Teaching and Examination Regulations

Faculty of Science
Master's programme in Ecology & Evolution

Academic year 2026-2027

A. Faculty section
B1. Programme-specific section – general provisions
B2. Programme-specific section – content of programme

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Section A: Faculty section

1. General provisions

Article 1.1 Applicability of the Regulations

1. These Regulations apply to anyone enrolled in the programme, irrespective of the academic year in which the student was first enrolled in the programme.	Advice OLC, approval FGV (9.38 sub b)
2. These Regulations enter into force on 1 September 2026.	Advice OLC, approval FGV (9.38 sub b)
3. An amendment to the Teaching and Examination Regulations is only permitted to concern an academic year already in progress if this does not demonstrably damage the interests of students.	Advice OLC, approval FGV (9.38 sub b)
4. In certain cases, students may appeal against decisions made on the basis of the Teaching and Examination Regulations, for example decisions made by an examiner, examination board, BSA committee, or admission committee. Whether an appeal can be considered depends on the type of the decision and by whom the decision was made. More information about legal protection can be found in the Student Charter and on the website Complaints, appeals, and objections - Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.	Ordinance CvB, see Appendix III

Article 1.2 Definitions

The following definitions are used in these Regulations (*in alphabetical order*):

a. academic year: the period beginning on 1 September and ending on 31 August of the following calendar year;

b. EC (European Credit): a course credit with a workload of 28 hours of study;

c. examination: an assessment of the student's knowledge, understanding and skills relating to a unit of education. The assessment is expressed in terms of a final mark. An examination may consist of one or more partial examinations. A resit always covers the same material as the original examination. An examination can be completed in writing, orally or in another way;

d. final examination: a Master's examination;

e. final project: a unit comprising research into the literature and/or a contribution to scientific research, always resulting in a written report;

f. internship: period spent working in professional practice as part of a study programme;

g.1 joint degree: a degree awarded by an institution together with one or more institutions in the Netherlands or abroad, after the student has completed a study programme (a degree programme, a specialisation or a specific curriculum within a degree programme) for which the collaborating institutions are jointly responsible;

g.2 double degree: partnership between a program of a Dutch educational institution with a foreign educational institution, whereby students complete all or part of both study programmes and obtain two diplomas on the basis of agreements regarding the mutual recognition of the programme (replacement courses);

h. period: a part of a semester;

i. practical exercise: participation in a practical training activity or other educational learning activity, aimed at acquiring certain (academic) skills. Examples of practical exercises are:

- researching and writing a thesis or dissertation
- carrying out a research assignment
- taking part in fieldwork or an excursion
- taking part in another educational learning activity aimed at acquiring specific skills, or
- participating in and completing a work placement;

j. programme: the totality and cohesion of the units of education, teaching activities/methods, contact hours, testing and examination methods and recommended literature;

k. SAP/SLM: the student information system (*Student Lifecycle Management*);

l. semester: the first (September - January) or second half (February - August) of an academic year;

m. specialisation: optional route of study within a degree programme indicating a deepening of the context of the programme (e.g. interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary);

n. student statute: sets out the rights and responsibilities of students on the one hand, and of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam on the other hand, including those derived from the law and those derived from university regulations. The Executive Board (CvB) officially confirms the student statute once its completeness has been approved by the University Student Council (USC);

o. student: the person enrolled, requesting enrolment or who has been enrolled in a course or program at the Vrije Universiteit;

p. study guide: the guide for the study programme that provides further details of the courses, provisions and other information specific to that programme. The study guide is available online at *https://www.vu.nl/studiegids*;

q. study monitor: dashboard for students and academic advisers containing data pertaining to the student, including the student's study progress;

r. subject: see u. 'unit of education';

s. track: a study pathway within a programme, of which the workload and the qualities in terms of knowledge, insight and skills that the student must have acquired by the end of the program are equal to those of the programme

t. unit of education: a unit of study of the programme within the meaning of the WHW;

u. university: Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam;

v. WHW: the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act (Wet op het Hoger Onderwijs en Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (WHW)).

w. workload: the workload of the unit of education to which an examination applies, expressed in terms of credits = EC credits (ECTS = European Credit and Transfer Accumulation System). The workload for 1 year (1,680 hours) is 60 EC credits.

The other terms have the meanings ascribed to them by the WHW.

2. Study programme structure

Article 2.1 Structure of academic year and units of education

1. The study programme will be offered in a year divided into two semesters.	Ordinance CvB, see Appendix III
2. Every semester consists of three consecutive periods. The first two periods each	Ordinance CvB, see Appendix III

consist of eight weeks, and the final period consists of four weeks.	
3. A unit of education comprises 6 EC or a multiple thereof.	Ordinance CvB, see Appendix III
4. By way of exception to paragraph 3, the Executive Board may in special cases and on request of the Faculty Board, stipulate that a unit of education comprises 3 EC or a multiple thereof.	Ordinance CvB, see Appendix III

3. Assessment and examination

Article 3.1 Signing up for education and examinations

1. Every student must sign up to participate in the units of education of the programme, the examinations and resits. The procedure for signing up is described in Regulations for registering for courses and examinations.	Ordinance CvB, see Appendix III
2. Signing up may only take place in the designated periods.	Ordinance CvB, see Appendix III

Article 3.2 Type of examination

1. At the examiner's request, the Examination Board may permit a different form of examination than is stipulated in the study guide.	Advice OLC, approval FGV (7.13 l)

Article 3.3 Oral examinations

1. No more than one student will be examined orally at a time, unless specified otherwise in part B for the relevant unit of education.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 l and n)
2. A second examiner is present when an oral examination is being held, unless the Examination Board has determined otherwise. The oral examination takes place at a time and location to be determined by the examiner within the regular timetable, on campus or online. At the request of the student, and with the approval of the examiners, an audio recording can be made. Should the second examiner not be available unexpectedly, an audio recording of the oral exam is made. This audio recording is retained by the university for the retention period applicable for examinations.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 l and n)

Article 3.4 Determining and announcing results

1. The examiner determines the result of a written examination within fifteen working days. However, the marking deadline for final projects is no longer than twenty working days after submission. The examiner will then immediately ensure that the marks are registered and also ensures that the student is immediately notified of the mark, taking due account of the applicable confidentiality standards.	Ordinance CvB, see Appendix III
2. The examiner determines the result (i.e. mark) of an oral examination as soon as possible, but at the latest within two working days after the examination has finished and informs the student accordingly. The third clause of the first paragraph applies.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 o)
3. In the case of assessments other than oral or written examinations, the Examination Board determines in advance how and by what deadline the student will be informed of the results.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 o)

Article 3.5 Examination opportunities

1. a. Per academic year, two opportunities to take examinations will be offered for each unit of education. b. By way of exception to a., the options for retaking practical exercises, work placements and final projects are detailed in the relevant work placement manual, course manual or teaching regulations.	Ordinance CvB, see Appendix III
2. The most recent mark will apply in the event of a resit. A resit is allowed for both passed and failed units of education.	Ordinance CvB, see Appendix III
3. The resit for a (partial) examination may not take place within ten working days of the announcement of the results for the original (partial) examination. Exceptions are only possible in period 6.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 j)
4. The Examination Board may allow a student an extra opportunity to sit an examination if that student: a) has completed all but one units of education to meet the requirements of the degree; and b) has failed the examination during all the previously offered attempts unless participation in an examination was not possible for compelling reasons. This provision excludes the practical exercises and the final project. Requests for an additional examination opportunity must be submitted to the Examination Board no later than 15 July. If necessary, the method of examination may deviate from the provisions in the study guide.	Ordinance CvB, see Appendix III
5. If a unit of education is no longer offered, at least one additional opportunity will subsequently be provided to sit the examination(s) or parts thereof and a transitional arrangement will be included in Section B.	Advice OLC, approval FGV (7.13 j)

Article 3.6 Marks

1. (Partial) grades are given on a scale from 1 to 10 with no more than one figure after the decimal point.	Ordinance CvB, see Appendix III
2. A final mark between 5 and 6 will be rounded to the nearest whole number: final marks below 5.5~~0~~, rounded down; final marks of 5.5~~0~~ or higher, rounded up. All other final marks will be expressed in whole or half marks.	Ordinance CvB, see Appendix III
3. To pass a given course or unit, a final mark of 6 or higher is required.	Ordinance CvB, see Appendix III
4. The Examination Board can allow the use of symbols rather than numbers.	Ordinance CvB, see Appendix III

Article 3.7 Exemption

1. At the written request of the student, the Examination Board may exempt the student from taking one or more examination components, if they: a. have either passed a unit of education at a university or university of applied sciences (HBO) or a research university (WO) that is equivalent in terms of content and level; b. or have demonstrated through their work and/or professional experience that they have sufficient knowledge and skills with regard to the relevant unit of education.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 r)
2. The final project is excluded from this exemption possibility.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (9.38 sub b)

Article 3.8 Validity period for results

1.	The validity period of examinations passed and exemption from examinations is unlimited, unless otherwise specified in Section B.	Legal provision
2.	The validity period of a partial examination is limited to the academic year in which it was sat or until the end of the unit of study concerned, as stipulated for the relevant unit of study in Section B. In exceptional circumstances, an examiner may deviate from this; this must be stated on Canvas at the start of the unit of education.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (9.38 sub b)

Article 3.9 Right of inspection

1.	Within twenty working days after the announcement of the results of a written examination, but at least ten working days before the resit opportunity for that examination, the student has the right to inspect their graded examination.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 p and q)
2.	Students can view the questions and assignments set in the written examination, and the standards applied when assessing the examination, within the period specified in 3.9.1.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 q)
3.	The examiner determines whether the inspection takes place collectively or individually. In all cases, the time and place of the inspection is announced in the course manual or learning environment.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 q)
4.	Students are entitled to feedback on their academic performance. The manner in which this is provided in each unit of education is described in the course manual.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 p and q)

4. Academic student counselling and study progress

Article 4.1 Administration of study progress and academic student counselling

1.	The faculty board is responsible for the correct registration of the students' study results. After the assessment of a unit of education has been registered, every student has the right to inspect the result for that component and also has a list of the results achieved at their disposal in VU.nl Dashboard.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 u)
2.	Enrolled students are eligible for academic student counselling. Academic student counselling is in any case provided by a. The Student Counsellor b. Student psychologists c. Faculty academic advisers	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 u)

Article 4.2 Facilities for students with a disability or impairment

1.	Students with a disability or impairment can submit a request via VU.nl Dashboard to qualify for one or more special facilities with regard to teaching, practical exercises and examinations. These facilities will accommodate the student's individual disability or impairment as much as possible, but may not alter the quality or degree of difficulty of a unit of education or an examination. In all cases, the student must fulfil the intended learning outcomes for the study programme.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 m)
2.	The request referred to in the first paragraph must be accompanied by a statement from a doctor or psychologist. If possible, an estimate should be given of the potential impact on the student's study progress. In case of a chronic disability a single (one time) request suffices.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 m)

3. Students who have been diagnosed with dyslexia must provide a statement from a BIG-, NIP- or NVO-registered professional who is qualified to conduct a psychological evaluation.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 m)
4. The faculty board, or the person acting on behalf of the faculty board, decides on teaching facilities and facilities regarding logistics. The Examination Board will decide on requests for facilities with regard to examinations.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 m)
5. In the event of a positive decision in response to a request as referred to in paragraph 1, the student can make an appointment with the academic adviser to discuss the details of the provisions.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 m)
6. A request for one or more facilities can be refused if it would place a disproportionate burden on the organisation or the resources of the faculty or university were it upheld. Any such refusal will be substantiated.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 m)
7. If the disability or impairment justifies an extension of the examination time, the responsible person on behalf of the Examination Board will register in SAP this entitlement to an extension. If a disability or impairment justifies other measures to be taken, the academic adviser can take the necessary measures. The student can consult the study monitor to check which facilities have been granted to them.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 m)
8. The decision as referred to in paragraph 5 may specify a limited validity of the facilities granted.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 m)

5. Hardship clause

Article 5.1 Hardship clause

In instances not regulated by the Teaching and Examination Regulations or in the event of demonstrable extreme unreasonableness or unfairness, the faculty board responsible for the study programme will decide, unless the matter concerned is the responsibility of the Examination Board.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (9.38 sub b)

Section B1: Programme-specific section

6. General programme information and characteristics

Article 6.1 Study programme information

1. The programme Ecology & Evolution, RIO number 60365, is offered on a full-time basis.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 i)
2. The programme is offered in partnership with University of Rennes (France), and Georg-August-Universität Göttingen (Germany), and leads to a double degree. New members; but pending timely signing of all agreements by VU-admin: Masaryk University (Czech Republic), University of South-Eastern Norway (Norway).	Advice OLC; approval FGV (9.38 sub b)

Article 6.2 Teaching formats used and modes of assessment

1. The programme uses the teaching formats as specified in the study guide.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 x)
2. The modes of assessment used per unit of education are specified in the study guide.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 l)

Article 6.3 Academic student counselling

1. The programme offers the following counselling in addition to the student counselling mentioned in Section A: - Lecturer AM_1312 Research Skills in Ecology and Evolution	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 u)

7. Further admission requirements

Article 7.1 Intake date(s)

The Master's programme starts on 1 September.	Advice OLC, Approval FGV (9.38 sub b)

Article 7.2 Admission requirements

1. Admission to the Master's programme is possible for an applicant who has obtained a Bachelor's degree at an institution of academic higher education, which demonstrates the following knowledge, understanding and skills: a. Knowledge and understanding demonstrated by proof of passing courses on the academic bachelor level or higher on the following topics: - Ecology (at least 12 EC; understanding of ecosystems, the ecological processes that play a role within them and the interrelationship of those processes, behavioural ecology) - Evolution (at least 12 EC; origin and development of life, processes of speciation, relationship between and within taxa, building plans of the most important groups) - Genetics (at least 12 EC; both at the organismal and population level) - Statistics or Mathematics (at least 12 EC; (t-test, regression and correlation analysis, analysis of variance, non-parametric tests) and	Advice OLC, approval FGV (9.38 sub b)

mathematical principles and techniques (differentiation and integration, ordinary differential equations) - Biochemistry and Cell Biology (insight into molecular and cellular processes in living organisms) - Animal and Plant Physiology (the function at supra-cellular level, insight into the construction and function of the main tissues, organs and organ systems and the regulation of their operation) - Biogeochemistry (flow of carbon and nutrients through ecosystems and global cycles) b. Proof of passing courses or internships on the academic bachelor level or higher that include the following skills: - The ability to collect data in a systematic way by means of observations during (laboratory) research and/or fieldwork, as well through literature review or other authoritative (internet) sources. - The ability to manage the collected data and observations in relation to each other, save, process, interpret them and write a scientific report that meets the bachelor level. - The ability to clearly define a biological question, along with accompanying assumptions – and to determine a strategy for answering the question (under guidance). - The ability to analyse research on main lines, both with regard to the design and conduct of research and to the interpretation of results. A Biology BSc degree from a university in the Netherlands covers the above mentioned admission requirements. As well as those with a Bachelor's degree in Applied Biology from a university of applied sciences (HBO)	
2. Specialisation IMABEE, International Master of Biodiversity, Ecology and Evolution: In the second year, provided that all the courses of the 1st semester of the 1st year have been completed, it is possible to enter the IMABEE programme. This means that the complete 2nd year (60 EC) can be followed at one of the partner universities (University of Rennes, France; University of Göttingen, Germany).	Advice OLC, approval FGV (9.38 sub b)
3. Applicants with a Bachelor's degree obtained at an institution outside the Netherlands may be asked for additional methods to prove that they meet the admission requirements.	Advice OLC, approval FGV (9.38 sub b)
4. Not applicable.	Advice OLC, approval FGV (9.38 sub b)
5. Applicants should demonstrate that they have a sufficient level of proficiency in English by meeting at least one of the following standards: - IELTS Academic: an overall score of at least [6.5]. At the start of the program, the test must not have been taken more than two years ago. - TOEFL iBT: an overall score of at least [4.5]. At the start of the program, the test must not have been taken more than two years ago. - Cambridge C2 Proficiency/Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE): an overall score of at least [180] - Cambridge C1 Advanced/Certificate Advanced English (CAE an overall score of at least [180]	Advice OLC, approval FGV (9.38 sub b)

	- LanguageCert Academic SELT: an overall score of at least [70]. At the start of the program, the test must not have been taken more than two years ago. - Pearson PTE Academic: an overall score of at least [68]. At the start of the program, the test must not have been taken more than two years ago.	
6.	Applicants who have completed one of the following meet the English language requirement and therefore are exempted from taking an English language test (as mentioned in the section 5) if: - a secondary education or higher education degree fully taught in English has been completed in Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, the United Kingdom or the United States of America; - a fully English-language, accredited bachelor's or master's degree in the Netherlands, EU/EFTA countries, Singapore or South Africa, or - a vwo diploma or equivalent diploma in which the course on English of a comparable level is required has been earned;	Advice OLC, approval FGV (9.38 sub b)
7.	The Admission Board will investigate whether the applicant meets the admission requirements.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (9.38 sub b)

Article 7.3 Selection criteria

1.	In addition to the admission requirements referred to in Article 7.2, the Faculty Board also sets (at least two of) the following selection criteria: - Not applicable.	Advice OLC, approval FGV (9.38 sub b)

Article 7.4 Pre-Master's programme

1.	Applicants with a Bachelor's degree from a university of applied sciences (HBO) or a Bachelor's degree from a research university (WO) who wish to enter the programme but do not fulfil the admission requirements as stipulated in Article 7.2 can request admission to the pre-Master's programme. Article 2 of these regulations does not apply to admission to a bridging or pre-Master's programme. The provisions of sections A and B only apply to the extent that they are described in Article 7.4. Information about the programme from part B2 applies, insofar as it concerns the units of education from the pre-Master's programme.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (9.38 sub b)
2.	Applicants must, in addition to paragraph 1 above, also satisfy the following requirements: A. Students with a completed Dutch BSc programme listed below, give direct access to the pre-Masters programme: - Earth Sciences - Biomedical Sciences - Health and Life Sciences, major: Biomedical Sciences - Future Planet Studies - Aarde, Economie & duurzaamheid. Students from the above-listed programmes can include the minor Ecology & Evolution in their BSc programme to gain direct access to the Master's programme Ecology & Evolution without the pre-master.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (9.38 ub b)

B. Applicants with a different Bachelor's degree who wish to enter the Master programme “Ecology and Evolution” are considered to have completed 90 EC (in the case of a research university Bachelor)/60 EC (in the case of a Bachelor from a university of applied sciences) on academic skills, and thus lack 90 EC (in the case of a research university bachelor)/120 EC (in the case of a Bachelor from a university of applied sciences) on relevant topics to be eligible for admission to the MSc “Ecology and Evolution” as stipulated in Article 7.2. These students can only be admitted to the pre-master Ecology and Evolution, if they provide evidence beforehand, that the combined previous education in combination with the pre-master meets all requirements set under 7.2.	
3. A candidate must demonstrate that they meet the language requirements, as specified in Article 7.2.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (9.38 sub b)
4. The pre-Master’s programme has 30 European credits (EC), is only offered during the first semester and consists of the following units: - AB_1020 Environmental Toxicology (6 EC) - AB_1022 Evolutionary Genetics (6 EC) - AB_1041 Behavioural Biology (6 EC) - AB_ Ecosystem modelling (or AB_1261 Diversiteit van Leven (6 EC) – optional for HBO students only) - AB_1219 Adaptation to Human Environments (6 EC) For HBO pre-Master programme can also be followed as a so-called embedded pre-master (minor) as part of an HBO Applied Sciences programme. In exceptional cases the Admission Board can recommend a personal pre-master programme of max. 30 EC that deviates from the above pre-master programme. The following terms also apply: a. If a pre-Master’s student completes an individualised pre-Master’s programme, this is to be communicated to that student in writing. b. The Examination Board can, if the pre-Master’s student submits a written request, exempt the student from one or more examinations of a standard pre-Master’s programme. c. The provision under b. does not apply to an individualised pre-Master's programme.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (9.38)
5. Evidence that the pre-Master’s programme has been completed successfully will entitle the student to admission to the relevant Master’s programme in the following academic year. A pre-Master’s programme must be completed within one academic year.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (9.38 b)

8. Examinations and results

Article 8.1 Sequence of examinations

1. Students may participate in the practical exercises of the units of education listed below only if they have passed the examination or examinations for following units of education: - AM 1114: Research Project E&E II after passing AM 1100: Research Project E&E I	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 h, s & t)

Article 8.2 Validity period for results

1.	The validity period of the examinations and exemptions from examinations below is limited, as follows: - If the exam shows that a student's knowledge is insufficient or outdated, or if the student's skills evaluated in the exam are demonstrably outdated, the Examination Board may impose a supplementary or replacement examination for a course for which an examination was passed more than 6 years ago.	Advice OLC; approval FGV (7.13 k)
2.	A student may request the Examination Board to extend the validity of an exam. If the student's knowledge is demonstrably outdated, or if the student's skills and understanding are demonstrably outdated, the Examination Board may impose a supplementary examination, impose a replacement examination or refuse to extend the period of validity.	Legal provision
3.	In situations where a limited period of validity applies, the period of validity of examinations may be extended in the event of extenuating circumstances as stipulated in WHW Article 7.51, paragraph 2, with at least the period of allocated financial assistance specified in WHW Article 7.51, paragraph 1.	Legal provision

Section B2: Programme-specific section – content of programme

9. Programme objectives, specialisations, intended learning outcomes and language

Article 9.1 Workload

1. The programme has a workload of 120 EC.	Approval OLC; (7.13 g)

Article 9.2 Specialisations

The programme has the following specialisation(s): a) Research specialisation - Ecology & Evolution b) International Master Biodiversity, Ecology & Evolution (IMABEE) specialisation c) Science Education Ad a Research specialisation. This specialisation is designed to teach advanced research methodology and scientific publishing. The specialisation is suitable for students aiming to pursue a PhD, research roles in research institutes, or R&D positions in industry. Ad. b. IMABEE, International Master of Biodiversity, Ecology and Evolution. In the second year, provided that all the courses of the 1st semester of the 1st year have been completed, it is possible to enter the IMABEE programme. This means that the complete 2nd year (60 EC) can be followed at one of the partner universities (University of Rennes, France; University of Göttingen, Germany). Ad. c. Science Education: This can be chosen in the second year. The Master student then graduates with a specialisation in Education (RIO number 68502) and obtains a certificate that qualifies the graduate to teach Biology in secondary schools (this is a 'grade one' certificate, i.e. it qualifies the graduate to teach pupils who will sit public exams in the subject).	Approval OLC (7.13 b)

Article 9.3 Programme objective

The programme aims to: provide students with the knowledge, skills and insights required to operate as an independent professional within the field of Ecology and Evolution, and to become a suitable candidate for a subsequent PhD study leading to a career in a fundamental or applied research field. As a consequence, it is a research-oriented programme. Having completed the programme the student should have developed a critical, scientific attitude and an awareness of the ethical and social aspects of Ecology and Evolution. The programme offers a broad package of courses and research experiences that provide a firm theoretical and practical basis for a Masters' degree with the possibility to develop a distinct, individual profile within the array of ecological and evolutionary sub-disciplines. In addition: students must choose a specialisation.	Advice OLC (7.13 a)

Article 9.4 Intended learning outcomes

1. At all events, a graduate of the study programme will have: - knowledge and understanding in the field of Ecology & Evolution. Learning outcomes of the MSc Ecology and Evolution programme according to the Dublin descriptors:	Approval OLC (7.13)

Dublin descriptor 1
Knowledge and understanding: The graduate should have specialized theoretical and practical knowledge of ecological and evolutionary science notably within the field of his/her specialisation.

The graduate:
- masters the field's conceptual framework, understands the state of the art in terms of developing theories and has insight into the most important current research issues in ecology and evolution,
- appreciates the place of this discipline within Biology and the Natural Sciences,
- appreciates the scientific and social relevance of ecology and evolution,
- is able to think in multidisciplinary terms,
- has sufficient knowledge of and is able to apply appropriate mathematical and statistical methods and computer software.

Dublin descriptor 2
Application of knowledge: The graduate should be experienced in carrying out research, in applying techniques specific to the subject area and in applying scientific knowledge to problems raised in society.

The graduate:
- is able to design and perform experiments in the different ecological and evolutionary fields and analyse their results,
- has command of the relevant advanced research techniques and laboratory procedures,
- is able to transmit his/her scientific knowledge to societal and political issues,
- is able to reflect on the ethical aspects of research and its uses.

Dublin descriptor 3
Critical judgment: The graduate should be able to independently and critically judge information.

The graduate:
- is able to independently and critically analyse ecological and evolutionary research,
- is able to independently acquire, analyse and critically evaluate ecological and evolutionary information from the literature at a meta level,
- has the ability to evaluate his/her own performance, both introspectively and in discussion with others.

Dublin descriptor 4
Communication: The graduate should be able to transfer knowledge and skills related to his/her subject area to other persons and to adequately reply to questions and problems posed within society.

The graduate:
- can report orally on research results to a scientific audience in English with support of modern presentation techniques,
- can report in written form on research results on the level of peer-reviewed academic journals (in English),
- can make essential contributions to scientific discussions,
- can operate professionally in a research team

Dublin descriptor 5

Learning skills: The graduate should develop learning skills that enable him/her further self-education and development within the subject area. The graduate: - is able to draw up a research proposal developing new research questions and directions, giving details of experimental design, performance and analysis, - is familiar with high-impact general scientific journals as well as professional journals in ecology and evolution, - able to evaluate and reflect on scientific contributions of peers, - can make a well-considered choice for a specialized PhD trajectory or other positions on the job market.	
2. Research specialisation Ecology & Evolution: expands on the basis provided in year 1 through the following objectives: - The student learns to independently make a detailed study of the literature, which broadens and deepens the knowledge gained earlier in the programme. - The student learns to efficiently process the material in a given field and to evaluate it critically at meta-level, thereby developing an own perspective on the literature. - The student learns to write a scientific thesis in English at the level of peer-reviewed academic journals. - The students learn how to master the complete publishing cycle; aligning their thesis to existing journal requirements, learn how to provide objective feedback in the scientific reviewing process and demonstrate scientific depth in a systematically written rebuttal - The student learns to orally present the research/thesis and to discuss the findings with a scientific audience. IMABEE: The learning objectives of the IMABEE programme are equal to the one described for the regular Ecology & Evolution programme, but does this in an international setting as the student follows additional courses and their second internship at one of the partner IMABEE universities in Europe, thereby experiencing education and research approaches other than those of the Netherlands. Science Education specialisation (in Dutch): Vakinhoudelijke bekwaamheid – De student beheerst de vakinhoudelijke stof zodanig dat de leerinhoud voor het onderwijs toegepast, aangevuld en gecontextualiseerd kan worden. 1. toont parate actuele vakkennis- en kunde en kan deze vertalen naar het type onderwijs waarvoor de bevoegdheid behaald wordt, nl. de eerstegraads bevoegdheid. 2. overziet de opbouw van het curriculum van het schoolvak, de plaats van het vak in het curriculum, relaties met andere vakken, en relaties met de eindtermen, eindexamenprogramma's en vervolgopleidingen. (Vak)didactische bekwaamheid - de student laat zien onderwijs didactisch verantwoord te kunnen ontwerpen en uitvoeren, evalueren en ontwikkelen. 3. kan samenhangende lessen ontwerpen met passende leerdoelen, werkvormen, materialen en media afgestemd op het niveau en de kenmerken van groepen leerlingen. 4. kan leerstof begrijpelijk en aansprekend en op verschillende manieren uitleggen aan leerlingen, rekening houdend met hun taalniveau. 5. kan leerlingen begeleiden bij de verwerking van de stof, stimulerende vragen stellen en opbouwende gerichte feedback geven op taak en aanpak. 6. kan samenwerking, zelfwerkzaamheid en zelfstandigheid stimuleren.	Approval OLC (7.13 b)

7. verzamelt informatie over de voortgang van de leerlingen door (bestaande en zelf ontworpen) toetsen en formatief handelen, en stelt het onderwijs waar nodig bij. Pedagogische bekwaamheid – de student zorgt voor een veilig en motiverend leerklimaat, stemt af op de sociaal-emotionele en morele ontwikkeling van de leerling. 8. kan een veilig en motiverend pedagogisch klimaat scheppen waarin leerlingen gezien worden en waarin hun zelfvertrouwen wordt gestimuleerd. 9. kan leiding geven aan groepen leerlingen en groepsprocessen sturen en begeleiden. 10. kan zicht krijgen op de leefwereld van de leerlingen in al hun diversiteit en daarmee rekening houden in het onderwijs. 11. stemt af op de sociaal-emotionele en morele ontwikkeling van leerlingen en sluit aan bij de onderwijsbehoeften van verschillende groepen leerlingen 12. kan mogelijke belemmeringen in de sociaal-emotionele, morele en cognitieve ontwikkeling signaleren en het pedagogisch handelen afstemmen met collega's, ouders en professionele betrokkenen. Professionele en academische bekwaamheid – de student werkt samen met begeleiders en collega's, toont een academische en onderzoekende houding ten opzichte van theorie en praktijk, neemt verantwoordelijkheid voor het eigen ontwikkelproces en heeft een visie op (het geven van) goed onderwijs. 13. kan samenwerken en professioneel communiceren met hen en andere betrokkenen, zoals het zorgteam en ouders. 14. kan het eigen professionele handelen blijven ontwikkelen door gebruik te maken van gerichte feedback en reflectie. 15. kan het eigen professionele handelen uitleggen en verantwoorden, en hierbij gebruik maken van (vak)didactische en pedagogische basis- en verdiepende theorie en onderzoek. 16. kan eigen opvattingen en idealen over het vak, goed (vak)onderwijs en goede leraren onder woorden brengen en positie innemen ten opzichte van het curriculum, de schoolaanpak en mogelijke dilemma's. 17. is in staat verwachtingen ten aanzien van het onderwijsleerproces systematisch en onderzoeksmatig te evalueren, op basis van een variatie van gegevens.	
3. Language proficiency may be taken into account in the assessment of examinations.	Approval OLC (7.13 c)

Article 9.5 Language of instruction

1. The language of instruction is English, with the exception of courses taught within the specialisation Science Education, which are offered in Dutch.	Approval OLC (9.18)
2. The 'Gedragscode vreemde taal' (Code of conduct for foreign languages) applies.	VU policy

10. Curriculum structure

Article 10.1 Composition of the programme

1. The programme comprises at least a package of compulsory components and an individual Master's thesis or academic work placement.	Ordinance CvB, see Appendix III
2. Additionally the programme can offer: - Elective course components (12 - 18 EC); students are free to spend 6 EC to either an elective course or to expand one of their research projects with 6 EC.	Advice OLC (7.13 a)

The shortest research project is at least 30 EC. The first research project has to take place at the Vrije Universiteit or the University of Amsterdam.	
3. Units of education are categorised as specialised (400), research-oriented (500) and highly specialised (600) level.	Ordinance CvB, see Appendix III

Article 10.2 Compulsory units of education

A detailed description per unit of education can be found in the Study Guide.

Unit of education	course code	nr. of EC	level	Advice OLC; (7.13 a)
Year 1				
Current Trends in Ecology & Evolution (VU or UvA course, alternating annually)	AM_470507/ AMU_470507	6	500	
Ecological Data Analysis	AM_1225	6	500	
Research Project Ecology and Evolution I	AM_1100	30-42	600	
Research Skills in Ecology & Evolution	AM_1312	6	500	
Year 1 constrained choice				
Evolutionary Genomics*	AM_1231	6	500	
Environments Through Time	AMU_0022	6	500	
Ecosystem Services and Scientific Advocacy	AM_1053	6	500	
Global Ecology & Biodiversity	AMU_0027	6	500	
Biogeochemical Cycles in System Earth	AMU_0035	6	400	
Invasion & Conservation Biology	AMU_0026	6	500	
Microbial Symbiosis*	AM_1284	6	500	
Plastic and Chemical Pollution	AM_1259	6	400	
Sustainable Landscape Challenges*	AM_1304	6	500	
Cooperation and Conflict in Nature*	AM_1229	6	500	
** Course is taught every other year, see the study guide to check availability.*				

Specialisation Research

Unit of education	course code	nr. of EC	level	Advice OLC; (7.13 a)
Year 2				
Research Project Ecology and Evolution II	AM_1114	30-48	600	
Year 2, select one of the following two options:				
Applied Literature Survey Ecology and Evolution	AM_1226	12	500	
Literature Survey Ecology and Evolution	AM_1131	12	500	

Specialisation Education

Unit of education	course code	nr. of EC	level	Advice OLC; (7.13 a)
Year 2				
Bio Ecologie en Biodiversiteit	O_ABBECBD	5	300	
Bio Evolutie	O_ABBIEVO	3	300	
Bio Planten	O_ABBIPL	5	300	
Didactiek 1	O_MLDIDAC_1	6	400	

Didactiek 2	O_MLDIDAC2	9	400	
Praktijk 1	O_MLPRAK_1	6	400	
Praktijk 2	O_MLPRAK_2	9	400	
Praktijk 3	O_MLPRAK_3	15	400	
Peergroup 1	O_MLPEERGR_1	0	400	
Peergroup 2	O_MLPEERGR_2	0	000	
Startweek	O_MSTARTSEP	0	000	
Pedagogische Didactische Verdieping	O_MPEDIVER	9	500	

Specialisation IMABEE

Unit of education	course code	no. of EC	level	Advice OLC; (7.13 a)
Year 2				
IMABEE incoming				
Research Project Ecology and Evolution I	AM_1100	30	600	
Literature Survey Ecology and Evolution	AM_1131	12	500	
Current trends in Ecology & Evolution (VU or UvA course, alternating annually)	AM_470507/ AMU_470507	6	500	
Research Skills in Ecology and Evolution	AM_1312	6	500	
IMABEE outgoing				
IMABEE	AM_1243	60	600	

Article 10.3 Elective units of education

1. The student can take one or more of the following electives without prior consent from the Examination Board:	Advice OLC; (7.13 a)

Specialisation Research

Name of unit of education	course code	no. of EC	level	Advice OLC; (7.13 a)
Year 2 spec. Research pre-approved electives				
Abiotic Stress	AMU_0024	6	500	
Benthic Ecosystems	AMU_0023	6	500	
Biological Oceanography	AMU_0021	6	500	
Biotic Interactions	AMU_0019	6	500	
Coral Reef Ecology	AMU_0025	6	500	
Metropole Ecology	AM_1199	6	500	
Microbial Ecology	AMU_0008	6	500	

Specialisation Education

Unit of education	course code	no. of EC	level	Advice OLC; (7.13 a)
Year 2				
Praktijkonderzoek	O_MLPROZ	6	400	
Tweetalig Onderwijs	O_MTTO	3	400	
AI in het Onderwijs	O_MAIIHO	3	400	

Wereldburgerschap deel 1	O_MWRLDBS_1	3	400	
Wereldburgerschap deel 2	O_MWRLDBS_2	3	400	
Inclusieve Digitale Didactiek	O_MIDD	3	400	
Vernieuwend Onderwijs	O_MLVNON	3	500	

Specialisation IMABEE

Unit of education	course code	no. of EC	level	Advice OLC; (7.13 a)
Year 2				
Cooperation & Conflict in Nature*	AM_1229	6	500	
Ecological Data Analysis	AM_1225	6	500	
Ecosystem Services and Scientific Advocacy	AM_1053	6	500	
Environments Through Time	AMU_0022	6	500	
Global Ecology and Biodiversity	AMU_0027	6	500	
Biogeochemical Cycles in System Earth	AMU_0035	6	400	
Invasion and Conservation Biology	AMU_0026	6	500	
Metropole Ecology	AM_1199	6	500	
Plastic and Chemical Pollution	AM_1259	6	400	
** Course is taught every other year, see the study guide to check availability.*				

2. If the student wishes to take a different unit of education than listed, advance permission must be obtained in writing from the Examination Board.	Advice OLC; (7.13 a)

Article 10.4 Practical exercise

The following components can be considered as practical exercises:				Approval OLC (7.13 d)
Name of unit of education	course code	no. of EC	level	
Research Project Ecology and Evolution I	AM_1100	30≤EC≤42	600	
Research Project Ecology and Evolution II	AM_1114	30≤EC≤48	600	
Literature Survey Ecology and Evolution	AM_1131	12	500	
Applied Literature Survey Ecology and Evolution	AM_1226	12	500	

Article 10.5 Participation in practical training and tutorials

1. In the case of practical exercises, there may be attendance requirements. For details on attendance requirements, please refer to the study manual of the relevant unit of study.	Approval OLC (7.13)
2. In the case of tutorials, there may be attendance requirements. For details on attendance requirements, please refer to the study manual of the relevant unit of study.	Approval OLC (7.13 d)
3. For thesis and internship, the programme applies the guidelines as stipulated in the Thesis and Placement Regulations.	Approval OLC (7.13 d)

11. Evaluation and transitional provisions

Article 11.1 Evaluation of the programme

1. The education provided in this programme is evaluated in accordance with the	Approval OLC

document ‘Kwaliteitszorg Onderwijs BETA’.	(7.13 a1)

Article 11.2 Transitional provisions

By way of departure from the Teaching and Examination Regulations currently in force, the following transitional provisions apply for students who started the programme under a previous set of Teaching and Examination Regulations: - The course AM_470507 Current Trends in Ecology & Evolution equals AMU_470507 Current Trends in Ecology & Evolution - From 25-26 students will follow AM_1312 Research Skills in Ecology and Evolution and components of this course can be used to cover any existing deficits from Scientific writing in English (AM_1157), Masterclasses in Ecology and Evolution (AM_1016) or Employability, Skills and Career (AM_1244) for students started before 25-26. - The Science Communication and Science in Society specialisations are being discontinued from academic year 2025-2026. Students who start their Master’s programme in 2025-2026 can no longer be admitted into these specialisations. Students who started their Master’s programme in 2024-2025 (or before) can still complete the SC- and SiS-specialisations by following the courses listed in the TER 2024-2025 for these specialisations. Degrees including these specialisations will be handed out until 31 August 2027 the latest.	Advice OLC (7.13 a)

Approval of the Programme Committee of the curriculum structure (submitted via UAS), on 16/12/2025.

Advice and/or approval by the Programme Committee (with the exception of the curriculum structure), on 07/07/2026.

Approved by the Faculty Joint Assembly, on 07/07/2026.

Adopted by the board of the Faculty of Science on 10/07/2026.

Appendix I

Overview of articles that must be included in the OER

Based on Article 7.13, paragraph 2 and Article 7.30b, paragraph 2 of the WHW.

Section A: Faculty section

2. Study programme structure	
Article 2.1 Structure of academic year and units of education	7.13 paragraph 2 sub e
3. Assessment and examination	
Article 3.2 Type of examination	7.13 paragraph 2 sub h, l, j
Article 3.3 Oral examinations	7.13 paragraph 2 sub l, n
Article 3.4 Determining and announcing results	7.13 paragraph 2 sub o
Article 3.5 Examination opportunities	7.13 paragraph 2 sub h, j
Article 3.7 Exemption	7.13 paragraph 2 sub r
Article 3.8 Validity period for results	7.13 paragraph 2 sub k
Article 3.9 Right of inspection and post-examination discussion	7.13 paragraph 2 sub p, q
4. Academic student counselling and study progress	
Article 4.1 Administration of study progress and academic student counselling	7.13 paragraph 2 sub u
Article 4.2 Facilities for students with a disability	7.13 paragraph 2 sub m

Section B1: Programme specific – general provisions

6. General programme information and characteristics	
Article 6.1 Study programme information	7.13 paragraph 2 sub i, r
Article 6.2 Teaching formats used and modes of assessment	7.13 paragraph 2 sub l, x
[keuze:] Article 6.3 Academic student counselling	7.13 paragraph 2 sub u
7. Further admission requirements	
Article 7.2 Admission requirements	7.30b paragraph 1
Article 7.3 Selection criteria	7.30b paragraphs 2 & 5
Article 7.4 Pre-Master's programme	7.57i section 1
8. Examinations and results	
Article 8.1 Sequence of examinations	7.13 paragraph 2 sub h, s, t
[option 1:] Article 8.2 Validity period for results	7.13 paragraph 2 sub k
[option 2:] Article 8.2 Validity period for results	7.13 paragraph 2 sub k

Section B2: Programme-specific section – content of programme

9. Programme objectives, tracks/specialisations, intended learning outcomes and language	
Article 9.1 Workload	7.13 paragraph 2 sub g
Article 9.2 Tracks and/or specialisations	7.13 paragraph 2 sub a
Article 9.3 Programme objective	7.13 paragraph 2 sub a
Article 9.4 Intended learning outcomes	7.13 paragraph 2 sub b, c
Article 9.5 Language of instruction	9.18 (*implementation expected in 2020*)
10. Curriculum structure	
Article 10.1 Composition of the programme	7.13 paragraph 2 sub a
Article 10.2 Compulsory units of education	7.13 paragraph 2 sub a

[Keuze:] Article 10.3 Elective units of education	7.13 paragraph 2 sub a
[Keuze:] Article 10.4 Practical exercise	7.13 paragraph 2 sub d
Article 10.5 Participation in practical training and tutorials	7.13 paragraph 2 sub d
11. Evaluation and transitional provisions	
Article 11.1 Evaluation of the programme	7.13 paragraph 2 sub a1
Article 11.2 Transitional provisions	7.13 paragraph 2 sub a

Appendix II

Overview of advisory and approval rights of Programme Committees (OLC) and Faculty Joint Assembly (FGV)

Article 7.13, paragraph 2, of the Higher Education and Research Act	FGV		OplC	
	I	A	I	A
a. the content of the programme and the associated examinations				■
a1. the manner in which teaching and education in the relevant programme are evaluated			■	
b. the content of the specialisations offered as part of the programme			■	
c. the programme's final attainment levels with regard to the knowledge, understanding and skills			■	
d. where applicable, the design of practical exercises			■	
e. the workload of the programme and of each of its constituent units of education			■	
f. the detailed rules referred to in Article 7.8b, sixth paragraph, and Article 7.9, fifth paragraph (recommendation on continuation of studies)				■
g. the Master's programmes to which Article 7.4a, eighth paragraph, applies (elevated workload)			■	
h. the number and sequence of examinations and the times at which these can be taken	■			■
i. the full-time, part-time or work-study structure of the programme	■			■
j. where necessary, the order in which students can take the examinations and the final examinations for Bachelor's and Master's programmes, as well as the timing of and number of opportunities	■			■
k. where necessary, the period of validity for pass grades awarded for examinations, notwithstanding the authority of the Examination Board to extend this period of validity	■			■
l. whether examinations are administered in oral, written or another form, notwithstanding the authority of the Examination Board to decide otherwise	■			■
m. the way in which students with a disability or chronic health condition are given a reasonable opportunity to take the examinations	■			■
n. the public nature of oral examinations, subject to the right of the Examination Board to determine otherwise in special cases	■			■
o. the period within which the results of an examination must be announced, together with details of whether this period can be altered and if so in what way	■			■
p. the way in which and the period within which students who have taken an examination are given the opportunity to inspect their marked work	■			■
q. the way in which and the period within which information can be provided about the questions asked and exercises given in the framework of a written examination and about the standards used for assessment	■			■
r. the grounds on which the Board of Examiners may grant exemptions from taking one or more examinations on the basis of examinations and final examinations for Bachelor's and Master's programmes previously completed in higher education, or on the basis of knowledge or skills acquired outside higher education	■			■
s. where necessary, the stipulation that students must pass certain examinations as a condition for admission to other examinations	■			■
t. where necessary, the obligation to take part in certain practical exercises with a view to admission to the examination in question, subject to the authority of the Examination Board to grant exemption from this obligation, with or without the imposition of alternative requirements	■			■
u. the monitoring of academic progress and individual student support and guidance	■			■
v. where applicable, the manner in which students are selected for a special track within a programme as referred to in Article 7.9b (excellence track within a programme)			■	
x. the actual design of the education provided	■			■
All other matters that are regulated in the Academic and Examination Regulations but which are not mentioned as such in Article 7.13 of the Higher Education and Research Act under points a to x.				■

The lettering corresponds to the lettering of Article 7.13 section 2 of the WHW

Abbreviations used:

FGV: Faculty Joint Assembly

OplC: Programme Committee
I: right of approval
A: right of advice

Appendix III
Ordinances of VU Executive Board (CvB) and Binding Master's Guidelines

Section A, article:	Concerns:	CvB ordinance / guideline
1.1.4	Legal protection for students	4-11-2025
2.1.1, 2.1.2	Year planning two semesters 8-8-4 (uniform year calendar VU-UvA)	29-9-2008 (period 2009-2015) 22-05-2014 (period 2016-2025)
2.1.3, 2.1.4	Units of education	Bachelor's and Master's education guidelines included in model TER, revised on 2 July 2019
3.1	Signing up for education and examinations	CvB ordinance 17-11-2020, prior consent of USC.
3.4.1	Determination and publication of the results (1) Grading deadline exams ten working days (2) Theses twenty working days	(1) Bachelor's guideline included in model TER, revised on 2 July 2019 ((2) Quality demand 11 from the VU-wide assessment policy, CvB ordinance 15-05-2012, approval GV 28-02-2013
3.5.1	Two possibilities to take examinations per year	Bachelor's and Master's education guidelines included in model TER, revised on 2 July 2019
3.5.2	Resit: most recent grade is valid, resit allowed in case of pass grade	Taken from the UvA guidelines, as part of the harmonisation, CvB ordinance 24-02-2014
3.5.4	One-time extra resit in relation to examination requirement	Included in (prior) model OER 16-17 following a request from committee O&O and adopted by CvB op 27-10-2015
3.6	Grades	CvB ordinance 30-09-2010, prior consent USR. As a result of harmonisation UvA, the guideline: 5.5 is a pass, has been added. CvB ordinance 24-02-2014.
Section B1, article:	**Concerns:**	**CvB ordinance / guideline**
7.2	Admission criteria	Bachelor's and Master's education guidelines included in model TER, revised on 2 July 2019
7.3	Selection criteria	Bachelor's and Master's education guidelines included in model TER, revised on 2 July 2019
Section B2, article:	**Concerns:**	**CvB ordinance / guideline**
10.1.1	Composition programme	Bachelor's and Master's education guidelines included in model TER, revised on 2 July 2019
10.1.3	Categorisation of units	Bachelor's and Master's education guidelines included in model TER, revised on 2 July 2019

Appendix IV
Higher Education and Research (Implementation) Act

1.The extenuating personal circumstances referred to in Article 7.8b, paragraph 3 and 7.9, paragraph 3 of the Act (WHW) are limited to:

a. illness of the person concerned,
b. physical, sensory or other impairment of the person concerned,
c. pregnancy of the person concerned,
d. extenuating family circumstances,
e. membership, including the chairmanship of:

1. universities: the university council, faculty council, the body established under the participation regulation referred to in Article 9.30, paragraph 3, or Article 9.51, paragraph 2, of the Act, the programme management or the programme committee, or membership on the board of a foundation whose bylaws allow for the exploitation of facilities belonging to the student services, or an equivalent body with regard to its activities in the opinion of the board of the institution,

2. universities of applied sciences: the participation council, district council, student committee or programme committee,

f. other circumstances to be designated by the board of the institution in the regulation as referred to in Article 7.8b, paragraph 6, and Article 7.9, paragraph 5, of the Act in which the person concerned engages in activities within the framework of the organisation and the administration of the affairs of the institution,
g. membership on the board of a student organisation of a certain size with full legal capacity, or a similar organisation of a certain size, whose primary task regards general societal interest and which actually develops activities for this purpose,
h. other personal circumstances set out in the Teaching and Examination Regulations as referred to in Article 7.13 of the Act, pursuant to Article 7.13, paragraph 2, clause f of the Act,
i. personal circumstances other than those referred to in a – h above which, if overlooked by the governing bodies of the institution, would lead to an obviously unfair outcome.

2 The institutional board may, for the purposes of the first paragraph, part g, establish specific rules regarding the maximum number of eligible board members per organisation per academic year, as well as the eligible administrative offices.