

Rules and Guidelines for the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities / School of Religion and Theology Examination Board 2026-2027

Contents	Page
1. Scope of application	2
2. General	2
3. Composition of the Examination Board	2
4. Duties of the Examination Board	2
5. Working method of the Examination Board	3
6. Questions and assignments, subject matter and duration of examinations	5
7. Detailed regulations for resitting examinations and written assignments	5
8. Completing an examination in other ways	6
9. Procedure for the completion of written examinations	6
10. Invigilation of written examinations	7
11. Oral examinations	8
12. Inspection and reflective discussion	8
13. Registration of the results	9
14. Assessment of examinations	9
15. Designation 'cum laude'	10
16. Approval of the choice of subjects for the free-choice components and additional courses	11
17. Exemption from an examination and substitute assignment	11
18. Departures from regular programmes	12
19. Graduation	12
20. Degree certificate and statement	13
21. Academic misconduct in examinations	13
22. Procedures and sanctions	14
23. Sanctions for examinations subject to online proctoring	15
24. Irregularities	15
25. Retention periods	15
26. Annual report	15
27. Amendments to these Rules and Guidelines	15
28. Hardship clause	15
29. Unforeseen circumstances	16
30. Date of commencement	16
Appendices School of Social Sciences	
Appendix 1: Regulations on appointing examiners FSH	17
Appendix 2: VU Examination Regulations	19
Appendix 3: Criteria Free Programme SRT	

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 referred to as the Rules and Guidelines of the Examination Board.

These Rules and Guidelines apply to the examinations and final degree assessments for 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 this person 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. The FSH Examination Board consists of a central faculty examination board, a chamber for each of the three Schools within the faculty, a chamber for the PPE programme, and an Assessment Sub-board. The structure and division of responsibilities within the FSH Examination Board are still under development. Until a final decision has been taken on this matter, the various chambers and sub-boards will continue to operate as they did in the 2025–2026 academic year.
2. The Central Examination Board will include at least one external (not from FSH) member.
3. The Chair is responsible to oversee the Examination Board's daily tasks. During periods of absence, the Chair will assign one of the remaining members to function as his/her replacement.
4. Examination Board members are appointed for three years and can be re-appointed.

4. Duties of the Examination Board

The duties of the Examination Board are laid down 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;
- 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 1 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;
- determining when in special cases it is permitted to deviate from the method of testing indicated in the Teaching and Examination Regulations;
- 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 limited period of validity of an examination or exemption when a student makes a substantiated request. The Examination Board can decide to allow an extension of the period of validity only after the requester has successfully passed a supplementary examination on the material in question;
- assessing applications for the confidential publication of a Bachelor's or Master's thesis in accordance with the relevant articles in the FSH'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 FSH's regulations on Bachelor's and Master's theses;
- writing an annual report on its activities.

5. Working method of the Examination Board

1. The FSH Examination Board usually meets six times a year or whenever the chair deems it necessary.
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 for the policy regulations at SSC).
10. Students taking a course outside their School 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 school/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 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.
13. To the extent that the decision-making of the Examination Board requires weighing up different interests, the following interests, among others, will be taken account of:
 - a) maintaining the quality and selection requirements of an examination or test;
 - b) enforcing effectiveness criteria: striving to prevent serious study delays for students as well as unmanageable additional workload for lecturers or the study programme. In its decision-making, the Examination Board will consider the study programme's efforts, which must not be disproportionate to their effects.
 - c) showing leniency: the Examination Board will endeavour to show leniency to students who have incurred study delays due to exceptional circumstances outside their control.

6. 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. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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, unless the Examination Board decides otherwise at the examiner's request. Take-home exams may deviate from this rule. The duration of examinations can be extended for students hampered by a disability.

7. 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. When a pass has been obtained for a thesis, a resit is not possible.
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.The examiner will note which option (A or B) 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 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 course manual (found on Canvas) by the start of the course.
8. Due to an increased risk of fraud (e.g. identity fraud), resits of take-home exams are held at VU Amsterdam exam locations.
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 this student 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 student. 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 centrally supported examination rooms (such as RAI and Emergohal) and faculty supported examination rooms. See Appendix 2 for these Examination Regulations.
2. "VasVU students" 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. Due to the increased risk of fraud, the use of printed dictionaries is not allowed during examinations. However, an examiner may decide to place one or more pre-checked dictionaries at the front of the examination hall for students to consult.
4. Students who have two (resit) exams as part of their degree programme on the same day and at the same time are given the opportunity to sit one of the exams/resits at a different time on the same day. This is only possible if both exams are from the student's own school. To submit their request for a different exam time with the Examination Board, students must fill in the relevant form on VU.nl three weeks prior to the date of the exam/resit at the latest.
5. Paragraph 4 also holds for coinciding examinations of students who are enrolled for two VU programmes simultaneously (and are actively pursuing both programmes). This concerns interfaculty programme combinations only. This provision can only be offered when the other faculty is prepared to cooperate.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. If a student fails to comply sufficiently with the instructions referred to in paragraph 6 and 7, 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 at a VU exam location are subject to Article 7 of the VU Examination Regulations contained in Appendix 2. The aforementioned article applies

- to the invigilation of examinations both in centrally supported examination rooms (such as RAI and Emergohal) and faculty supported examination rooms.
2. The following guidelines apply to the number of invigilators per in-person (partial) examination in a faculty supported examination room:
 - 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 at a VU exam location, 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).
 - b) 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). 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 where one or more students are given the opportunity to sit the only as yet unpassed subject of their programme in the current academic year.
 4. In the case of online examinations or resits not held at a VU exam location, the lecturer/examiner – or their designated replacement – must be available by phone and email to Testvision's support team, or to students if the exam is an online take home exam via Canvas. 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. Students must identify themselves to the lecturer/examiner at the start of the oral examination.
2. Unless otherwise specified in the course manual of the educational unit concerned, 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. Unless otherwise specified by the Examination Board, an oral examination (on location or online) will be taken in the presence of a second examiner. The presence of a second examiner is not necessary if an audio recording of the (re)examination is made. This recording must be kept for at least two months at the end of the academic year in which the oral examination was taken.

12. Inspection and reflective discussion

1. If the student was unable to inspect the assessed work at the designated place and time through no fault of his 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.
2. A degree programme can have its own inspection regulations, see for example the inspection regulations 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. In the event of online inspection of a multiple-choice examination, the provisions of Appendix 7 shall apply.
3. If a student appealed to the Examination Board or Examination Appeals Board against the way in which the work was assessed, this student may be issued a copy of the assessed work at student's request to support student in the appeals procedure. This copy 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 FSH 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 20 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 digitally 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 0.75 becomes 0.5, and a mark from 0.75 onwards 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 5.50 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.
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 classification 'cum laude' is awarded to students who have met the following conditions:

1. 'Cum laude', Bachelor's programme

- A. The weighted average of all degree components excluding the graduation project of the Bachelor's programme is at least an 8.0 and the grade for the graduation project is also at least an 8.0. The weighted average is determined on the basis of the unrounded average. Extracurricular grades are not counted;
- B. Received a 6.0 or a 6.5 for no more than two components;
- C. For the other components, with the exception of the graduation project, grades of 7.0 or higher have been obtained;
- D. Only the results obtained during the initial participation are taken into account;
- E. The grades were achieved within the nominal duration of study, which may be extended by a maximum of two months per academic year;
- F. Exemptions make up no more than 20% of the nominal credits required, except in the case of exemptions granted by the Examination Board of the shortened Bachelor's programme in Philosophy, for which a maximum of 33⅓ % applies.
- G. The classification 'cum laude' will not be awarded if the student has been subject to disciplinary action for academic misconduct during the degree programme.

2. 'Cum laude', Master's programme

- A. Master's students must meet the requirements set out in paragraph 1 with the exception of sub B: a grade of 7.0 or higher has been obtained for all components.
- B. The following exceptions apply to the two-year Master's programmes in Philosophy and Philosophy of Culture and Governance:
 1. the 20 % maximum for exemptions applies only to the remaining philosophy components (and not to exemptions granted on the basis of discipline-specific components).
 2. the marks must have been obtained within the standard duration of the disciplinary Master's programme, plus a maximum of 2 years.
3. When applying the criteria for awarding the classification 'cum laude' the rounded final results of the degree components as registered in the official student administration records are used.
4. When applying the criteria for awarding the classification 'cum laude' a student will be deemed to have participated in an examination once the examination location has been entered or, in the case of a digital examination, once the examination environment has been accessed. In the case of papers and assignments assessing skills, the student will be deemed to have participated once a final version has been submitted.
5. For students in the 2025-2026 cohort or earlier the rules set out in the Examination Board's Rules and Guidelines 2025–2026 apply.
6. The classification '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 VU.nl. Before a student is allowed to go on a foreign exchange programme as part of the free-choice component, student must have obtained at least 60 credits within the Bachelor's programme when applying to study abroad.
2. Students don't need permission of the Examination Board to take additional free-choice components. Additional subjects are listed as extracurricular on the diploma supplement. 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 VU.nl.
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. 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.
4. No exemption can be granted for a Bachelor's or Master's thesis.
5. A maximum of 60 credits of the Bachelor's programme and no more than 20% credits of the Master's programme may be obtained on the basis of exemptions. The exemptions for the non-philosophical courses within the Philosophy of Culture, Governance and Management Master's programme and the Philosophy (2-year) Master's programme are separate from this.
6. 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.
7. 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, 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 VU.nl, 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. Under certain conditions, students have the option of departing from the standard curriculum as prescribed by the programme and composing their own study programme, a so-called free programme. The free programme is put together by the student from the educational units offered by VU Amsterdam or another institution of higher education and must at least have the size, breadth and depth of a regular Bachelor's or Master's programme. The student must ensure that the proposed Bachelor's programme will enable admission to at least one Master's programme, though this does not mean the student is under any obligation to actually take this Master's programme. The composition of such a programme requires the prior approval of the Examination Board that has the greatest jurisdiction over the programme components. See Appendix 4 for the criteria for a free Bachelor's programme at SSC.

19. Graduation

1. The Examination Board will determine the date on which the student will obtain the 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 VU.nl, 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 ten working days 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 the 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 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 the student 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 VU.nl. 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 in examinations

1. Academic misconduct is defined as any action or negligence by a student that makes it partially or entirely impossible to form an accurate assessment of this student's 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, smartwatches, 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) 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) the submission of work that has been wholly or partially generated using artificial intelligence, in a manner not permitted by the examiner;
 - i) using falsified data for the research conducted in a component of a degree programme and/or the thesis;
 - j) distributing exam question papers, without explicitly having been given permission to do so by the examiner;
 - k) plagiarism.
3. Plagiarism includes the following:
 - 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. When an examiner discovers – or has reasonable grounds to suspect – academic misconduct, the examiner is responsible to send immediate notification in writing to the Examination Board, and if possible, to pass on any documentation of the charges. The examiner will also inform the student of the notification sent to the Examination Board. The Examination Board will then invite the student for an interview, providing where possible the written evidence that gave rise to the suspicion of academic misconduct. When there is a suspicion of illegitimate use of artificial intelligence, the lecturer may first initiate further investigation into the authenticity of the piece of work submitted before notifying the Examination Board of a suspicion of academic misconduct.
3. The Examination Board will summon the student to answer questions about the alleged academic misconduct within ten working days 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.
4. If the Examination Board concludes that a student is guilty of academic misconduct, 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, student may take this resit examination at own 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. 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.
9. 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. The Board's decisions in these cases must take account of the principles of proper procedure.
10. If the Examination Board SSC receives report that a student is suspected of academic misconduct, it will determine its course of action on the basis of the *Memo academic misconduct policy* SSC (see Appendix 5).

23. Sanctions for examinations subject to online proctoring

1. In addition to the provisions of Articles 21 and 22, 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.

24. 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.

25. Retention periods

The Examination Board follows the retention periods specified in the Retention Periods List for the retention periods of exams, certificates for the propaedeutic phase, graduation projects, and graduation exams: [Onderwijs](#).

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. 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.

29. Unforeseen circumstances

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

30. Date of commencement

These Rules and Guidelines take effect on 1 September 2026.

Adopted by the Examination Board FSH on 30 June 2026.

Appendix 1: Regulations on appointing examiners FSH

- 1) The FSH 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 FSH Examination Board the information it requires.
- 3) An examiner must meet ALL of the qualifications below.
 - a) The examiner has worked as an instructor in the degree programme component for which he/she will administer testing;
 - b) The examiner is officially employed at - or has a comparable working relationship with - the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities;
 - c) The examiner must hold a University Teaching or Examining Qualification certificate;
 - d) The examiner must hold a doctoral degree or has been granted an exemption from the PhD requirement by the Examination Board.
- 4) 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 article 3 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.
- 5) 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 article 3 of this appendix); and
 - b) the lecturers, for whom exemptions have been requested from one or more of the qualifications listed in article 3 in order to serve as examiners.
- 6) 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 5, section b of this appendix.

In addition, the following applies to the School of Social Sciences:

In addition to the foregoing, the following relaxations apply to examiners of Bachelor's and Master's theses, as long as programme directors submit a substantiated request for such a relaxation measure to the Examination Board.

Master's theses

With regard to **examiners of Master's theses**, they may be exempted from specific provisions contained in these regulations in the following cases:

1. a lecturer with a PhD who does not have a University Teaching or Examining Qualification certificate, for example a postdoc or an external staff member with a minor appointment at SSC, can receive an exemption for this requirement when the individual has taken and passed the short course *Supervising and assessing final projects* given by the VU Centre for Teaching and Learning or an equivalent course, or has provided at least 8 Master's students with effective guidance in writing their SSC thesis;
2. a PhD-student (without doctoral degree) can receive an exemption for the PhD requirement and, where necessary, for the University Teaching or Examining Qualification requirement when the individual has taken and passed the short course *Supervising and assessing final projects* given by the VU Centre for Teaching and Learning or an equivalent course, or has provided at least 8 Master's students with effective guidance in writing their SSC thesis;
3. an external staff member with a minor temporary appointment at SSC who has a PhD degree but not the University Teaching or Examining Qualification, can receive an exemption for this requirement when the individual has taken and passed the short course *Supervising and assessing final projects* given by the VU Centre for Teaching and Learning or an equivalent course, or has provided at least 8 Master's students with effective guidance in writing their SSC thesis. Until such time, the staff member can function as a Master's thesis supervisor, but is not permitted to act in the role of Master's thesis examiner/assessor.

It is further required that, of the two examiners who assess a Master's thesis, at least one examiner must be qualified without any exemption, in other words in possession of both the PhD and the UTQ certificate.

Bachelor's theses

The Examination Board grants exemptions to **examiners of Bachelor's theses** for specific requirements in these regulations in the following case:

1. a lecturer with or without a PhD who does not have the University Teaching or Examining Qualification certificate, for example a postdoc or external staff member with a minor appointment at SSC, can receive an exemption for this requirements when the individual has taken and passed the short course *Supervising and assessing final projects* given by the VU Centre for Teaching and Learning or an equivalent course, or has supervised at least 8 SSC Bachelor's and/or Master's theses.

Appendix 2: VU Amsterdam Examination Regulations

These examination regulations apply to both centrally supported examination rooms (supported by IT and Corporate Real Estate and Facilities) and faculty supported examination rooms. In the interests of clarity and for the practical implementation of these examination regulations by invigilators, examiners and students, the decision was made to draw up one set of regulations for both types of rooms. As regards centrally supported examination rooms, Examination Boards are not free to deviate from the provisions outlined below as these are the Executive Board's conditions for the use of these examination rooms. As regards faculty supported examination rooms, Examination Boards are free to make any adjustments to their own faculty's provisions as they deem necessary in such cases, on the condition that the Examination Board in question clearly indicates these deviations and communicates any deviations to the invigilators, examiners, students and other stakeholders within the faculty¹. VU Amsterdam strongly advises avoiding or limiting deviations as much as possible and adhering to the provisions outlined below.

Adopted by the Executive Board on 7 July 2026.

Appendix to the Rules and Guidelines of the Examination Board.

In force as of 1 September 2026.

1. Rooms, support and time slots

- a. Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam offers access to both centrally supported examination rooms and faculty supported examination rooms. Corporate Real Estate and Facilities (FCO), the Information Technology service department (IT) and the Central Exam Organisation (CTO) provide support for examinations held in the centrally supported examination rooms.
- b. Examinations that take place in the faculty examination rooms are supported by faculty Education Offices.
- c. Examinations will be scheduled in the following time slots:

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

¹ Points from which it is permissible for Examination Boards to deviate are indicated below in square brackets

- d. In centrally supported examination rooms, several examinations can be held simultaneously. In case of different finishing times, FCO ensures that the various groups of students cause each other as little disruption as possible when leaving.
- e. Students who have proof of having been granted extra examination time are allowed to sit their exams, including the extra time, in the regular examination room.

2. Student ID

- a. In order to participate in an examination, students must show the invigilator a valid ID.² A photo of an ID is not allowed.
- b. The invigilator checks whether the ID shown corresponds to the student in question.
- c. The invigilator checks the students' ID and verifies (via the attendance list or the name displayed on screen, which the student used to log in to the exam software) whether the student is registered for that particular exam.
- d. Students taking part in an electronic assessment should use their personal VUnetID and password (and, in some cases, their personal VU email address). Students are personally responsible for ensuring they have the necessary codes to hand.

3. Study aids

- a. Students must leave all personal belongings – especially books, notes, smartphones, smartwatches, smart glasses, earplugs brought from home or anything else that could serve as a study aid – outside the examination room, or put them in a place in the examination room designated by the invigilator. The aisles between the tables must be kept free at all times.
- b. In derogation to paragraph a, students may use study aids may during an examination if they have been approved as such in advance by the examiner or the Examination Board. Permitted study aids are also listed on the front page of the examination paper or the official report of the exam.
- c. Any student who has a study aid that is not permitted within reach during an examination, or on a visit to the toilet during the examination, shall be guilty of academic misconduct.

4. Time constraints

- a. The examination room will be accessible to students fifteen minutes prior to the start of the examination.
- b. Once an examination has started, the examination room is no longer accessible.
- c. In derogation to paragraph b, the following applies to students who arrive late:
 - students must stay in the waiting room or waiting area. Thirty minutes after the start of the examination in question, they will all be admitted to the examination room together.
- d. Students are not permitted to leave the examination room within thirty minutes of the start time of an examination.
A valid proof of identity is a university registration card, passport, ID card, Dutch driving licence or Academic Centre for Dentistry Amsterdam pass.
- e. Students who continue to work after the examination time has ended will be guilty of academic misconduct, with the exception of those who have been awarded extra time.
- f. In the case of an emergency or technical problem that hinders a student or group of students from writing an examination for any period of time, the examiner may deviate from the final time of the examination, as long as the new end time falls within the maximum time slot allowed.

² A valid proof of identity is a university registration card, passport, ID card, Dutch driving licence or Academic Centre for Dentistry Amsterdam pass.

5. Visits to the toilet

- a. Visits to the toilet are permitted no earlier than 90 minutes after the start time of the examination. [In faculty supported examination rooms, no earlier than 90 minutes after the start of the examination.]
- b. Any student who has submitted a medical note to the academic advisor before an examination stating that they should be allowed to visit the toilet within the initial 90-minute period may visit the toilet during the examination within the time period referred to in the first paragraph.³
- c. The student shall be accompanied to the toilet by the invigilator.
- d. Any student wishing to go to the toilet must show the invigilator that they are not carrying any study aids. The invigilator will also ensure that students who visit the toilet during the examination do not have contact with any other students and are not able to use any kind of study aid.
- e. When students leave their seats to visit the toilet, they will ensure that the chances of another student looking at their exam paper are minimal or nil, while leaving all examination materials behind where they were writing the exam.

6. Food and drink

- a. Students are not permitted to eat in the examination room, unless they have been granted permission in connection with a disability or medical condition.⁴
- b. It is only permitted to bring drinks into the examination room in transparent and sealable cups, mugs or bottles, and the invigilator or examiner may check to see whether these have been tampered with by the student.

7. Invigilation

- a. Examiners are responsible for the content of examinations.
- b. Invigilators are responsible for the orderly conduct of the examination in accordance with the VU Examination Regulations. Invigilation is carried out under the authority of the examiner. Invigilators are required to follow the examiner's instructions.
- c. The examiner will inform invigilators in writing or otherwise prior to the start of the examination of any study aids students are permitted to use, and other relevant details about the examination.
- d. For 50 or more students, at least two invigilators are required to be present. There should be one extra invigilator for every additional 50 students. At least one chief invigilator is present for each exam. The method of examination and the number of students sitting the exam may give cause to a variation from this requirement.
- e. Invigilators will ensure that the exam question papers are handed out to students at the same time as much as possible, or that students start digital examinations at the same time.
- f. Students are obliged to follow the instructions of the examiner and the invigilator.
- g. To prevent academic misconduct, examiners and invigilators are allowed to check items students are using or are permitted to use during their exams.⁵
- h. If academic misconduct is suspected based on irregularities noted by the examiner or invigilator, then the examiner or the invigilator on the examiner's behalf must notify the student in question of this suspicion. Any materials or resources used in the suspected academic misconduct will be confiscated with proof of receipt. The suspected student may complete the exam. In the official report of the incident, the invigilator will state the student's name, the time it occurred and the alleged misconduct. In the event of suspected academic misconduct, the examiner will decide whether there is cause to

³ Prior to this, the student timely applied for a provision, which the student was granted in this case.

⁴ Prior to this, the student timely applied for a provision, which the student was granted in this case.

⁵ These may include such things as drink bottles, telephones, reference books, calculators, smartwatches, etc.

report it to the Examination Board in accordance with the applicable rules and guidelines of the faculty.

- i. The examiner will be present in the examination room during the exam or able to be easily contacted by the invigilator in the case of irregularities during an exam.

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 3: Criteria Free Programme SRT

In all cases, the following requirements must be fulfilled in order to be eligible for the Bachelor's degree:

1. at least 70 credits must be obtained from one of the regular study programmes of the faculty.
2. the free programme contains at least 70 credits from courses of other programmes.
3. the free programme must include at least 60 credits at level 100, 60 credits at level 200 and 60 credits at level 300.