a course at another faculty. The Examination Board of the degree programme that the course is part of investigates the suspicion of academic misconduct committed by the student. Its findings are reported to the Examination Board of the programme the student is enrolled in. This Examination Board then determines whether this is a case of academic misconduct or plagiarism and, if so, what measure will be imposed on the student.

12. If the Examination Boards concerned are both competent with regard to the subjects referred to in Paragraphs 10 and 11, the Examination Boards will determine by mutual agreement what decision is to be taken.

## **6. Language of examinations**

1. The exam questions and assignments of Dutch educational units that are part of a programme for which Dutch is the language of instruction will be drafted in Dutch, and will have to be answered and completed in Dutch.
2. The exam questions and assignments of English educational units that are part of a programme for which Dutch is the language of instruction will be drafted in English, and may be answered and completed in either Dutch or English, according to student preference. The questions and answers of multiple choice exams will both be drafted in English.
3. All exam questions and assignments of English language programmes will be drafted in English, and will have to be answered and completed in English.
4. At the request of the examiner the Examination Board may decide to grant an exemption from the provisions detailed in paragraph 1 and 2.
5. At the request of the student the Examination Board may decide—contrary to the stipulations laid out in paragraphs 1, 2, and 3—that an alternative language is allowed to be used to draft and/or answer and complete the questions and assignments of the exam of a specific educational unit, provided that both the examiner and the student are adequately proficient in that language. This request has to be filed with the Examination Board at least four weeks before the exam or resit in question.

## **7. Questions and assignments, subject matter and duration of examinations**

1. None of the individual questions or assignments in the examination will relate to anything other than the examination material that is announced beforehand. The material which will be examined will be made known via Canvas prior to the start of the teaching period for that subject. Details of the materials will be published in full no later than one month before the examination. This examination material may comprise required reading, slides from the lectures and the information provided by the lecturer during the lectures. In the case of an open-book examination, the articles placed online by the lecturer during the course must also be available at the time of the examination.
2. The examiner will provide students with the opportunity to consult a written example of the examination together with model answers; these will demonstrate the standards that will apply when evaluating the examination.
3. The Examination Board will supervise the quality of examinations.
4. Students are prohibited from removing examination question sheets from the examination hall after the examination has ended. The examiner may decide whether or not to make the exam available.
5. In the event of a resit in a different year of study, the student will be examined on the material set for the examination in the current year of study, unless the Examination Board decides otherwise in the light of a request from the examiner and/or the student.
6. Each examination will be sufficiently long to ensure that students have enough time to answer the questions. Written examinations last a maximum of 2 hours and 45

minutes. The duration of examinations can be extended for students hampered by a disability.

### **7a. Detailed regulations for resitting examinations and written assignments**

1. Both passing and failing results can be resat. The result that is obtained last holds—a No Show (NS) will not count as a result for this purpose.
2. For group assignments, similar to the evaluation of the initial assignment, the evaluation of the resit may be differentiated by individual students.
3. A group assignment can be resat by the full group or by one or more of the group members.
4. Only those group members who resit the group assignment will be given a result for the resit. Students who do not resit the assignment will retain their mark from the first exam opportunity.
5. For the resit of a written assignment an examiner (preferably the course coordinator) will choose one of the two following options:
  - A. The resit will comprise (a) new assignment(s);
  - B. The resit will consist of improving the initially evaluated assignment. If this is the case the examiner may impose a maximum on the attainable mark.
6. The examiner will note which option applies to the resits of the course in the respective study guide (found on Canvas) by the start of the course.
6. For the resit of the Master's thesis only the option to improve applies, with the caveat that a maximum for the attainable mark may not be imposed in this case.
7. In the case of partial examinations and/or partial written assignments the resit may take one of the following two forms:
  - A. One single resit exam covering all the material of the partial examinations and/or partial assignments, thus making up the full final mark;
  - B. Every partial examination and/or partial assignment will be covered by a separate resit, or several partial examinations and/or partial assignments will be grouped together and resat separately.

The examiner will note which option (A or B) applies to the resits of the partial examinations and/or partial assignments of the course in the respective study guide (found on Canvas) by the start of the course.

8. The period of validity of a partial examination is limited to the academic year in which it was sat. An examiner may exceptionally deviate from this: he/she should mention this at the beginning of the course (in the study guide) on Canvas.
9. Only a full course may be regarded as a practical. If a practical assignment serves as an assessment component for a course, students must be given an opportunity to resit this component by taking an alternative assessment that covers the same learning objectives as the practical assignment.

### **8. Completing an examination in other ways**

1. At an examiner's request, the Examination Board may permit a different form of examination than that stipulated in the study guide.
2. Upon reasoned request by an individual student, the Examination Board may permit him/her a different form of examination from that stipulated in the study guide. The student's request demonstrates that due to special circumstances, taking the

examination in the regular manner would represent a disproportionate burden for him/her. The Examination Board will make such decision on whether to permit a different form of assessment after having first consulted the examiner of the course.

## **9. Procedure for the completion of written examinations**

1. The *VU Examination Regulations* apply to in-person examinations held both in shared examination rooms (such as TenT, RAI and Emergohal) and rooms which are not shared. See Appendix 4 for these Examination Regulations.
2. Students whose mother tongue is different than Dutch may use a dictionary during written (partial) examinations during their first year of registration for the Dutch Bachelor's programmes. These students are also entitled to extra exam time during their first and second year of registration. They should, however, submit a request to this effect to the Examination Board well in advance.
3. Students who have two exams/resits (of courses FSS) scheduled at the same time on the same day are given the opportunity to sit one of the exams/resits at a different time on the same day. To submit their request for a different exam time with the Examination Board, students must fill in the relevant form on VUweb three weeks prior to the date of the exam/resit at the latest.
4. Paragraph 3 also holds for coinciding examinations of students who are enrolled for two programmes simultaneously (and are actively pursuing both programmes). This concerns interfaculty programme combinations only.
5. During in-person examinations or resits, students are obliged to follow the instructions given by the examiner and the invigilator(s). Refusal to do so, or any other disruptive behaviour, may lead the examiner to exclude the student from the exam.
6. In the case of an online examination or resit, students are obliged to comply with the instructions published by the examiner on Canvas prior to the examination or given to the students by other means. Students are also obliged to follow the instructions given by the examiner during the examination, and – if online proctoring is involved – the general instructions on the VU website regarding this method of online supervision.
7. If a student fails to comply sufficiently with the instructions referred to in paragraph 6, the Examination Board may decide to declare the examination or resit invalid and impose an additional sanction if appropriate.

## **10. Invigilation of written examinations**

1. In-person examinations are subject to Article 7 of the VU Examination Regulations contained in Appendix 4. The aforementioned article applies to the invigilation of examinations both in shared examination rooms (such as TenT, RAI and Emergohal) and rooms which are not shared.
2. The following guidelines apply to the number of invigilators per in-person examination or constituent examination in an examination room that is not shared:
  - a) if the examination takes place in a single room, an external invigilator (from an agency for example) will be present along with an examiner from the course in question;



- b) if the examination is administered in multiple rooms, at least two invigilators will be posted in each room. This will be done to enable the examiner for the course to make rounds to the different examination rooms;
  - c) regardless of the number of rooms in which the examination takes place, at least one external invigilator will be available per 50 students (i.e. a total of 51 students requires a minimal of two external invigilators, 101 requires a minimal of three, 151 requires a minimal of four and so on).
3. In the case of in-person examinations and resits, the examiner/lecturer is subject to the following conditions:
- a) The examiner/lecturer of the subject will be present half an hour before the start of the exam, to offer instructions to the attending invigilator(s). Subsequently, the examiner/lecturer will be present for at least the first and the last half of hour of the exam or resit. The lecturer is not required to be present for the last half hour of electronic exams, because there are no exam papers or exam question papers to be handed in. In the meantime, the examiner/lecturer will be available by phone for the invigilator(s).
  - b) If the examiner/lecturer is unable to be present at the exam due to force majeure, he or she will arrange for substitution by a colleague (examiner, lecturer, PhD candidate). In no event may the substitute be a student assistant.
  - c) The lecturer/examiner may only be substituted by a colleague if the exam or resit is drawn up in such a way that during the exam no explanation of the contents whatsoever is required.
  - d) The requirement by the lecturer/examiner to be present prior to, and during a part of, the examination and to arrange substitution in the event he/she is unable to be present does not apply to the additional examination opportunity in August where one or more students are given the opportunity to sit the only as yet unpassed subject of their Bachelor's programmes in the current academic year.
4. In the case of online examinations or resits, the lecturer/examiner – or their designated replacement – are required to make themselves available for contact with the TestVision support team by telephone and email. They should be available from 15 minutes before the start of the examination or resit until 15 minutes after it has finished.

## **11. Oral examinations**

1. The student(s) must identify themselves to the lecturer/examiner at the start of the oral examination.
2. Unless otherwise specified by the Teaching and Examination Regulations for the relevant degree programme, no more than one student will be examined orally at the same time.
3. The Examination Board can decide that the presence of one or more people is required at the oral exam, on the invitation of the examiner or the student.
4. A student may submit a request to the Examination Board to deviate from the requirement for a public oral examination. The Examination Board will weigh the student's interests against the interests of administering a public examination.

5. Unless otherwise specified by the Examination Board, an oral examination will be taken in the presence of a second examiner.
6. If an oral examination or resit is held using Zoom or another online resource, a second examiner need not be present; in such cases, the second examiner may base their assessment on an audio recording of the examination or resit. This recording must be kept for at least two months and destroyed within six months at the latest.

## **12. Inspection and reflective discussion**

1. In the case of a multiple-choice examination that is subject to online proctoring, the assessed examination will be made available for inspection as stated in the Rules and Guidelines of the Examination Board (see Appendix 7).
2. If the student was unable to inspect his/her marked work at the designated place and time through no fault of his/her own (for example because of illness or mandatory classes), an alternative option will be offered. The examiner will determine the time and date of that alternative option.
3. A degree programme can have its own inspection regulations, see for example the inspection protocol of the Communication Science degree programme, referred to in part B of the Teaching and Examination Regulations for Communication Science. In the event of any conflicts between the current Rules and Guidelines of the Examination Board and the degree programme's own inspection regulations, the inspection regulations apply.
4. If a student appealed to the Examination Board or Examination Appeals Board against the way in which his/her work was assessed, he/she may be issued a copy of the exam question papers at his/her request to support him/her in the appeals procedure. The copy of the exam question papers will be provided on the basis of confidentiality. If the student violates the code of confidentiality, it will be considered fraud.

## **13. Registration of the results**

1. The examiner will register and validate examination results, as regulated under the final responsibilities of the faculty's Education Office.
2. In cases where only one examiner has been assigned to a programme component, that programme's coordinator will serve as a second/replacement examiner. If the programme coordinator is not authorized to administer exams, the Director of Studies for that programme will serve as a second/replacement examiner instead.
3. Examination results of Bachelor's programmes need to be at the faculty's Education Office on 25 August at the latest.
4. Students have access to their examination results via the student information system through a secure connection.
5. If the student has reasonable grounds for requesting a separate certificate for an examination result, this will be provided.
6. The student is entitled to appeal before the Examinations Appeals Board against the manner in which the assessment was reached. The notice of appeal must be submitted in writing within 6 weeks after the announcement of the examination results. For further details, please refer to the chapter Legal protection of the VU University Students' Charter.

#### 14. Assessment of examinations

1. Each programme component is concluded with an examination, for which the student receives a final mark or an abbreviation (pass/fail, good/sufficient/insufficient, or a different type of qualification).
2. If a programme component is assessed by means of partial examinations or assignments, the examiner must announce on Canvas before the start of the component how the partial marks will be weighted in order to arrive at a final mark.
3. Partial marks are given on a scale from 1 to 10 with no more than one decimal point.
4. Final marks are given as whole marks, e.g. a 7.0, or half marks, e.g. a 7.5. An exception to this is the marking between 5 and 6, meaning no 5.5 can be assigned as a final mark, refer to Paragraph 6.
5. The following rounding rules apply to the determination of the final mark: a mark less than 0.25 is rounded down, a mark between 0.25 and 0.74 becomes 0.5, and a mark above 0.75 is rounded up. As an example: a 6.24 then becomes 6, a 6.74 becomes 6.5 and a 6.75 is rounded up to 7.
6. Notwithstanding the provisions of the preceding Paragraph, if the assessment is higher than a final mark of 5, but lower than a final mark of 6, the result is then given in whole points. Final marks of 5.01 to 5.49 are rounded down to 5.0. Final marks of 5.5 to 5.99 are rounded up to 6.0.
7. The results obtained on programme components taken at a foreign university (during a student exchange, for example) will be registered as Pass or Fail; specific marks will not be recorded. Any credits earned will be converted to the European Credit Transfer System. The original mark from the foreign university will be stated on the diploma supplement.
8. Students will be assessed as having passed an examination if they are awarded a final mark of six or above.
9. In the assessment, the marks will have the following meaning:
  - 10 Outstanding
  - 9 Very good
  - 8 Good
  - 7 More than satisfactory
  - 6 Satisfactory
  - 5 Unsatisfactory
  - 4 Very unsatisfactory
  - 3 Poor
  - 2 Very poor
  - 1 Extremely poor
10. A mark of 0 will only be awarded if the assessment relates to a partial assignment that has not been handed in or in cases where academic misconduct has taken place. It is not possible to give an overall final mark of 0.
11. In the case of an educational unit where examination takes the form of one single exam/resit, a “no-show” (NS) will be recorded if the student has registered for the exam/resit, but did not attend. For an educational unit where examination takes the form of multiple partial exams and/or partial assignments, a NS will be recorded if a student did enrol for an exam/resit, but did not take part in any of the partial exams.

12. Not fulfilled (in Dutch: niet voldaan, abbreviated: NVD) is recorded when an educational unit consists of multiple partial examinations and a student has not fully met all the requirements for the completion of one or more of those partial examinations.
13. Examinations will be assessed in such a way that examinees can determine how their examination results were reached.

### **15. Designation 'Cum laude'**

The Examination Board may award the designation 'cum laude' when the following requirements are met:

*Bachelor's programme:*

- a) the weighted average of all marks is an 8.0 or higher, and the thesis mark is at least an 8.0;
- b) the marks have been achieved within the nominal duration of study, which can be extended by a maximum of six months;
- c) if additional educational components have been followed, these will not be included in the average;
- d) if exemptions have been granted for no more than 60 EC of the total of the Bachelor's degree programme;
- e) during the candidate's study there has been no question of academic misconduct;
- f) paragraph b does not apply to students who started their Bachelor's programme in or before September 2015.

*Master's programme:*

- a) the weighted average of all marks is an 8.0 or higher, and the thesis mark is at least an 8.0;
- b) the marks have been obtained without the student sitting a resit (in this instance, a No Show does not count as an examination opportunity);
- c) the marks have been achieved within the nominal duration of study, which can be extended by a maximum of two months in a one-year Master's programme and four months in a two-year Master's programme;
- d) if additional educational components have been followed, these will not be included in the average;
- e) if exemptions have been granted for no more than 20% of the total number of EC in the Master's programme;
- f) during the candidate's study there has been no question of academic misconduct;
- g) The educational unit Peer Group Learning, part of the Research Master Societal Resilience, has been awarded the score "good".

The designation 'cum laude' will be marked on the degree certificate and the diploma supplement.

### **16. Approval of the choice of subjects for the free-choice components and additional courses**

1. Students need to request approval for their choice of subjects for the free-choice components, in accordance with the *Procedure for the approval of free-choice*

*components* on VUweb. Before a student is allowed to go on a foreign exchange programme as part of his or her free-choice component, he or she must, at the time of departure, have fully completed the first Bachelor's year and have obtained a total of at least 90 credits. To be eligible for selection, a student must have obtained at least 60 credits within the Bachelor's programme when he or she applies to study abroad.

2. For the approval of additional free-choice components, the student must follow the procedure approval of additional free-choice components, available on VUweb. Students who are enrolled in a Master's programme can, if they wish to do so, take part in additional educational units at Bachelor's level, but the results they achieve in these educational units will not be recorded in the diploma supplement they receive along with their Master's degree certificate. This diploma supplement only contains results achieved in educational units at Master's level.
3. Justification will be given for any decision to withhold approval and students will receive a digital notification.

### **17. Exemption from an examination and substitute assignment**

1. A request for exemption from a course must be submitted to the Examination Board before the start of the relevant course, using the relevant form on VUweb.
2. After consulting the relevant examiner, the Examination Board can grant an exemption from an examination on the basis of the successful completion of an examination passed in higher education, in the Netherlands or elsewhere, which is equivalent in terms of its content and study load to the component from which exemption is being sought.
3. No exemption can be granted for a Bachelor's or Master's thesis.
4. A maximum of 90 credits of the Bachelor's programme and no more than 30 credits of the Master's programme may be obtained on the basis of exemptions (a maximum of 60 credits applies to the two-year Research Master's in Societal Resilience).
5. Prior approval is required from the Examination Board if a student wishes to meet the requirements for specific examinations by studying at a different faculty or university, in the Netherlands or abroad.
6. Students can petition the Examination Board for exemption from participating in practicum courses/tutorials. Exemptions may be granted on grounds, such as conscientious objections. The Examination Board will then determine, together with the examiner, the substitutional requirements that the student will need to fulfil.

### **18. Departures from regular programmes**

1. The Facilities Regulation (including a special regulation for top athletes), which is published in the Student Statute, could provide grounds for allowing deviations from the regular programme.
2. Any request to deviate from the programme of study must be submitted to the Examination Board using the relevant form on VUweb, stating the reasons for the request. Requests will be declined in all cases where the proposed replacement component followed is not at least the same level and scope as the component it replaces.

3. Any request to complete a component of the degree programme at another university in the Netherlands or abroad must be approved by the Examination Board before education at the other university commences.
4. The Examination Board has drawn up the following rules for examining an Individual Programme in one of the Bachelor's degree programmes at the Faculty of Social Sciences:
  - 1) The study load amounts to 180 EC;
  - 2) The first year (60 EC) is the first year of one of the programmes of the faculty;
  - 3) During the second and third years, the requirements mentioned in Appendix 5 need to be met;
  - 4) The entire programme should form a consistent whole and adequately prepare the student to meet the final qualifications for graduation, as assessed by the Examination Board.
  - 5) Approval for the programme should be requested in advance from the Examination Board.
  - 6) Once approval has been granted by the Examination Board, students may still propose a change.

## **19. Graduation**

1. The Examination Board will determine the date on which the student will obtain his/her degree after establishing that the student has passed all the programme components belonging to that degree programme. See the page "Graduation and diploma" and "Student regulations" on VUweb, where the VU Amsterdam regulations for issuing degree certificates can also be found.
2. A degree certificate can only be awarded after the Executive Board has declared that the student has satisfied all the procedural requirements, including payment of tuition fees.
3. The student may request the Examination Board not to initiate the graduation procedure yet. Any such request must be submitted within two weeks after the student is informed of the intended graduation date or has met the requirements for graduation. The Examination Board will allow graduation to be postponed provided the desired graduation date falls within the nominal duration of the programme plus one year. The Examination Board may decide differently in exceptional cases.

## **20. Degree certificate and statement**

1. The Examination Board will grant a degree certificate as proof that the student has passed his/her final degree assessment. The Examination Board will add a diploma supplement to the degree certificate that provides information on the nature and content of the degree programme completed. The diploma supplement of a Dutch-language degree programme is provided in Dutch and English, whereas the diploma supplement of an English-language degree programme is provided in English only. The diploma supplement complies with the European format.
2. In addition, the supplement will include reference to components that are not included in the final (Bachelor's/Master's) degree assessment but in which the student was examined at his or her request before the result of the final assessment was determined, providing that he/she passed these components.
3. Individuals who have successfully completed more than one examination and who cannot be awarded a diploma as stipulated in Paragraph 1 can apply for an official transcript on

VUweb. This transcript will list at least the programme components of which examinations have been successfully completed together with the number of credits obtained and the date on which the examinations were taken.

## **21. Academic misconduct and plagiarism in examinations**

1. Academic misconduct is defined as any action or negligence of the part of a student that makes it partially or entirely impossible to form an accurate assessment of his/her knowledge, understanding and skills, or that of other students.
2. Academic misconduct includes the following:
  - a) being in possession during an examination of devices and materials that have not been explicitly approved for use as reference aids (such as pre-programmed calculators, mobile phones, books, syllabi and notes);
  - b) copying or exchanging information during an examination;
  - c) sitting in for another person during an examination;
  - d) having someone sit in for you during an examination;
  - e) procuring the questions on an examination before the date or time of the examination in question;
  - f) adapting, expanding or changing any part of an examination after it has been submitted for final evaluation;
  - g) using falsified data for the research conducted in a component of a degree programme and/or the thesis;
  - h) distributing exam question papers, without explicitly having been given permission to do so by the examiner.
3. Plagiarism is defined as:
  - a) drawing on or quoting from the texts, data or ideas of others without providing full and correct source citations;
  - b) omitting to indicate clearly, such as by quotation marks or formatting, when any section of text is derived from another author – even if the source citation is correct;
  - c) paraphrasing or translating the contents of texts by others without providing sufficient source accreditation;
  - d) submitting texts written for – or similar to – assignments completed for other degree programme components, without making reference to this fact;
  - e) using work done by fellow students and passing it off as one's own;
  - f) submitting work that was acquired from a commercial organization, or that was written by someone else (regardless of whether the writer was paid).

## **22. Procedures and sanctions**

1. Electronic detection software programs may be used to detect plagiarism in texts. In submitting a text, the student implicitly consents to the text being entered into the database of the detection program concerned.
2. If the examiner discovers – or has reasonable grounds to suspect – academic misconduct or plagiarism, he/she is responsible to send immediate notification in writing to the Examination Board, and if possible, to pass on any documentation of the charges. He/she is also required to inform the student of the notification sent to the Examination Board.

3. The Examination Board will summon the student to answer questions about the alleged academic misconduct or plagiarism within two weeks after notification. The board will then make a decision based on the evidence presented and, if possible, on the student's testimony during the hearing. The Examination Board may also request more information from the examiner. This latter procedure is always followed in cases where the Examination Board is planning to absolve the student from any charges of academic misconduct or plagiarism.
4. If the Examination Board concludes that a student is guilty of academic misconduct or plagiarism, it will impose a sanction on that student. If the regular opportunity to resit an examination takes place before the Examination Board has made a decision, the student may take this resit examination at his/her risk. The resit may be declared invalid retroactively.
5. With due regard to the principles of legal fairness and proportionality, the Examination Board can declare the examination or the partial examination to which the academic misconduct relates to be invalid. The Examination Board may award the student the mark 0 and exclude the student from the following relevant examination.
6. The Examination Board may ban students involved in repeated – or serious – academic misconduct from participating in one or more examinations of the Board's choosing. These bans are not to exceed a one-year period.
7. In cases where students are found guilty of serious academic misconduct, the Examination Board may submit a proposal (via the Faculty Board) to the Executive Board for the student's permanent expulsion.
8. The Examination Board will not issue exemptions for examinations taken at another faculty or university during the period in which a student was banned from participating in examinations.
9. Students may lodge an appeal against the Examination Board's decision with the Examination Appeals Board. Such appeals must be made within six weeks of the date of the Examination Board's decision.
10. The Examination Board is responsible to decide on cases requiring urgent handling, and involving issues not covered by these rules and guidelines on academic misconduct and plagiarism. The Board's decisions in these cases must take account of the principles of proper procedure.
11. If the Examination Board receives report that a student is suspected of academic misconduct, it will determine its course of action on the basis of the *Faculty of Social Sciences memo: academic misconduct policy* (see Appendix 6).

### **23. Irregularities**

If the Examination Board deems that a student's participation in an examination, or any component thereof, deviates from the proper procedures, or if an examination or any component thereof is improperly administered, the Board will declare that examination, or the components concerned, invalid.

### **24. Sanctions for examinations subject to online proctoring**

1. In addition to the provisions of Articles 22 and 23, the Examination Board will receive the official video proctoring report after examinations or resits that are subject to online proctoring. This official report contains observations made by the video proctors and is, to



a large extent, used by the Examination Board as a basis for deciding on possible sanctions.

2. If a suspicion of academic misconduct or some other irregularity is noted in the official report, the student will always be asked to provide an explanation before the Examination Board decides whether or not to declare the examination or resit invalid and/or impose an additional sanction.

## **25. Retention periods**

Bachelor's and Master's theses will be retained digitally for at least 7 years. A (digital) retention period of at least two years applies for examination results, as well as examination questions and student responses and work, including papers and other written assignments that receive partial or final marks.

## **26. Annual report**

No later than 1 November, the Examination Board will compile a report on its activities during the preceding academic year. The Examination Board will send the annual report to the Faculty Board. On request, the annual report or parts of it can be made available to interested parties.

## **27. Amendments to these Rules and Guidelines**

No amendments are made in relation to the current academic year, unless there is a reasonable expectation that this will not damage the interests of the students.

## **28. Unforeseen circumstances**

In any circumstances not covered by these Rules and Guidelines, the decisions of the Examination Board will be final.

## **29. Important considerations**

If the decision of the Examination Board or the examiner requires the weighing of interests, the following should be taken into account:

1. the quality and selection requirements of a final examination or examination must be upheld;
2. effort must focus on preventing to the greatest extent possible any unnecessary loss of time to students while taking examinations;
3. leniency with regard to students if their studies have been delayed as a result of circumstances beyond their control;
4. the organization of the programme's course activities and examination process must be effective.

## **30. Hardship clause**

The Examination Board may decide to exercise leniency in enforcing these Rules and Guidelines, if stringent application of the stipulations outlined here would subject one or more students to unfair or unreasonable hardships.

**31. Date of commencement**

These Rules and Guidelines take effect on 1 September 2021.

Adopted by the Examination Board on 24 June 2021.

## Appendix 1

### Internal Regulations for the Faculty of Social Sciences Examination Board

#### 1. Relevant sub-committees and bodies

The *Faculty of Social Sciences Examination Board* consists of five bodies: the official Secretariat, the Central Examination Board, the three-person Core Committee, nine special sub-committees for the degree programmes and the Examination Board's Chair.

The *Central Examination Board* is responsible for policy matters throughout the faculty. In addition to its independent task of regulating policy, this body advises the Faculty Board concerning educational issues - both on request and on its own initiative. The Central Examination Board is not involved in making decisions regarding the individual student requests or complaints. The other four bodies listed above handle those cases.

To improve efficiency in processing individual student requests and complaints, the official Secretariat should strive to deal with as many of these cases as possible. The Central Examination Board's *Chair* should also handle a substantial number of requests and complaints to help ensure efficiency (and equality among the students). All remaining requests and complaints should be divided for further handling between the *Core Committee* and the *special sub-committees for the degree programmes*.

#### 2. Policy on formal authority

All decisions on individual student requests and complaints are *formally* deemed to be those of the *Faculty of Social Sciences Examination Board*. This policy applies regardless of which body made the *actual* decision. For instance, if the Secretariat grants a disabled student's request for special arrangements during an examination, that decision is officially one made by the Faculty of Social Sciences Examination Board. After all, the official Secretariat makes such decisions *on behalf of* the Examination Board. The Chair for the Faculty of Social Sciences Examination Board signs the decisions passed by the board.

#### 3. Distribution of tasks between relevant (sub-) committees and bodies

The *Central Examination Board* is responsible for developing general policies for the entire faculty. As a rule, this body meets four times throughout the academic year.

The *official Secretariat's* tasks consist to a great extent of processing a large number of individual student requests. In fulfilling this task, the Secretariat applies the relevant formal regulations and precedence-based policies established by cases handled in the past by different examination boards. On receiving student requests that involve personal circumstances and that the Secretariat is not able to process, the Secretary will consult the

relevant student advisor. His/her recommendations will then be passed on to the body that decides on the case.

The official Secretariat also makes preparations for the Central Examination Board's meetings and produces reports on those meetings.

The official Secretary attends the Chair's meetings and those of the Core Committee as part of his/her responsibility to serve in a supportive and advisory capacity.

Finally, the official Secretariat oversees timely delivery to the different bodies of the Faculty of Social Sciences Examination Board of the documents they are required to discuss and the requests and complaints referred to them. In addition, the official Secretariat is responsible to ensure that the decisions made by different bodies of the Examination Board are recorded and communicated to all parties concerned, (usually students).

The *Chair's* responsibilities primarily involve handling individual student requests. The Chair deals with requests that have not been fully resolved by the Secretariat and that, in his/her opinion, are not related specifically enough to a degree programme to qualify for referral to one of the special degree programme sub-committees.

In addition, the Chair functions as an external representative for the Faculty of Social Sciences Examination Board. In that capacity, he/she signs all of the board's decisions, as well as certificates and diploma supplements, and represents the board at meetings of the VU University Examination Appeals Board.

The Chair also writes the annual reports on the activities of the Faculty of Social Sciences Examination Board. Finally, the Chair is responsible for tasks arising from his/her membership in the board's three-person Core Committee.

The *Core Committee's* tasks span a range of areas. For one thing, this body is responsible to handle individual student requests that are not fully resolved by the Secretariat or the Chair, and that the Chair feels are not related specifically enough to a degree programme to qualify for referral to one of the special degree programme sub-committees.

The Core Committee also deals with all cases of academic misconduct that occur in the faculty's different degree programmes.

Moreover, all diploma supplements must be signed by a Core Committee member (in addition to the Chair).

Finally, the Core Committee fulfils a key role in quality control, as it is responsible to develop initiatives in this area and submit them for review to the Central Examination Board.

As a rule, the Core Committee meets once a month in its efforts to ensure satisfactory performance of its tasks.

The nine *special sub-committees for the degree programmes* are responsible – first and foremost – to handle all individual student requests that cannot be resolved fairly simply by applying some official rule or precedence-based policy, and that the Chair deems to be too specifically related to a degree programme for the Secretariat, Chair or Core Committee to handle.

The sub-committees are also responsible – as established in current practice – to oversee the appointments of chairpersons for graduation-related meetings.

In addition, the sub-committees play a role – albeit limited - in policy development. In cases where the Central Examination Board, Core Committee or Chair deems an issue to be too specifically related to a degree programme to merit establishment of a faculty-wide policy, these bodies may request the sub-committees to develop policies for individual programmes.

The sub-committees meet infrequently and intermittently.

#### **4. Registration and routing of individual student requests and complaints**

Ultimately, all of the individual student requests and complaints submitted via VUnet are received and registered by the official Secretariat. Of these requests and complaints, those that are not resolved at the Secretariat level are referred to the Chair. The Chair handles a substantial number of the requests referred in this manner. He/she will then forward any remaining requests to the Core Committee, or to one of the special degree programme sub-committees if the issue concerned has a clear bearing on a particular programme.

##### *Specific routing student requests for an additional examination opportunity due to exceptional personal circumstances*

When the Examination Board receives a student request for an additional examination opportunity on the basis of exceptional personal circumstances, and the chair and/or the official secretary intend(s) to honour the request, the official secretary shall present the request to the respective lecturer in order to gain further information and advice. The lecturer will be asked to provide information and/or advice on three separate questions: a) to what extent did the student notify the lecturer about the adduced personal circumstances at an earlier stage?; b) to what extent does the lecturer judge the adduced personal circumstances to be sufficient grounds for granting an additional examination opportunity?; and c) to what extent does the lecturer agree to have certain passages from the information and/or advice he provided to the Examination Board cited in the decision of the Examination Board?

If both the chair and the official secretary concur on the advice given by the lecturer regarding the granting of an additional examination opportunity, they will jointly come to a decision on behalf of the Examination Board on whether or not to honour the student's request. If the chair and the official secretary are of the opinion that the lecturer's advice ought not to be followed, however, they shall submit the student's request plus the lecturer's advice to the core committee of the Examination Board. The core committee will then decide whether the request shall be honoured.

The Examination Board will additionally see to it that in those decisions by the Board in which reference is made to information provided by the lecturer, it will be made explicitly clear that the decision was made by the Board itself exclusively.

##### *Routing additional requests and complaints*

Complex requests or complaints will be submitted to the core committee by the official secretary. Student requests pertaining to programme specific aspects will be submitted to the relevant subcommittee.

On receiving one or more cases from the Secretariat, a sub-committee will be responsible to plan a meeting in order to resolve the case(s) at hand. This meeting will not include any staff members from the Secretariat. As a rule, the Secretary will include a recommendation with any cases he/she refers. Sub-committees must notify the Secretariat of their decisions on any cases referred to them within one week of the case referral date.

Adopted by the Central Examination Board on 20 June 2019

## Appendix 2

### Regulations on appointing examiners (adopted on 29 June 2017)

- 1) The Faculty of Social Sciences Examination Board appoints examiners in accordance with article 7.12c of the Higher Education and Research Act (Dutch acronym WHW) for the purpose of administering examinations and recording the results.
- 2) Examiners are responsible to give the Faculty of Social Sciences Examination Board the information it requires.
- 3) An examiner must meet ALL of the qualifications below.
  - a) He/she has worked as an instructor in the degree programme component for which he/she will administer testing.
  - b) He/she is officially employed at - or has a comparable working relationship with - the Faculty of Social Sciences.
  - c) He/she must hold a University Teaching Qualification (UTQ) certificate.
- 4) Examiners for components of Master's programmes must also hold a doctoral degree.
- 5) In exceptional cases, the Examination Board may – at the request of the lecturer undergoing evaluation or the relevant programme director – permit a lecturer, who falls short of one or more of the qualifications listed under articles 3 and 4 of this appendix, to serve as an examiner. In granting such requests, the Examination Board will determine the degree programme component(s) and duration for which this exceptional arrangement applies.
- 6) Before each academic year begins, programme directors will notify the Examination Board of the following:
  - a) the lecturers who have been authorized to administer exams and for which programme components (based on articles 3 and 4 of this appendix); and
  - b) the lecturers, for whom exemptions have been requested from one or more of the qualifications listed in articles 3 and 4 in order to serve as examiners.
- 7) In the event of mid-year staff changes, or significant unforeseen circumstances, programme directors may petition the Examination Board during the academic year for exemptions, such as those referred to in article 6, section b of this appendix.

## Appendix 3

### Examination Board policy for dealing with student requests for an extra resit

#### General policy:

Testing takes place twice per year for each course (except for tutorials and practicum courses). An examination missed due to illness or other unusual circumstances will not automatically entitle the student to an extra resit session. Requests for an extra resit examination will only be granted if the missed examination would cause the student an “unfair” academic delay. The Examination Board defines an “unfair” academic delay as one that would force the student to wait over 6 months for the next regularly scheduled examination for the course concerned, during which period the student would have no further academic obligations to fulfil.

#### Policy for Master’s students:

If, at the end of his/her studies and after taking the (resit) examination, a Master’s student has failed to pass one of the period 1 or period 2 courses of the Master’s programme, he/she should re-enrol in the same course during the relevant period of the following academic year.

If, at the end of his/her studies and after taking the (resit) examination, a Master’s student has failed to pass one of the courses from period 3 (or later) in the Master’s programme, he/she will be given another opportunity to sit the examination during the first or second period of the following academic year. This will, of course, be subject to the condition that the student has successfully completed his/her Master’s thesis.

Students have until *15 September at the latest* to file a request for an additional examination opportunity for this course with the Examination Board through the relevant form on VUweb.

#### Policy for pre-Master’s students:

As a rule, pre-Master’s students are not entitled to any special arrangements for extra testing opportunities. However, in cases involving unusual personal circumstances, the Examination Board may decide to give a student an additional testing opportunity to enable him/her to complete the pre-Master’s programme.

Students have until *1 July at the latest* to file a request for an additional examination opportunity with the Examination Board through the relevant form on VUweb.

#### Policy for Bachelor’s students:

A **first-year Bachelor’s student** who misses his/her (resit) examination for good reasons will not be granted an extra testing opportunity. Rather, he/she should re-enrol in the same course during the relevant period of the following academic year. Should a student miss

multiple exams due to unusual circumstances, he/she will be allowed to request postponement of his/her binding academic recommendations.

For similar reasons, **second-year Bachelor's students** should also re-enrol in the same course during the relevant period of the following academic year.

**Third or higher-year Bachelor's students:**

If, towards the end of their studies, a Bachelor student has failed *one* FSS Bachelor course (not including the Bachelor's thesis) after the initial examination and the resit, the student will be granted an additional examination opportunity in the penultimate week of August.

The procedure to request this additional examination opportunity can be found on VUweb. Students have until *1 July at the latest* to file a request for an additional examination opportunity with the Examination Board through the relevant form on VUweb.



## Appendix 3A

### **Examination Board policy guidelines regarding requests from students who, due to coronavirus and the related measures, care obligations or illness, have difficulty meeting the relevant academic requirements**

*adopted by the Examination Board on 1 May 2020*

#### Students who request an exemption regarding assessment for one subject

- **If the subject is to be assessed using a written assignment or assignments, the following applies:**

If a student contacts the lecturer directly, that lecturer may, on the basis of a substantiated request, grant the student extra time to submit the relevant assignment(s) without the prior agreement of the Examination Board<sup>1</sup>. The regular date for resubmitting the assignment in question is important in this regard; if the deadline for submission (after an extension has been granted) is around the same date as the deadline for resubmissions, it makes sense to apply the date for resubmissions in the case of the student concerned.

If the student then fails the assignment, he or she can submit a request to the Examination Board for an opportunity to resubmit his/her assignment. The Examination Board will assess this request in consultation with the lecturer concerned, provided that the request is adequately substantiated.

- **If the subject is to be assessed using a *written or digital examination to be taken on a particular date*, the following applies:**

The lecturer refers the student and his/her request to the Examination Board. The student will initially be referred to the regular date for retaking the examination. If this is not possible, or if the student fails the retake, the Examination Board will assess each case on its own merits and decide whether that student will be granted an additional retake opportunity in the current academic year.

The Examination Board will take two factors into consideration when making this decision. Firstly, the regular policy of the Examination Board regarding the handling of requests from students for an extra opportunity to retake an examination (see Appendix 3 of the R&R Examination Board), which will be applied to the fullest possible extent. Secondly, whether an extra retake opportunity in the current academic year is necessary for that student with respect to his/her academic progress/the completion of his/her studies.

#### Students who encounter problems with their academic progress in the remainder of this academic year due to circumstances relating to coronavirus

- The Examination Board (or lecturer) will refer the student to the academic advisor to discuss the situation and, together with the academic advisor, draw up a realistic<sup>2</sup> study schedule for the rest of this academic year. The study schedule should indicate as specifically as possible which academic requirements the student can/cannot meet, which academic requirements the student may request an exemption for, which exams the student can/cannot take and/or which tests the student may request a deferment for.
- The student submits any requests for exemption(s) from academic requirements and/or the deferment of exams - along with the substantiated study schedule and a

positive recommendation from the academic advisor - to the Examination Board for approval.

- After consulting the lecturers involved, the Examination Board will decide whether and, if so, which special provisions (such as an exemption from an academic requirement, a replacement assignment, deferment of an exam, an alternative form of assessment or an additional opportunity to take an exam) will be granted to the student.

When arriving at its decision, the Examination Board will take account of the general measures that have been taken with respect to coronavirus.

1: If a lecturer is doubtful about a student's request, he/she still has the option of referring the student directly to the Examination Board for the consideration of his/her request.

2: Realistic in light of the student's personal situation, but also in light of practical considerations with the university. Obviously, it is much easier to allow deferment in the case of a written assignment than in cases where the lecturer would need to create a new examination for the student.

## Appendix 4

### VU Amsterdam - Examination Regulations

*The examination regulations outlined below refer to common examination rooms (rooms shared by multiple faculties) and non-shared examination rooms (rooms that are used by only one faculty at a time). In the context of clarity and the practical feasibility of these regulations for invigilators, examiners and students, the decision was made to draw up one regulation for both types of rooms. As regards common rooms, the Examination Boards are not free to deviate from the provisions outlined below as these are the Executive Board's conditions for the use of the common examination rooms. As regards examination rooms that are not shared, Examination Boards are free to make any adjustments to their own faculty's provisions they deem necessary, with the condition that the Examination Board in question must clearly indicate the deviations and communicate any deviations to the invigilators, examiners, students and other stakeholders within the faculty<sup>1</sup>. VU Amsterdam strongly advises to avoid or limit deviations to the extent possible and to adhere to the provisions outlined below.*

*Adopted by the Examination Board. Appendix to the Rules and Guidelines of the Examination Board.*

In force as of 1 February 2020.

#### 1. Rooms, support and time slots

- a. VU Amsterdam has a range of both common and non-shared examination rooms.
- b. Exams with more than thirty participants can take place in the common examination rooms. Corporate Real Estate and Facilities provides support for examinations held in the common examination rooms.
- c. Examinations that take place in the non-shared examination rooms are supported by the faculty Education Offices.
- d. The examinations will be scheduled in time slots. VU Amsterdam uses the following time slots:

	Standard examination time	Extra examination time	Total duration of examination
Block 1 (long – 2.45 hrs)	08:30 to 11:15	11:15 to 11:45	2:45 - plus 30 min extra time
Block 2 (short – 2:15 hrs)	12:15 to 14:30	14:30 to 15:00	2:15 - plus 30 min extra time
Block 3 (short – 2:15 hrs)	15:30 to 17:45	17:45 to 18:15	2:15 - plus 30 min extra time
Block 4 (long – 2.45 hrs)	18:45 to 21:30	21:30 to 22:00	2:45 - plus 30 min extra time

- e. If multiple examinations are scheduled in common examination rooms at the same time with varying start and end times, Corporate Real Estate and Facilities will ensure that the groups of students disturb each other as little as possible when arriving and leaving.
- f. Students who have been granted extra examination time are entitled to sit their exams including the extra time in the regular examination rooms. The Examination

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<sup>1</sup> Various possible degrees of freedom have been included in brackets.

Board shall inform the Department of Educational Planning in a timely fashion in the event that such a measure is necessary.

## **2. Student ID**

- a. In order to participate in an examination, students must show a valid ID to the invigilator<sup>2</sup>.
- b. Students taking part in an electronic assessment should use their personal VUnetID and password. Students are responsible for memorizing both codes.
- c. The invigilator checks the ID and establishes based on the attendance sheet whether a student is registered for the exam in question.

## **3. Aids**

- a. Students must leave all items, particularly books, notes, smartphones, or anything else that could serve as study aids, outside the examination room or put them in a place in the examination room designated by the invigilator. Pathways between the tables must be kept free.
- b. In derogation of paragraph a, a study aid may be used by the student during an examination if it has been approved as such in advance by the examiner or the Examination Board. Permitted study aids are also mentioned on the front page of the examination paper.
- c. Any student who appears to have within reach during an examination a study aid that has not been approved as such, or during a visit to the toilet during the examination, is guilty of misconduct.

## **4. Time constraints**

- a. The examination room is accessible to students fifteen minutes prior to the start of the examination.
- b. Once an examination has started, nobody may enter the examination room.
- c. In derogation of paragraph b, the following has been decided for students who arrive late:
  - for the common examination rooms: students stay in the waiting room. Thirty minutes after the start of the examination in question, they are all admitted to the examination room together.
  - [for the non-shared examination rooms: students will be admitted up to thirty minutes after the start of the examination in question].
- d. Students are not permitted to leave the examination room during the first thirty minutes of an examination.
- e. Students are not permitted to leave the examination room during:
  - the last thirty minutes of the examination in the common examination rooms;
  - [the last thirty minutes of the examination in the non-shared examination rooms]
- f. Students who continue to work after the official examination time has ended are guilty of academic misconduct, with the exception of those who have been awarded extra time.

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<sup>2</sup> Examples include a university registration card, passport, driving license, Academic Centre for Dentistry Amsterdam pass, ID card or public transport travel pass.

## **5. Visits to the toilet**

- a. Visits to the toilet are permitted no earlier than one-and-a-half hours after the start time of the examination. [in the non-shared examination rooms no earlier than one-and-a-half hours after the start of the examination]
- b. Any student who has submitted a medical note to the academic advisor before an examination that states that he or she should be allowed to visit the toilet within that period of 90 minutes, may visit the toilet during the examination and the time period, as intended in the first paragraph.
- c. For each group taking a particular examination, only one student at a time may visit the toilet.
- d. Any student wishing to go to the toilet must show the invigilator that they are not carrying any study aids. The invigilator also ensures that any student visiting the toilet during an examination does not enter into any contact with other students and is not able to use any kind of study aid.
- e. Any student wishing to visit the toilet must leave all the examination materials in place, with a blank page of paper facing upwards at the place where he or she is sitting in the examination room.

## **6. Food and drink**

- a. Students are not permitted to eat in the examination room unless they have been granted permission for a disability.
- b. The consumption of beverages during examinations is allowed. Cups, bottles, or any other beverage containers may be checked by an invigilator or examiner to see whether they have been tampered with.

## **7. Invigilation**

- a. Examiners are responsible for the content of the examination.
- b. Invigilators work under the responsibility and authority of the examiner. The invigilators are required to follow the examiner's instructions.
- c. The examiner informs invigilators prior to the start of the examination of any aids students are permitted to use and other relevant details for the examination.
- d. For 50 or more students, at least two invigilators are required to be present. There should be one additional invigilator for every additional 50 students. At least one chief invigilator is present per exam. The method of the exam and the number of students taking the exam may result in a deviating standard.
- e. The invigilators will ensure that the exam question papers are handed out to students at the same time to the extent possible.
- f. Students are obliged to follow the instructions of the examiner and the invigilator(s).
- g. To prevent academic misconduct, examiners and invigilators are allowed to conduct checks on items students use or may use during their exams<sup>3</sup>.
- h. If academic misconduct is suspected based on the irregularities noted by the examiner or invigilator, then the examiner, or the invigilator on the examiner's behalf, must report this to the student in question. Any materials or resources used in the suspected academic misconduct may be confiscated with proof of receipt. The student may complete the exam. In the event of suspected academic misconduct,

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<sup>3</sup> This includes bottles of water, legal codes, calculators, watches with internet function, etc.

the examiner decides whether there is cause to report it to the Examination Board in accordance with the applicable rules and guidelines.

- i. The invigilator proceeds to inform the examiner immediately of questions from students and irregularities during the exam. For this purpose the examiner is present in the examination room during the exam or can easily be contacted by the invigilator.

**8. Seat allocation**

The Examination Board may allocate students a specific seat in the examination room. The Examination Board shall inform the invigilators of this in a timely fashion.

## Appendix 5

### Rules for individual Faculty of Social Sciences Bachelor's programmes, Appendix to Article 17, Paragraph 4

The first year (60 EC) of an individual Bachelor's programme at the Faculty of Social Sciences is the first year of the Bachelor's programme in which the student is enrolled. While selecting courses for their second and third years, students must observe the following criteria (based on the Bachelor's programmes for the 2017-2018 academic year):

#### **For Administration and Organization (B&O):**

1. A minimum of 6 EC in Philosophy
2. 18 EC in Methods and techniques:
  - Bachelor's Tutorial B&O 4
  - Research Practical B&O (12 EC)
3. 12 EC B&O Bachelor's thesis
4. Choice from second and third-year B&O\* Major courses worth 30 EC, which must include Bachelor's Tutorial B&O 5
5. Students are free to earn the remaining EC by taking courses of their own choice, but at least four of these courses must be level 300 or higher.

#### **For Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology (CAO):**

1. A minimum of 6 EC in Philosophy
2. *For students in the 2016-2017 cohort:* 12 EC in Methods and techniques:
  - Ethnographic Research Methodology
  - Research Practical AnthropologyOR
  - *For students in the 2017-2018 cohort (and after):* 6 EC in Methods and techniques: Urban Studies or Organization and Anthropology or a comparable course in which the application of qualitative research methods has a central role.
3. 18 EC Bachelor's Project Anthropology
4. Choice from second and third-year Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology Major courses\* worth 30 EC
5. Students are free to earn the remaining EC by taking courses of their own choice, but at least four of these courses must be level 300 or higher.

#### **For Communication Science (CW):**

1. A minimum of 6 EC in Philosophy
2. 12 EC in Methods and techniques:
  - Quantitative Research Methods or a comparable course
  - Multivariate Analysis or a comparable course
3. 18 EC CW Bachelor's thesis
4. Choice from second and third-year Communication Science Major courses\* worth 30 EC
5. Students are free to earn the remaining EC by taking courses of their own choice, but at least four of these courses must be level 300 or higher.

**For Political Science (POL):**

1. A minimum of 6 EC in Philosophy
2. 12 EC in Methods and techniques:
  - Comparative Political Research
  - Research Project PS *or* Political Analysis
3. 18 EC POL Bachelor's thesis
4. Choice from second and third-year POL Major courses\* worth 30 EC
5. Students are free to earn the remaining EC by taking courses of their own choice, but at least four of these courses must be level 300 or higher.

**For Sociology (SOC):**

1. A minimum of 6 EC in Philosophy
2. 12 EC in Methods and techniques:
  - Research Practical 1: quantitative research methods specialization *or* a comparable course
  - Research Practical 2: qualitative research methods specialization *or* a comparable course
3. 18 EC Sociology Bachelor's thesis project
4. Choice from second and third-year SOC Major courses\* worth 30 EC, which must include the course Theoretical and thematic orientation
5. Students are free to earn the remaining EC by taking courses of their own choice, but at least four of these courses must be level 300 or higher.

\*: For a full overview of all Major courses provided within a Faculty of Social Sciences Bachelor's programme, see Article 10.5 of the Teaching and Examination Regulations for that programme.



## Appendix 6

### Memo academic misconduct policy FSS

*Adopted by the Faculty of Social Sciences' Central Examination Board on 27 October 2016 (minor update by core committee of Examination Board 13 May 2019)*

#### Introduction

The Examination Board deals with cases of academic misconduct, among other things. More precisely, it investigates cases in which lecturers suspect students of engaging in academic misconduct.

The Examination Board's policy when handling such cases is informed in part by the Academic and Examination Regulations (OER) and, most significantly, by the Rules & Guidelines (R&R) for Examination Boards. The main purpose of this memo is to establish guidelines for penalization.

#### What is academic misconduct?

The R&R define academic misconduct as follows:

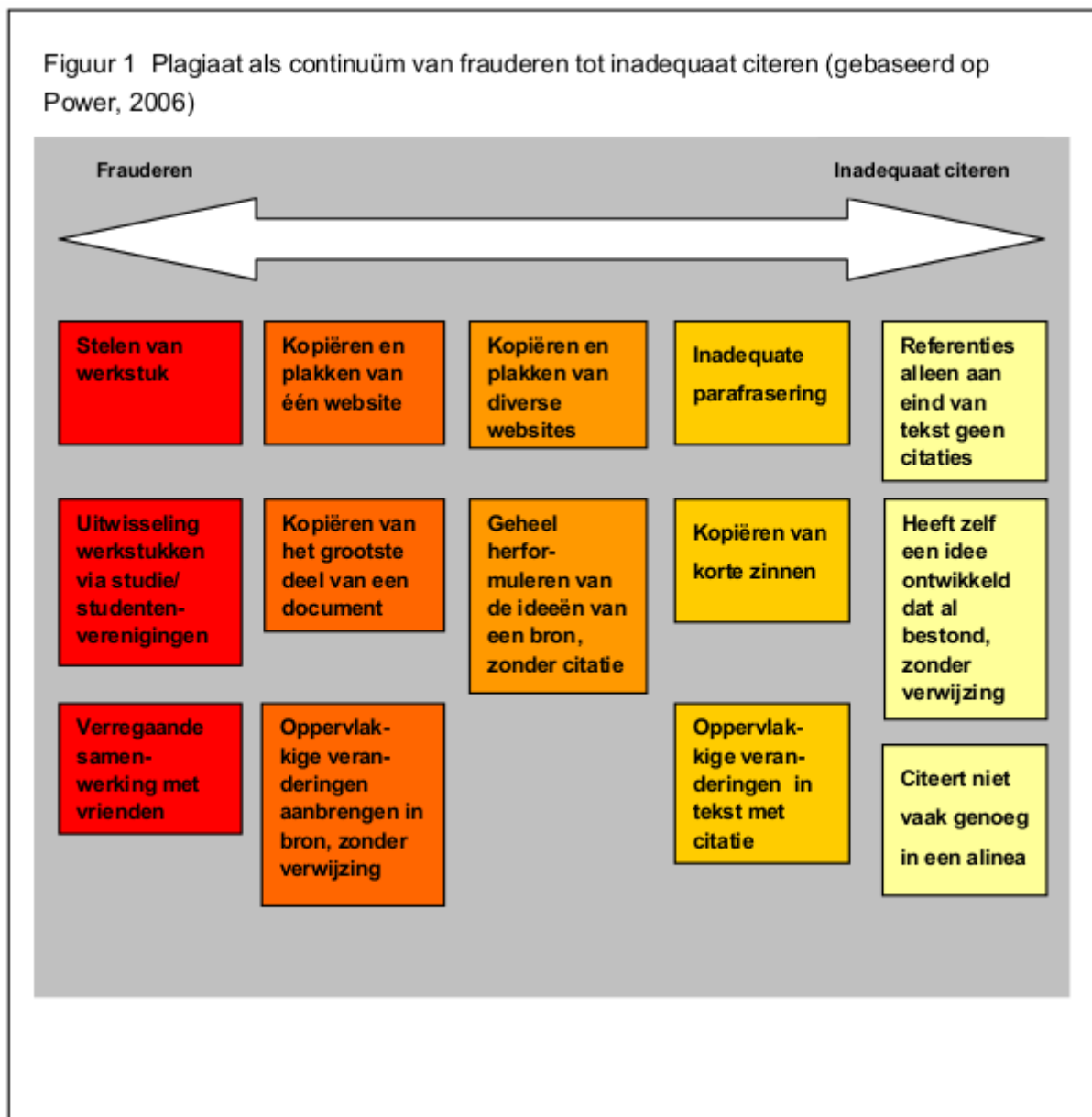
*“Any action or act of negligence by a student making it impossible to accurately assess – partially or completely – his/her knowledge, insight and skills, or those of another student.”*

In most cases, this will involve some form of cheating on an exam (copying answers from another student, use of external sources) or plagiarism. Plagiarism includes quoting or translating a source without proper citation, as well as directly copying a line of reasoning (sentence by sentence). According to the R&R:

*Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the following:*

- a) *using or copying someone else's texts, data or ideas without providing proper citation;*
- b) *not (clearly) indicating a direct quotation by using quotation marks or a certain layout, even if the source has been properly cited;*
- c) *paraphrasing or translating someone else's texts without proper citation;*
- d) *submitting previous work, or a text that is highly similar to previous work, in fulfilment of an assignment for another degree component, without making reference to this fact;*
- e) *copying another student's work and trying to pass it off as original work;*
- f) *submitting papers acquired from third parties (commercial institutions, freelancers, friends etc.), in exchange for payment or otherwise.*

For a useful overview of the various forms of plagiarism, and how they are weighed when it comes to penalization, see Figure 1 (for English terms, see Table 1), which was taken from “Towards an institution-wide anti-plagiarism policy” (original Dutch title: “Op weg naar een instellingsbreed plagiaatbestrijdingsbeleid”) (Drent et al., 2006). As this figure shows, plagiarism is a sliding scale: stealing a paper is a more severe transgression than forgetting to provide proper citation. An act of plagiarism is classified as exam fraud when it renders the examiner unable to accurately assess a student’s work – in other words, when a student presents someone else’s texts or ideas as his/her own. Depending on the context, this could be the case for all forms of plagiarism listed in Figure 1. This means that “inadequate citation” can also be penalized.



**Table 1: Terms from Figure 1 in English**

Fraud				Inadequately referencing
<----->				
Stealing a paper	Copy and paste from one website	Copy and paste from various websites	Inadequate paraphrasing	References only at the end of text, no citations
Exchange papers via study / student associations	Copy most of a document	Completely reformulate the ideas of a source, without citation	Copying short sentences	Has developed an idea that already existed, without reference
Extensive collaboration with friends	Make superficial changes in source, without reference		Superficial changes in text with citation	Does not reference often enough in a paragraph

### Procedure

The procedure to follow in cases of fraud or suspicion of fraud is outlined the R&R:

1. *If an examiner has proof of plagiarism or another form of academic misconduct, or reasonable grounds for suspicion, he/she will report this in writing to the Examination Board, providing documentary evidence if possible. He/she will also notify the student in question.*
2. *The Exam Board will then invite the student to a hearing about the alleged plagiarism or other form of academic misconduct, and render a decision based on the documentary evidence and, if possible, the information provided by the student during the hearing. The examiner can also be asked to provide further testimony. Such testimony will always be elicited in cases where the Examination Board is planning on acquitting the student in question.*
3. *If the Examination Board is convinced that plagiarism or another form of academic misconduct has in fact taken place, the student is penalized accordingly.*

## Penalization

Although each case of academic misconduct is judged on its own terms, the Examination Board does use a general guideline to determine the severity of the penalty. As a basic principle, the penalty must be more severe than the consequences the student would have faced had he/she not handed in the paper or sat the exam. Possible penalties, in ascending order of severity (in accordance with the R&R), are:

1. The constituent examination is rendered invalid, but the student is permitted to take a resit during the same academic year
2. The examination is rendered invalid, but the student is permitted to take a resit during the same academic year
3. The examination is rendered invalid, and the student is excluded from the first subsequent opportunity
4. The examination is rendered invalid, and the student is excluded from some or all further examinations for a maximum of one year (only in cases of 'recidivism or severe academic misconduct')
5. The Executive Board is asked to permanently terminate the student's registration (only in cases of 'extremely severe academic misconduct')

Students who cheat on a constituent examination that only makes up a small part of the overall assessment will, in principle, receive penalty 2. Students who cheat on an examination or constituent examination that makes up a considerable part of the overall assessment will, in principle, receive penalty 3. In case of mitigating circumstances such as unintentional misconduct or special personal circumstances, lighter penalties may be imposed. In cases of recidivism, severe misconduct or other aggravating circumstances such as intentional deceit and a refusal to admit any wrongdoing, more severe penalties will be imposed.

Decisions and penalties are always rendered by all of the core members of the Examination Board, who are advised by the administrative secretariat.

## Appeals

*"Students can appeal decisions by the Examination Board with the Examination Appeals Board, within six weeks after the decision is rendered."* (R&R FSS)

A student always has the right to appeal a decision by the Examination Board. Examiners, however, do not have this right, as the law does not provide it. The Examination Board, in its turn, cannot appeal decisions rendered by the Examination Appeals Board with the Higher Education Appeals Tribunal. This option, too, is only available to students.

## Appendix 7

### **Making online multiple-choice examinations available for inspection**

The Teaching and Examination Regulations (Part A, Article 3.9, paragraph 1) make the following provisions on the student's right to inspect their written examination after assessment: 'Within twenty working days after the announcement of the results of a written examination, but at least ten working days before the resit opportunity, the student can, on request, inspect their assessed work, the questions and assignments set, and the standards applied for marking. The time and location of this inspection is announced at the examination or on Canvas.'

Teachers who use multiple-choice questions in written examinations seek ways to provide an opportunity for inspection (and for discussion of the examination afterwards) without the risk of multiple-choice questions being distributed as screenshots or by similar means. The distribution of questions in this way means that new multiple-choice questions have to be formulated each time. This not only increases the lecturer's workload but also adversely affects the quality of the questions, as constantly varying the questions entails an increasing level of detail.

Online proctoring (or other technologies) do not offer watertight safeguards when written online examinations with multiple choice questions are made available for inspection. Yet there is a pressing need for watertight safeguards: if a single student is able to copy multiple-choice questions, there is nothing to stop them becoming available to everyone.

To prevent written online multiple-choice examinations being made public against the wishes of the examiner, the Faculty Board – in consultation with the Faculty Student Council and the Subcommittee – has drawn up a number of guidelines for making such examinations available for inspection. The Examination Board subscribes to these guidelines, which entail the following:

- In the case of online inspection of multiple-choice examinations, access to the assessed work and the questions set should be limited, and the lecturer should suggest alternative ways to give students feedback on their exam result as effectively as possible without sharing the questions.
- Lecturers should look for alternative ways to give students the best possible feedback, for example by providing insight into marks per theme instead of per question or – where necessary or at a student's request – by giving examples of questions that were answered incorrectly on an individual basis.
- If a lecturer wishes to provide more detailed feedback to several students at once, this can be done in a closed Zoom session for which students have to register.
- The above restrictions do not apply to open questions. For open questions, students retain the right to inspection as regulated in Article 12, paragraphs 2 to 4 of the current Rules and Guidelines of the Examination Board.