

## **Information about Fraud and Plagiarism for students of the Faculty of Science**

Amsterdam, September 2024

Dear student,

This is a letter from the Examination Board of your study. The responsibility of the Examination Board is to determine whether a student meets the conditions relating to the knowledge, insight and skills necessary to be awarded a degree.

However, whether you meet the conditions, can only be determined if your work is done by yourself. Therefore, i.e. copying information from fellow students, other scientists, the internet, or even him- or herself, is generally not allowed. This is called **plagiarism**. (See also section 19 below). Plagiarism is a form of fraud.

Also using tools or resources which are not explicitly permitted during the examination, copying information from another student during the examination, or assuming someone else's identity during the examination, make that the Examination Board cannot determine whether a student meets the conditions to be awarded a degree. Also the use of generative artificial intelligence to create ready-made content in assignments is considered fraud unless this use of AI is explicitly permitted by the examiner in the instructions for the assignment. These examples are called **fraud**. (See also article 19 of the Rules and Guidelines attachment 2).

### **Fraud is not allowed!**

Because it is not always clear to students what is considered as fraud and what are the consequences, we have produced this leaflet.

In this leaflet you can read about examples from reality (attachment 1), the definitions of fraud (attachment 2), and the procedures and penalties (attachment 2). A penalty might be that your work will be declared invalid. However, in more severe cases of academic misconduct or plagiarism, the Examination Board may exclude the student from participating in one or more examinations. And proven fraud or plagiarism means that a student cannot get a Cum Laude.

Please, read the attachments carefully.

If you have questions about this topic, feel free to ask your examiner (lecturer/teacher) of your course.

We wish you an educational time at the Faculty of Science.

Examination Board Faculty of Science  
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

## Attachment 1: examples, based on reality:

- ✓ If you use information from other sources, you have to mention the source. This holds i.e. when you use:
  - Internet
  - Work, done by other students
  - Work, done by yourself
  - Figures, pictures, tables
- ✓ When you quote from other sources, you have to mention the source and to use quotation marks (“.....”). However, we expect from students that they are able to formulate their own texts. So, do not quote too much.
- ✓ This also holds for text that you translate from another language.
- ✓ A (computer programming) assignment has to be done by yourself. It is not allowed to use text from fellow students, senior students or internet.
- ✓ Interviews have to be done with real persons. It is not allowed to interview one person several times and to suggest that it were different persons. Also not when it is difficult to find enough candidates.
- ✓ Sometimes model answers are available at the internet. However, you are not allowed to copy these model answers.
- ✓ The use of generative artificial intelligence (ChatGPT) to create ready-made content in assignments is considered fraud unless this use of AI is explicitly permitted by the examiner. Writing improvement is also considered as generative AI (see also [Generative AI, Copilot and ChatGPT - Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam \(vu.nl\)](#) )
- ✓ Sharing information during an exam, via WhatsApp (or in another way), is not allowed.
- ✓ The use of information from internet during an exam, is not allowed.

## Attachment 2: The Examination Board's Rules and Guidelines

**N.B.** The articles below are copied from the Examination Board's Rules and Guidelines 2023-2024. The Examination Board's Rules and Guidelines can be found at [this website](#).

### 19. Fraud and plagiarism in examinations and final degree assessments

1. Fraud (including plagiarism) is defined as any act or omission by a student that partially or entirely precludes an accurate assessment of their knowledge, understanding and skills, or those of another student.
2. Fraud includes at least:
  - a. being in possession of tools or resources (pre-programmed calculator, mobile phone, books, syllabi, notes, etc.) which are not explicitly permitted during the examination;
  - b. copying from or exchanging information with another student during the examination;
  - c. assuming someone else's identity during the examination;
  - d. allowing someone else to assume your identity during the examination;
  - e. obtaining the examination questions before the date or time when the examination is scheduled to take place;
  - f. changing, extending or amending a section of the examination after it has been submitted for a final assessment;
  - g. continuing to work on an examination after the official examination time has ended, with

- the exception of those who have been granted extra time;
  - h. submitting work generated by artificial intelligence, without this being allowed as an aid, as being one's own work;
  - i. falsifying data/research data;
  - j. plagiarism.
3. Plagiarism includes at least the following:
    - a. using or copying another person's written work, data or ideas without providing full and appropriate source references;
    - b. not indicating clearly in the text, for example through the use of quotation marks or a particular layout, that text is being cited directly from another author, even where correct source references have been included;
    - c. paraphrasing the content of other people's texts without sufficient referencing of sources;
    - d. submitting a text (wholly or in part) that has previously been submitted for an earlier assignment for a separate degree component;
    - e. copying work from other students and presenting this work as one's own;
    - f. submitting assignments that have been obtained from a commercial agency or that have been written by someone else (whether or not in exchange for payment).
  4. Electronic detection software programs may be used to detect plagiarism in texts. When submitting a text, the student implicitly consents to the text being entered into the database of the detection program concerned.

## **20. Procedures and penalties**

1. If the examiner ascertains, or has good reason to suppose, that fraud has taken place, they must report this to the Examination Board in writing immediately.
2. The Examination Board will inform the student of this report in writing and invite the student to a hearing about the alleged fraud, and will take a decision based on the documentary evidence and, if possible, the information provided by the student at the hearing. Further information may be required from the examiner. It is possible that the Examination Board will only invite a student to be heard after a provisional decision has been sent.
3. If the Examination Board is convinced that fraud has been committed, a penalty will be imposed.
4. In cases of fraud, the Examination Board can – with due regard to the principles of legal fairness and proportionality – declare the examination or the assignment to which the misconduct relates to be invalid or assign a grade of 0, and may also exclude the student from the next examination opportunity for that particular course or subject. The Examination Board can also require the student to write a reflection report. Also, as a part of the sanction, the Examination Board may impose that a plagiarism certificate be obtained before the grade is released.
5. In the event of serious or repeated fraud, the Examination Board may exclude the student from participating in one or more examinations or final degree assessments at VU Amsterdam for a maximum of one year.
6. If serious fraud is identified, the Examination Board can advise the Executive Board that the relevant student's registration should be terminated permanently.
7. In urgent cases relating to fraud and plagiarism which are not covered by these Rules and Guidelines, the Examination Board will make a decision with due regard to the principles of an appropriate procedure.
8. If a student takes a course at another degree programme and fraud is detected or suspected, the Examination Board responsible for the course in relation to which the fraudulent conduct has been detected, will investigate the suspected fraud by the student. The Examination Board of the degree programme that the student is enrolled in, will be informed of the findings. The latter Examination Board determines whether, and what measure is imposed on the student, in the event of fraud.