

Work Procedure Assessment Committee Examination Board SH July 2025

The assessment committee (NL: toetskamer) of the Examination Board of the School of Humanities (SH) is responsible for safeguarding the quality of the interim and final examinations. The activities of the assessment committee align with the VU assessment framework (in particular appendix 8: handbook for examination committees) as well as the assessment policy of the School of Humanities. This memo describes the assessment office's working methods for carrying out these activities. The activities themselves are further outlined annually in the annual plan and annual report.

Drafting the Annual Report

The annual report is drafted after each academic year and covers the period from September of year x through August of year x+1. The chairperson of the assessment committee drafts the report, assisted by the administrative secretary. The draft report is discussed in the assessment committee meeting and amended if/where necessary. This annual report is incorporated into the Examination Board's annual report. Since this final annual report must be approved by November 1, the Examination Committee submits its annual report to the executive committee of the Examination Board in the first half of October.

Drafting the Annual Plan

The assessment committee draws up an annual plan each academic year. The plan at last includes:

- an overview of the courses for which the examination files will be assessed;
- an overview of the theses that will be assessed;
- a proposal for conducting a quantitative analysis;
- a general schedule of activities;
- a concise multi-year plan.

Assessment of assessment files

The annual plan specifies which assessment files will be assessed in the coming academic year. Suggestions for courses to be assessed can be made by other members of the Examination Board, programme directors, the portfolio holder for education, and programme committees. The chairperson, in consultation with the administrative secretary, makes the final selection of courses, taking into account the accreditation cycle and ensuring an even course distribution across the periods of the academic year. This selection is communicated to the examiners/course coordinators of the relevant courses, so they know their course will be assessed by the assessment committee. Course coordinators ensure that the required documents, that should comprise an assessment file according to SH policy, are submitted to the administrative secretary in a timely manner. (The contents of the assessment file can be found in the [assessment policy](#).)

Each assessment file is assessed by two members of the assessment committee based on a clear assessment form (see appendix). The chairperson, in consultation with the administrative secretary, determines which members of the assessment committee will assess an assessment file, taking into consideration the members' substantive and educational expertise. Once a year, one assessment file is reviewed and discussed by all members of the assessment committee. During the assessment committee meeting, the findings of the relevant members are discussed, based on which the two assessment forms are combined into a single form, and the necessary further action(s) are discussed. There are several possible scenarios:

- the assessment committee finds that the assessment file is completely in order; the chairperson compliments the examiner – feedback is not deemed necessary;
- the chairperson of the assessment committee requests the examiners for a response to the findings (feedback);
- the assessment committee has fundamental reservations about the assessment file; the chairperson informs the examiners of these, asks them to develop an improvement plan, and monitors whether the improvement plan is actually implemented. The programme director is informed that an improvement plan has been requested. It is also reported whether the plan has actually been implemented. If it is determined that improvements are not being made, the executive committee of the Examination Board is notified. The Executive Board consults with the manager of the examiner in question and the programme director: they will decide on appropriate measures. In extreme cases, the Examination Board may decide that the lecturer can no longer act as examiner (for the module in question, or in its entirety).

If an assessment file has been assessed on the recommendation of another member of the Examination Board, the portfolio holder for education, the programme director, or the programme committee, the examiner remains the first point of contact. In addition, the programme director and the relevant official / committee are also informed of the assessment committee's findings. A summary of all assessments by the assessment committee, including feedback from lecturers, is included as a confidential appendix to the assessment committee's annual report.

Assessment of Theses assessments

The assessment committee's annual plan also lists which graduation projects/theses assessments will be analysed in the coming academic year. Suggestions for thesis assessments to be analysed can be made by other members of the Examination Board, programme directors, the portfolio holder for education, and programme committees. The chairperson, in consultation with the official secretary, makes the final selection of graduation projects, taking into account the accreditation cycle. The assessment is conducted using a specially developed form. Each thesis assessment is analysed by one assessment committee member, taking the members' substantive expertise into account as much as possible when categorizing the projects. The assessment committee's findings regarding the assessment of a project are discussed during an assessment committee meeting; subsequently, it is determined whether further action is necessary. There are several possible scenarios:

- The assessment committee finds no unusual findings in the assessment of the thesis; the administrative secretary archives the findings, but no feedback is requested from the original examiner;
- The assessment committee encounters unusual circumstances during the assessment of the graduation project and requests feedback from the original examiner. If the feedback is satisfactory, it is archived by the administrative secretary, along with the assessment committee's findings. The chair of the assessment committee generally requests feedback from the assessors.
- The assessment committee has fundamental doubts about the assessment and decides to read the thesis in full. If doubts about the assessment persist after reading the thesis, the chair informs the original assessors and their programme director(s) of the assessment committee's findings. They are requested to provide feedback, which, along with the assessment committee's findings, is archived by the administrative secretary. The assessment committee verifies whether any proposed improvement measures are actually implemented. If it is determined that improvements are not

being made, the executive committee of the Examination Committee is informed. The executive committee corresponds with the supervisor of the examiner in question and the programme director: they decide on appropriate measures. *In extremis* the Examination Board may decide that the lecturer can no longer act as examiner (for the assessment of theses, or at all).

If a thesis has been assessed on the recommendation of another member of the Examination Board, such as the portfolio holder for education, the programme director, or the programme committee, the programme director and the relevant official/committee will also be informed of the assessment committee's findings. A summary of all assessments by the assessment committee, including the assessors' feedback, will be included as a confidential appendix to the assessment committee's annual report.

Conducting quantitative analyses

One member of the assessment committee is an assessment expert. This expert can conduct quantitative analyses on behalf of the assessment committee, by for example, focusing on theses grades or exam performance. The annual plan will specify the assessment expert's focus for the coming academic year.

Advising on Assessment Plans

All academic departments develop assessment plans for their own departments. The assessment committee generally assesses the programme's assessment plan annually (at least in the run-up to midterms and visitations), focusing primarily on whether the programme's assessment plan enables students to achieve the programme's learning outcomes. Once an assessment plan has been developed or amended, it can be submitted to the assessment committee for advice. The chairperson of the assessment committee can decide to discuss the assessment plan during either a regular assessment committee meeting or an additional meeting with several representatives of the assessment committee (chairperson, assessment committee member from the relevant programme cluster, administrative secretary). Additionally, the programme director is present in both cases. Based on the discussion in the assessment committee, the programme director adjusts the assessment plan as necessary.

Optional: Advising on exam performance

The assessment committee reviews the exam performance of the Humanities programmes and incorporates the programme director's reflection on these performance in their annual report into their assessment. Based on the assessment committee's findings, the chairperson provides a coherent recommendation to the programme director.