

Rules and Guidelines for the School of Social Sciences (SSC) Examination Board 2025-2026

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1. Scope of application

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

These Rules and Guidelines apply to the examinations in the Bachelor's/Master's degree programmes and pre-Master's programmes of the School of Social Sciences (SSC).

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

4. Duties of the Examination Board

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

- determining in an objective and expert manner whether or not a student meets the conditions set in the Teaching and Examination Regulations relating to the

- knowledge, insight and skills necessary to be awarded a degree;
- safeguarding the quality of examinations;
- determining guidelines and instructions to assess and determine the results of examinations within the framework of the Teaching and Examination Regulations;
- granting exemptions for one or more examinations;
- initiating an investigation in the case of reports of suspected academic misconduct by a student and determining the severity of the penalty for academic misconduct.
- appointing examiners to administer examinations and record the results. See Appendix 2 for the Regulations on appointing examiners;
- issuing degree certificates and accompanying diploma supplements as testimonials to successful completion of degree programmes;
- issuing permission to students wishing to pursue an Individual Programme in one of the Bachelor's degree programmes, which if successfully completed, culminates in a degree;
- issuing documentation of completed course work to students who have passed one or more courses, but who have not yet met the requirements for a degree certificate;
- 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 SSC'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 SSC'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 working method of the Examination Board is laid down in the Internal Regulations for the SSC Examination Board referred to in art. 3.1.
2. The official secretariat of the Examination Board is located at the Education Office.
3. The academic advisor may act as an advisor for the Examination Board on requests from students.

4. The Examination Board can grant mandates for tasks to be performed by one member, several members, a subcommittee, examiners, the official secretary and the Education Office.
5. The official secretary of the Examination Board has the mandate to:
 - a) adapt the procedure for an examination in order to take a student's physical or sensory disability into account;
 - b) issue a certificate at the written request of a student who cannot be awarded a degree certificate, stating which examinations the student has passed;
 - c) allow enrolment in optional courses and confer exemptions and/or substitutions in accordance with the precedent of previous decisions;
 - d) deal with amendments to an Individual Programme, in accordance with the precedent of previous decisions;
6. Any requests or complaints involving an Examination Board member will be handled in the absence of that member if an objective review of the case would not otherwise be sufficiently guaranteed.
7. Requests and complaints must be expressed in clear language and accompanied by a concrete explanation of reasons. Students who fall short of these requirements will receive a second opportunity to submit a clear description and concrete explanation of their request or complaint. Complete or insufficient compliance with these requirements in second submissions of requests and complaints may result in a declaration of inadmissibility from the Examination Board. On receiving requests and complaints, the Examination Board will, as a rule, present those submissions to the lecturer or examiner concerned, for his/her response and accompanying explanation.
8. The Examination Board preferably makes a decision within 20 working days, though in any event no later than within 30 working days of receiving a request or complaint. The Examination Board may, for compelling reasons, postpone this decision and will inform the interested parties of this in writing.
9. The Examination Board demarcates its powers as much as possible by formulating policy regulations on how it makes use of its powers. These policy regulations cover a range of issues, including the possibility of granting additional examination opportunities (see Appendix 3).
10. Students taking a course outside the SSC 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. 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 Master's thesis only the option to improve applies, with the caveat that a maximum for the attainable mark may not be imposed in this case.
7. In the case of partial examinations and/or partial written assignments the resit may take one of the following two forms:
 - A. One single resit exam covering all the material of the partial examinations and/or partial assignments, thus making up the full final mark;
 - B. Every partial examination and/or partial assignment will be covered by a separate resit, or several partial examinations and/or partial assignments will be grouped together and resat separately.

The examiner will note which option (A or B) applies to the resits of the partial examinations and/or partial assignments of the course in the respective 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 TenT, RAI and Emergohal) and faculty supported examination rooms. See Appendix 4 for these Examination Regulations.
2. 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.
3. Students whose mother tongue is different than Dutch may use a dictionary during written (partial) examinations during their first year of registration for the Dutch Bachelor's programmes. These students are also entitled to extra exam time during their first and second year of registration. They should, however, submit a request to this effect to the Examination Board well in advance.
4. Students who have two exams/resits (of courses SSC) scheduled at the same time on the same day are given the opportunity to sit one of the exams/resits at a different

time on the same day. To submit their request for a different exam time with the Examination Board, students must fill in the relevant form on 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 4. The aforementioned article applies to the invigilation of examinations both in centrally supported examination rooms (such as TenT, 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 Bachelor's 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 8 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 SSC Education Office.
2. In cases where only one examiner has been assigned to a programme component, that programme's coordinator will serve as a second/replacement examiner. If the programme coordinator is not authorized to administer exams, the Director of Studies for that programme will serve as a second/replacement examiner instead.
3. Examination results of Bachelor's programmes need to be at the faculty's Education Office on 25 August at the latest.
4. Students have access to their examination results via the student information system through a secure connection.
5. If the student has reasonable grounds for requesting a separate certificate for an examination result, this will be provided.
6. The student is entitled to appeal before the Examinations Appeals Board against the manner in which the assessment was reached. The notice of appeal must be submitted in writing within 6 weeks after the announcement of the examination results. For further details, please refer to the chapter Legal protection of the VU University Students' Charter.

14. Assessment of examinations

1. Each programme component is concluded with an examination, for which the student receives a final mark or an abbreviation (pass/fail, good/sufficient/insufficient, or a different type of qualification).
2. If a programme component is assessed by means of partial examinations or assignments, the examiner must announce on Canvas before the start of the component how the partial marks will be weighted in order to arrive at a final mark.
3. Partial marks are given on a scale from 1 to 10 with no more than one decimal point.
4. Final marks are given as whole marks, e.g. a 7.0, or half marks, e.g. a 7.5. An exception to this is the marking between 5 and 6, meaning no 5.5 can be assigned as a final mark, refer to Paragraph 6.
5. The following rounding rules apply to the determination of the final mark: a mark less than 0.25 is rounded down, a mark between 0.25 and 0.75 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. The original mark from the foreign university will be stated on the diploma supplement.
8. Students will be assessed as having passed an examination if they are awarded a final mark of six or above.
9. In the assessment, the marks will have the following meaning:
10 Outstanding

- 9 Very good
 - 8 Good
 - 7 More than satisfactory
 - 6 Satisfactory
 - 5 Unsatisfactory
 - 4 Very unsatisfactory
 - 3 Poor
 - 2 Very poor
 - 1 Extremely poor
10. A mark of 0 will only be awarded if the assessment relates to a partial assignment that has not been handed in or in cases where academic misconduct has taken place. It is not possible to give an overall final mark of 0.
 11. In the case of an educational unit where examination takes the form of one single exam/resit, a “no-show” (NS) will be recorded if the student has registered for the exam/resit, but did not attend. For an educational unit where examination takes the form of multiple partial exams and/or partial assignments, a NS will be recorded if a student did enrol for an exam/resit, but did not take part in any of the partial exams.
 12. Not fulfilled (in Dutch: niet voldaan, abbreviated: NVD) is recorded when an educational unit consists of multiple partial examinations and a student has not fully met all the requirements for the completion of one or more of those partial examinations.
 13. Examinations will be assessed in such a way that examinees can determine how their examination results were reached.

15. Designation ‘Cum laude’

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

Bachelor’s programme:

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

Master’s programme:

- a) the weighted average of all marks is an 8.0 or higher, and the thesis mark is at least an 8.0;
- b) the marks have been obtained without the student sitting a resit (in this instance, a No Show does not count as an examination opportunity);
- c) the marks have been achieved within the nominal duration of study, which can be extended by a maximum of two months in a one-year Master’s programme and four months in a two-year Master’s programme;
- d) if additional educational components have been followed, these will not be included in the average;

- e) if exemptions have been granted for no more than 20% of the total number of EC in the Master's programme;
- f) during the candidate's study there has been no question of academic misconduct;
- g) The educational unit Peer Group Learning, part of the Research Master Societal Resilience, has been awarded the score "good".

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

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

1. Students need to request approval for their choice of subjects for the free-choice components, in accordance with the *Procedure for the approval of free-choice components* on VU.nl. Before a student is allowed to go on a foreign exchange programme as part of the free-choice component, student must, at the time of departure, have fully completed the first Bachelor's year and have obtained a total of at least 90 credits. To be eligible for selection, students 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 90 credits of the Bachelor's programme and no more than 50% credits of the Master's programme may be obtained on the basis of exemptions.
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. The Examination Board has drawn up the following rules for examining an Individual Programme in one of the Bachelor's degree programmes SSC:
 - 1) The study load amounts to 180 EC;
 - 2) The first year (60 EC) is the first year of one of the programmes of SSC;
 - 3) During the second and third years, the requirements mentioned in Appendix 5 need to be met;
 - 4) The entire programme should form a consistent whole and adequately prepare the student to meet the final qualifications for graduation, as assessed by the Examination Board.
 - 5) Approval for the programme should be requested in advance from the Examination Board.
 - 6) Once approval has been granted by the Examination Board, students may still propose a change.

19. Graduation

1. The Examination Board will determine the date on which the student will obtain 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 two weeks after the student is informed of the intended graduation date or has met the requirements for graduation. The Examination Board will allow graduation to be postponed provided the desired graduation date falls within the nominal duration of the programme plus one year. The Examination Board may decide differently in exceptional cases.

20. Degree certificate and statement

1. The Examination Board will grant a degree certificate as proof that the student has passed 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) submitting work that has been generated using artificial intelligence, as if it were one's own work, in cases in which artificial intelligence is not permitted to be used as an aid;
 - 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 two weeks after notification. The Board will then make a decision based on the evidence presented and, if possible, on the student's testimony during the hearing. The Examination Board may also request more information from the examiner.
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 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 6).

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

Bachelor's and Master's theses will be retained (digitally) for at least seven years. Examination papers are retained for at least seven years, starting from the end of the academic year in which the examination was put together. Exam question answers, including essays and other written materials for which a mark/partial mark has been awarded and examination results are retained for at least two months (digitally) after the end of the academic year in which the answers have been given. For the purposes of programme re-accreditation, an arbitrary selection of answers is retained for seven years. In relation to the remainder, the Examination Board follows the terms stipulated in VU Amsterdam's List of Retention Periods.

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 2025.

Adopted by the Examination Board SSC on 3 July 2025.

Appendix 1

Internal Regulations for the School of Social Sciences Examination Board

1. Relevant sub-committees and bodies

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

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

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

2. Policy on formal authority

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Finally, the sub-committees periodically take a random sample – in consultation with the Core Committee – of theses, examinations and internship reports; they report back on their findings and discuss the selected samples in their programme consultations.

The sub-committees meet infrequently and intermittently.

4. Registration and routing of individual student requests and complaints

Ultimately, all of the individual student requests and complaints submitted via VU.nl are received and registered by the official Secretariat. Of these requests and complaints, those that are not resolved at the Secretariat level are referred to the Chair. The Chair handles a substantial number of the requests referred in this manner.

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

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

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

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

Routing additional requests and complaints

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

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

Adopted by the Central Examination Board on 20 June 2019

Appendix 2

Regulations on appointing examiners SSC

- 1) The SSC 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 SSC 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 School of Social Sciences.
 - c) The examiner must hold a University Teaching Qualification (UTQ) certificate.
- 4) Examiners for components of Master's programmes must also hold a doctoral degree.
- 5) In exceptional cases, the Examination Board may – at the request of the lecturer undergoing evaluation or the relevant programme director – permit a lecturer, who falls short of one or more of the qualifications listed under articles 3 and 4 of this appendix, to serve as an examiner. In granting such requests, the Examination Board will determine the degree programme component(s) and duration for which this exceptional arrangement applies. The exemption applies for one academic year, unless the Examination Board decides otherwise.
- 6) Before each academic year begins, programme directors will notify the Examination Board of the following:
 - a) the lecturers who have been authorized to administer exams and for which programme components (based on articles 3 and 4 of this appendix); and
 - b) the lecturers, for whom exemptions have been requested from one or more of the qualifications listed in articles 3 and 4 in order to serve as examiners.
- 7) In the event of mid-year staff changes, or significant unforeseen circumstances, programme directors may petition the Examination Board during the academic year for exemptions, such as those referred to in article 6, section b of this appendix.

Additions, adopted on 16 February 2023:

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 UTQ certificate, for example a postdoc or an external staff member with a minor appointment at SSC, can receive an exemption for the UTQ 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 UTQ 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 UTQ 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 UTQ certificate, for example a postdoc or external staff member with a minor appointment at SSC, can receive an exemption for the UTQ 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 supervised at least 8 SSC Bachelor's and/or Master's theses.

Appendix 3

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

General policy:

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

Policy for Master’s students:

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

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

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

Policy for pre-Master’s students:

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

Students have until *10 June at the latest* to file a request for an additional examination opportunity for courses taught in period 1, 2, 3 or 4; for courses taught in period 5 or 6, the application deadline is 10 July. Requests should be submitted to the Examination Board using the ‘Extra examination opportunity’ request form on VU.nl.

Policy for Bachelor's students:

A **first-year Bachelor's student** who misses the (resit) examination for good reasons will not be granted an extra testing opportunity. Rather, this student should re-enrol in the same course during the relevant period of the following academic year. Should a student miss multiple exams due to unusual circumstances, student will be allowed to request postponement of the binding academic recommendations.

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

Third or higher-year Bachelor's students:

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

The procedure to request this additional examination opportunity can be found on VU.nl. Students have until *10 June at the latest* to file a request for an additional examination opportunity for courses taught in period 1, 2, 3 or 4; for courses taught in period 5 or 6, the application deadline is 10 July.

Requests should be submitted to the Examination Board using the 'Extra examination opportunity' request form on VU.nl.

Appendix 4

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 faculty.¹ 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 16 July 2024.

In force as of 1 September 2024.

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. When, in cases of high exception, multiple examinations with different start and end times are scheduled in centrally supported examination rooms at the same time, Corporate Real Estate and Facilities will ensure that the different groups of students disturb each other as little as possible when arriving and 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. Invigilators will check students' IDs and use the attendance sheet [in case of written exams on paper] to verify that each student is registered for that particular exam.
- d. Students taking part in an electronic assessment should use their personal VUnetID and password. Students are responsible for memorising both codes.

3. Study aids

- a. Students must leave all personal belongings – especially books, notes, smartphones, smartwatches, earplugs 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, no one is permitted to enter the examination room.
- c. In derogation to paragraph b, the following applies to students who arrive late:
 - for the centrally supported examination rooms, students must stay in the waiting room; thirty minutes after the start of the examination in question, they will all be admitted to the examination room together.
 - [For faculty supported examination rooms, students will be admitted up to thirty minutes after the start of the examination in question.]

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

- d. Students are not permitted to leave the examination room during the first thirty minutes of an examination.
- e. Students who continue to work after the official 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.

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. For each group sitting a given examination in the same examination room, only one student at a time may use the toilet.
- d. Any student wishing to go to the toilet must show the invigilator that they are not carrying any study aids. The invigilator 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.

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.

- 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 procedure for conducting interim examinations and the number of students taking the examination may result in a deviating number of invigilators.
- 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(s).
- 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 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 invigilators of this in a timely fashion

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

Appendix 5

Rules for individual School of Social Sciences Bachelor's programmes, Appendix to Article 18, Paragraph 4

The first year (60 EC) of an individual Bachelor's programme at SSC is the first year of the Bachelor's programme in which the student is enrolled.

While selecting courses for their second and third years, students must observe the following criteria:

For Administration and Organization (B&O):

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

For Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology (CAO):

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

For Communication Science (CW):

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

For Political Science (POL):

1. A minimum of 6 EC in Philosophy
2. 12 EC in Methods and techniques:
 - Quantitative Research and Methods in Political Science
 - Research Project PS *or* Qualitative Research and Methods in Political Science

3. 18 EC PS Bachelor's thesis
4. Choice from second and third-year POL Major courses* worth 30 EC
5. Students are free to earn the remaining EC by taking courses of their own choice, but at least four of these courses must be level 300 or higher.

For Sociology (SOC):

1. A minimum of 6 EC in Philosophy
2. 12 EC in Methods and techniques:
 - Interpretative Research *or* a comparable course
 - Participatory Action Research/ Co-creative Research *or* a comparable course
3. 18 EC Sociology Bachelor's thesis project
4. Choice from second and third-year SOC Major courses* worth 30 EC, which must include the course Research on Effects of Interventions
5. Students are free to earn the remaining EC by taking courses of their own choice, but at least four of these courses must be level 300 or higher.

*: For a full overview of all Major courses provided within a SSC Bachelor's programme, see Article 11.3 of the Teaching and Examination Regulations for that programme.

Appendix 6

Memo academic misconduct policy SSC

Adopted by the SSC Central Examination Board on 18 June 2024

Introduction

One of the tasks of the Examination Board is to handle cases of academic misconduct. More precisely, it investigates cases in which lecturers suspect students of engaging in academic misconduct.

The Examination Board's policy for handling such cases is informed in part by the Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER) and, most importantly, by the Rules & Guidelines for the SSC Examination Board (R&G). The main purpose of this memo is to establish guidelines for penalisation.

In principle, the memo concerns suspicions of fraud in summative examinations or constituent examinations, i.e. (sub)assignments/tests that are assessed with a mark, a pass or fail, or in some other way. The section entitled 'What to do in case of suspected fraud in a formative examination or constituent examination' explains how to deal with suspected fraud in formative (sub)examinations that are not subject to assessment.

What is academic misconduct?

The R&G define academic misconduct as follows:

"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."

In most cases, this will involve some form of exam fraud (copying answers from another student, use of external sources) or plagiarism. Submitting work generated by artificial intelligence (AI), where this is not permitted, as one's own work is also considered fraud, as it makes it difficult or impossible to accurately assess the student's knowledge, understanding and skills. To determine whether a student has committed fraud, the basic principle remains: if the student has submitted texts created by generative artificial intelligence (such as ChatGPT or another AI tool) as their own work, they have committed fraud. Also important in this context is whether and how the lecturer allows students to use AI tools (such as ChatGPT) as an aid.

Plagiarism is a common form of academic misconduct. Plagiarism includes quoting or translating a source without proper citation, as well as directly copying a line of reasoning (sentence by sentence). According to the R&G:

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, 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).*

An overview of the different forms of fraud (and their severity) can be found in the table below. This table shows that plagiarism is a sliding scale: stealing a paper is more serious than forgetting a citation. An act of plagiarism is classified as exam fraud if it prevents the examiner from accurately assessing the student's work; in other words, if the student presents someone else's texts or ideas as their own. Depending on the context, this could be the case for all forms of plagiarism listed in the table below. This means that, under certain circumstances, 'inadequate citation' can also be penalised. It is important to note that the Examination Board handles and assesses each case on an individual basis before ultimately reaching a decision.

Less serious		Mitigating circumstances: - penalties for first-year students may be less severe than for more advanced students			
	A	References at end of text, no citations	Has developed an idea that already existed and failed to reference it	Has not used proper citations	
	B	Inadequate paraphrasing/translation of content	Copying short sentences	Superficial changes to cited texts	
	C	Copying and pasting from various websites	Completely rephrasing ideas without citing the source		
	D	Copying and pasting from one website or programme	Copying the majority of a document	Submitting a previously submitted or similar (own) text for other degree components without referencing it	Making superficial changes to source, without references
	E	Stealing or buying papers, or copying the work of other students, and presenting it as one's own work	Exchanging papers through student associations, or submitting papers acquired from a commercial institution or written by someone else (whether or not for payment)	Excessive collaboration with fellow students and/or friends	
More serious		Aggravating circumstances - Deliberate deception - Recidivism			

Procedure

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

1. If an examiner has proof of plagiarism or another form of academic misconduct, or reasonable grounds for suspicion, he/she will report this in writing to the Examination Board, providing documentary evidence if possible. The examiner will also notify the

student in question. 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.

2. Within two weeks of the report, the Exam Board will invite the student to a hearing about the alleged plagiarism or other form of academic misconduct, and will make a decision based on the documentary evidence and, where possible, the information provided by the student during the hearing. The examiner can also be asked to provide further testimony.
3. If the Examination Board is convinced that plagiarism or another form of academic misconduct has in fact taken place, the student is penalized accordingly. Should the regular resit opportunity take place before the Examination Board has decided on the case, the student is permitted to participate in the resit at his or her own risk. The possibility remains that this resit will be declared invalid retroactively.

Communication with lecturers and students regarding Examination Board decisions:

- If the student is found not guilty, the lecturer will be informed of this before the student. The lecturer will also receive an explanation of the decision. The student is then informed by email, and the lecturer is cc'd.
- If the student is found guilty, the verdict (including an explanation) will be emailed to the student, and the lecturer will be cc'd.

Penalization

As a basic principle, the penalty must be more severe than the consequences the student would have faced had they not handed in the paper or sat the examination or constituent examination. Possible penalties, in ascending order of severity (in accordance with the R&G), are:

- 1) The constituent examination is declared invalid, but the student is permitted to take a resit during the same academic year;
- 2) The examination/paper is declared invalid, but the student is permitted to take a resit during the same academic year;
- 3) The examination/paper is declared invalid, and the student is excluded from the first resit opportunity;
- 4) The examination/paper is declared invalid, and the student is excluded from some examinations for a maximum of one year.
- 5) The examination/paper is declared invalid, and the student is excluded from all examinations for a maximum of one year.
- 6) The Executive Board (CvB) is requested to permanently expel the student.

The overview of the different forms of fraud (and their severity) is complemented below by the corresponding penalties (far-right column). While the Examination Board uses this table in determining appropriate penalties, it handles and assesses each case on an individual basis before ultimately reaching a decision (as mentioned above).

In essence, the appropriate severity of a penalty for plagiarism is determined by several factors: the percentage of plagiarism according to the anti-plagiarism software, the weighting of the plagiarised work in the final mark, and any mitigating or aggravating circumstances.

Less serious	Mitigating circumstances: - penalties for first-year students may be less severe than for more advanced students				fraud %	Appropriate penalty Numbers refer to the numbers in the far-right column
↑ ↓	A	References at end of text, no citations	Has developed an idea that already existed and failed to reference it	Has not used proper citations		- NG* - W* - 1 - 2
	B	Inadequate paraphrasing/translation of content	Copying short sentences	Superficial changes to cited texts		- 2 - 2
	C	Copying and pasting from various websites	Completely rephrasing ideas without citing the source			- 2 - 3 - 4
	D	Copying and pasting from one website or programme (e.g. generative AI)	Copying the majority of a document	Submitting a previously submitted or similar (own) text for other degree components without referencing it	Making superficial changes to source, without references	- 3 - 4 - 5
	E	Stealing or buying papers, or copying the work of other students, and presenting it as one's own work	Exchanging papers through student associations, or submitting papers acquired from a commercial institution or written by someone else (whether or not for payment)	Excessive collaboration with fellow students and/or friends		- 5 6.
	More serious				fraud %	Appropriate penalty
	Aggravating circumstances - Deliberate deception - Recidivism					

*NG: not guilty; W: warning.

The far-right column of the table lists numbers between 1 and 6. These numbers refer to the penalties set out above this table. One factor in determining the severity of a penalty may include the percentage of plagiarism according to the anti-plagiarism software. A plagiarism rate of more than **≈50%** is considered more serious than a plagiarism rate of **≈10%**. The weighting of the assignment in the final mark may also determine the severity of the penalty. If the assignment accounts for a substantial percentage (**≈50-100%**) of the final mark, the fraud will be treated more seriously than for smaller assignments.

Students who cheat on a constituent examination that only makes up a small part of the overall assessment will, in principle, receive penalty 2. Students who cheat on an examination or constituent examination that makes up a considerable part of the overall assessment will, in principle, receive penalty 3.

Sometimes a lighter penalty can be imposed. This might be appropriate, for instance, for a first-year student who has committed a (very) minor offence writing their first paper. In cases of recidivism, severe misconduct or other aggravating circumstances (such as intentional

deceit), more severe penalties will be imposed. The green letters and numbers refer to penalties for cases involving mitigating circumstances. The red numbers refer to penalties for cases involving aggravating circumstances. Severe misconduct may result in a severe penalty, even in cases involving first-time offenders (i.e. no recidivism). This might be appropriate, for instance, if a student has submitted a purchased paper.

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

Appeals

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

A student always has the right to appeal a decision by the Examination Board. Examiners, however, do not have this right, as the law does not provide it. The Examination Board, in its turn, cannot appeal decisions rendered by the Examination Appeals Board with the Administrative Law Division of the Council of State (AbRvS). This option, too, is only available to students.

What to do in case of suspected fraud in a formative examination or constituent examination

If a lecturer suspects fraud in a formative assessment (not linked to a summative assessment), they must first try to talk to the student in question.

- If the lecturer determines that the student has not committed fraud, no further action needs to be taken.
- If the lecturer determines that the student has committed fraud, the student must be given a warning.

When to report (suspected) fraud in a formative test to the Examination Board?

- If, after receiving a warning, a student is again suspected of committing fraud in a formative examination or constituent examination, an official report of suspected fraud will be submitted to the Examination Board, and the procedure for fraud in summative examinations or constituent examinations will be initiated.
- Suspected fraud in **draft versions of theses and/or papers that account for a large proportion of the final mark (≈50% or more)** should always be reported to the Examination Board. In such cases, the same procedures apply as for suspicions of fraud in summative examinations or constituent examinations.

Appendix 7

Policy on the potential use of student assistants and STuKOs in assessment

We distinguish between those student assistants with a student teaching qualification (= STuKO) and those without a student teaching qualification (= student assistant). A STuKO has been previously trained by CTL staff, is peer reviewed and is supervised by a lecturer involved in the course.

Use of STuKOs in [creating/preparing tests](#) for a course

A request from the Director of Education at SSC to use STuKOs in assessing a course was discussed at the meeting of the Central Examination Board on 13 February 2025. It has been taken into account that it is technically possible to set up two environments/domains in Testvision within a single course, whereby different groups of users have different access rights.

Based on the information provided by the Director of Education as regards the education and training of STuKOs, the Examination Board is of the opinion that a STuKO can be sufficiently embedded into the teaching team and also have sufficient distance from regular students to be intensively involved in the teaching and assessment of a course. Ultimately, it is however the examiner who is and remains responsible for assessing the course in question.

Contributing ideas on formative and summative assessment is therefore perfectly acceptable, but the examiner bears ultimate responsibility.

In addition, the Examination Board is of the opinion that a STuKO should only have access to the assessment systems (such as Testvision, Canvas) insofar as these concern *formative* assessment questions and assignments, but should not have access to the domain with *summative* questions/assignments.

This is not due to the Examination Board having doubts as regards the integrity of STuKOs, but rather to protect them. This also guarantees that the examiner holds the responsibility for summative assessment. The context in which these STuKOs operate plays a role in this (i.e. 'A smarter academic year' / reducing the workload for lecturers), but also from the point of view of privacy and reputation (if exam questions were to become known in advance), the Examination Board does not want STuKOs to have access to the questions/assignments prior to a summative examination (or part-examination).

Use of STuKOs or student assistants in [marking examinations](#) for a course

The Examination Board is, in principle, opposed to the use of STuKOs or student assistants in the marking of (summative) examinations, assignments and/or papers.

Should an examiner nevertheless decide to engage one or more STuKOs or student assistants in the marking of examinations, assignments and/or papers, the following conditions must be met:

- 1) This person is in a higher academic year than the academic year to which the course belongs;
- 2) This person has completed a Master's degree programme if it concerns a course from a Master's degree programme.;
- 3) This person receives clear instructions from the course examiner for marking the examinations, assignments and/or papers, for example in the form of a detailed standard answer;
- 4) This person reviews some of the examinations, assignments and/or papers together with the examiner;
- 5) The examiner carries out a random check on a portion of the work checked by the student assistant or STuKO.

Appendix 8: Online inspection of MC examinations

The TER (Section A, Article 3.9, paragraph 1) stipulate the following regarding the inspection of written examinations: “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 can submit a request to inspect their assessed work, the questions and assignments set in it, as well as the standards applied for marking.”

Lecturers who use multiple-choice (MC) questions in written examinations are looking for ways to allow students to inspect marked examinations (and discuss them) without the risk of the MC questions being distributed via screenshots or similar means. Distribution of the questions results in new MC questions needing to be created every time. This involves more work for the lecturer and beyond that, it comes at the cost of quality of the questions, as they become more and more detailed.

In the event that a situation arises again in which we become dependent on online exam inspection (as was the case during the Covid pandemic), the following rules will apply:

- In the case of online inspection of MC questions, access to the assessed work and the questions asked will be limited, and the lecturer proposes an alternative way to provide students with feedback on their exam score as effectively as possible without sharing the questions.
- Lecturers are looking for alternatives to provide students with the best possible feedback, for example by offering insight into scores for each theme within the MC questions or, where necessary or when requested by a student, providing individual examples of questions that have been answered incorrectly.
- If a lecturer wishes to give a large number of students more detailed feedback, this should be possible on registration via Zoom.
- The above-mentioned restrictions do not apply to open questions. In such cases, students retain the right of inspection as stipulated in Article 12 of the Examination Board's Rules and Guidelines.