Rules and Guidelines for the Examinations Board
(as referred to in Section 7.12b, paragraph 3 of the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act)

This Model must be seen in conjunction with the Model Teaching and Examination Regulations (OER) for the Bachelor’s and Master’s programmes at the UvA and the stipulations in the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act.

This is an English-language translation of the Dutch-language Rules and Guidelines. In case of discrepancy between the Dutch-language original text and the English-language translation, the Dutch-language text applies.

1 – General provisions

Article 1.1 – Applicability of the Rules and Guidelines
These Rules and Guidelines shall apply to the exams and final examinations of the Communication Science study programme(s), hereinafter referred to as: the study programme(s).

Article 1.2 – General
1. The terms defined in the OER for the relevant study programme shall also apply to these Rules and Guidelines. The remaining terms shall have the meanings ascribed to them by the Act.
2. In the event that a provision in these Rules and Guidelines is in conflict with a provision in the OER for the relevant study programme, the latter shall prevail.

2 – The Examinations Board

Article 2.1 – Composition of the Examinations Board
The Examinations Board shall consist of at least a chairperson, a secretary and an external member. The secretary is responsible for handling the day-to-day affairs of the Examinations Board.

Article 2.2 – Duties of the Examinations Board
The duties of the Examinations Board are set out by law. These include determining the rules for the execution of duties and powers and taking measures with regard to
- determining objectively and professionally whether a student satisfies the requirements laid down in the OER with regard to the knowledge, understanding and skills that are required for obtaining a degree;
- ensuring the quality of exams and final examinations;
- establishing guidelines and instructions within the framework of the OER as the basis for assessing and determining the results of exams and final examinations;
- granting exemptions from one or more exams;
- assessing requests for dispensation;
- taking measures in the event of fraud and plagiarism;
- appointing examiners to conduct exams and determine their results;
- issuing the degree certificate, with the diploma supplement appended to it, as proof that the final examination has been successfully taken;
- granting a student permission to follow a flexible curriculum, the final examination for which will lead to the obtaining of a degree;
- issuing a certificate for passed exams to a student who has successfully taken more than one exam, but to whom a degree certificate cannot be issued;
- drawing up an annual report on its activities.
Article 2.3 – General benchmarks
The Examinations Board monitors the quality of the degree programme and that students’ learning outcomes are being achieved. The Examinations Board uses a number of general benchmarks in its decisions. These are:
- the need for students to achieve the learning outcomes of the relevant programme in order to graduate;
- the desirability that only students that meet the entry requirements will move on to the next phase of the programme;
- the desirability of limiting time wasting for students as much as possible in preparing for examinations;
- the desirability of encouraging students to discontinue their degree programme as early as possible, if passing an interim or final examination has become unlikely;
- the desirability of protecting students from themselves in cases when they wish to take on too heavy a study load;
- leniency with regard to students whose study progress has been delayed by circumstances beyond their control;
- strictness with regard to students who deliberately or repeatedly violate rules.

2.4 – Decision period for the Examinations Board
The Examinations Board shall take a decision as soon as possible and no later than eight weeks after receiving a written petition.

Article 2.5 – Frequency of meetings of the Examinations Board
The Examinations Board shall meet at least eight times per year.

Article 2.6 – Test coordinator
One of the members of the Examinations Board is also the test coordinator. The course file and the review commission are supervised by the test coordinator and are the responsibility of the Examinations Board.

3 - Examiners

1. There is at least one examiner for every curriculum component.
2. The examiners are responsible for the quality of the education, including tests, conducting exams and determining the final results.
3. The Examinations Board determines the requirements that examiners must meet and determines which lecturers may be examiners.
4. The Director of Education shall determine which of the authorised examiners will be the examiner of a curriculum component.
5. The Examinations Board may appoint experts from outside the institution as examiners.
6. The examiners shall provide the Examinations Board with the requested information.

4 – Tests

Article 4.1 – Requirements
The requirements to be fulfilled for the successful completion of a module are shown in the module guide of the relevant course component. The examiner is responsible for testing students on the relevant course component. The test may consist of written exams, assignments, presentations, essays, papers and/or other forms of testing considered relevant by the lecturer. The content of tests needs to be based on the treated curriculum and
Article 4.2 – Attendance
Students are expected to attend every seminar and practical training. More specific rules regarding attendance and absenteeism are provided in the module guide for each course. Regardless of these rules, students who are enrolled should always attend the first seminar or practical training. Any student who is unable to do so should contact the lecturer beforehand; failure to do this may result in exclusion from the course.

Article 4.3 – Deadlines
Deadlines for handing in assignments, essays and papers, as well as the dates for presentations and exams, will be communicated before the start of the course in question if possible, but should in any case be listed in the module guide.

Article 4.4 – Taking tests
1. Participation in a test is only possible if the student has properly registered for that relevant curriculum component in time, meets any entry requirements and is registered in the University of Amsterdam’s Student Information System (SIS). Any student who does not register or fails to register in time may be excluded from the exam.
2. The only tests to be assessed will be those relating to the course for which the student has enrolled. Any test relating to a course for which the student has no valid enrolment will not be assessed. No marks will be given.

Article 4.5 – Thesis project, work placement and thesis
Separate standards apply to the thesis project, the work placement report and the Master's thesis. They are listed separately in the relevant guides.

5 – Exams

Article 5.1 – Dates and times of exams
1. Written and online exams shall be conducted on dates and times to be determined at least 30 days before the start of the study programme in question and shall be announced via the exam schedule (via the internet), under the responsibility of the Examinations Board. Partial tests held during lessons will be listed in the course file and in the information in the virtual learning environment.
2. Oral or individual written exams shall be conducted at times to be determined by the examiner(s), if possible following consultation with the student.
3. In determining the dates and times of exams, every effort shall be made to prevent exams belonging to the same study programme from coinciding.
4. The fixed dates and times shall only be modified in the event of force majeure.

Article 5.2 – Duration of exams
1. The time prescribed for taking an exam may not unreasonably exceed three hours, though it may be shorter than this.
2. The duration of an exam shall be such that students can be reasonably expected to have sufficient time to answer the questions.
3. The duration of an exam may not be shortened for organisational or logistical reasons. Where there are grounds for doing so, extra time should be given at the end of the official exam time.
4. Time spent handing out papers at the beginning of the exam will not be compensated, unless this takes exceptionally long (longer than 10 minutes).
5. Students arriving late will be admitted up to a maximum of 30 minutes after the start of the exam, unless decided otherwise by the examiner. Under no circumstances may
students be admitted after students have left the room.
6. The examiner shall be entitled to decide that students are not permitted to leave the
room in which an exam is being conducted during the last 15 minutes of the exam.
7. In the case of exams that are held in rooms with fixed seating (lecture halls), students
may be obliged, contrary to what is stated above, to remain seated in the room from the
beginning until the end of the exam.
8. Students must stop work on the exam as soon as the invigilator announces that it is over.

Article 5.3 – Order during exams
1. The examiner shall ensure that a sufficient number of invigilators are appointed to
oversee the written examination and make sure that the exam proceeds in an orderly
fashion.
2. The student shall be obliged, at the request of the examiner, to provide proof of identity
by means of valid proof of registration (student ID card). When in doubt or in the case of
absence, the examiner may ask for a valid identity document with a passport photograph
showing a good likeness. Any student unable to identify themselves may be denied access
to the exam or the exam may be declared invalid.
3. Students must follow all instructions from the examiner or the invigilator issued before,
during or immediately after the exam. If a student fails to follow one or more instructions,
he or she may be excluded by the examiner from further participation in the exam in
question.
4. The only things permitted on the table are the items needed for the exam (the exam papers
and the answer sheets and scrap paper handed out by the invigilators, pens, pencils and
erasers), along with a limited quantity of food and drink. Other items are not permitted,
unless the examiner has granted explicit permission.
5. Notes and study material must be stowed in a closed bag before entering the exam room.
The same goes for devices that allow one to communicate with others or search for, store
or view information. Such devices must be switched off and stowed in a closed bag upon
entering the exam room. This includes mobile phones, smartphones and smartwatches, e-
readers, tablets and headsets. In case of the presence of lockers all bags need to be stowed
in lockers.
6. Bags and books should be out of students’ reach. If there are no secure lockers available,
books may be kept in closed bags on the floor next to the desk. Open bags and separate
books should be kept elsewhere in the exam room.
7. Students who are found to have a mobile telephone or other electronic device in their
possession which is not switched off during the exam may be excluded from further
participation in the exam in question. Sanctions may also be imposed in accordance with
the Regulations governing Fraud and Plagiarism.
8. Only the paper officially handed out for that purpose may be used as scrap paper; answers
written on scrap paper will not be accepted (unless authorised by the examiner).
9. In case any special circumstances occur before, during or after the exam, the invigilators
shall draw up a report at the end of the exam, providing a description of the incident. The
report shall be sent to the chairperson of the Examinations Board.
10. The examiner may (partly) delegate supervision of the orderly conduct of examinations to
another examiner.

Article 5.4 – Handing in written exams
1. Invigilators and students are responsible for ensuring that papers are handed in in an
orderly fashion. This means, among other things, that students should wait at an
appropriate distance from the table when handing in their work until an invigilator is
available to take possession of and check the students’ exam paper.
2. The exam papers should bear the student's name and student number (this applies to every
individual answer page). The invigilator checks that the exam is complete and that the
name on the exam papers, the proof of identity document and the list of participants correspond.

3. When an exam has been checked and found to be in order, as described in the last point, the student in question must sign the list of participants when handing in his or her exam.

4. Students who leave the exam early are also required to sign the list of participants and to hand in their answer papers, including their name and student number, even if they have not filled in any answers.

Article 5.5 – Fraud, plagiarism and sanctions

1. The provisions of the Regulations governing Fraud and Plagiarism for UvA Students apply in full, and form part of these Rules & Guidelines.

2. If an invigilator discovers a student cheating (for example using unauthorised material, copying answers or talking to another student) the examiner will make a written report to this effect. This report should be presented to the Examinations Board within five working days.

3. The invigilator requests the student caught cheating to hand over any evidence of this (crib sheets, etc.). If the student refuses to do this, this will be noted in the report. If this event causes too much commotion during the exam, this may also occur at the end of the exam.

4. The student must always be given the opportunity to continue sitting the examination.

5. The Examinations Board decides on any possible sanctions in the first scheduled meeting after the fraud was discovered and the student has been given the opportunity to respond to the allegation.

6. In accordance with the provisions of the Regulations governing Fraud and Plagiarism for UvA Students, the Examinations Board may decide to deem invalid the exam in question and to exclude the student from any further participation in said exam or from every exam for every module for a period of no more than one year.

6 – Assessments

Article 6.1 – Assessing tests other than exams

When assessing summative written tests other than exams, an assessment form will be used that lists the relevant criteria and their weighting.

Article 6.2 – Assessing exams

1. Written exams shall be assessed according to predetermined standards, which are set down in writing and which may be modified based on the correction process.

2. If more than one lecturer is involved in the assessment of an exam, the examiner shall ensure that every lecturer applies the same standards when assessing the exam.

3. The method of assessment shall be such that the student is able to verify how the results of his or her exam have been arrived at.

4. If practical exercises by several students result in a contribution to a single joint assignment, the Examinations Board shall apply the guidelines as referred to in the OER, the Course Catalogue and the workbook of the course in question.

5. Final marks shall be assigned on a scale from 1 to 10, to a maximum of one decimal place.

6. The final assessment of a component is considered to be a pass if a mark of 5.5 or higher is obtained.

7. Final marks between 5.0 and 6.0 are always rounded up or down to a whole number. This rule does not apply to partial tests. Marks of 5.0 up to and including 5.499 are rounded down to 5.0 and marks of 5.5 up to and including 5.999 are rounded up to 6.0.

8. If a resit requires the revision of a previously submitted written item of coursework (a paper, assignment or thesis), that revision (the resit) cannot be awarded a mark higher
than a 6. This rule does not apply to exams, which are assessed on a scale of 1 to 10. Exceptions can be made if mentioned in the course file.

9. If a student is taking a course for a second time, assignments from the previous semester are to be done again, unless the Examinations Board in consultation with the lecturer decides otherwise.

10. For students who take a resit, the last mark obtained is the one that determines the final result.

Article 6.3 – Reassessment and appeal
1. Any student who believes that an error or errors have been made in the assessment of his or her exam may submit a reasoned request in writing for a reassessment to the examiner no later than the day on which students may inspect their exams (see Article 7) or, if no such separate day is organised, up to 20 days after publication of the assessment.
2. After a reassessment, students may submit a written objection to the Examinations Board against the result determined by the examiner.

7 – Inspection

Article 7.1 – Right of inspection
1. In the case of written tests, students have the right to inspect their work after it has been assessed, as well as the standards and criteria on which their work has been assessed.
2. In the case of written tests other than exams (such as assignments, essays and papers), students are given an assessment form by the examiner that bears their mark and the reasons for that mark.
3. In general, separate inspections are organised for each exam. Only those students who have notified the study advisers in advance of their inability to inspect their exam on the set date (and providing they have a valid and well-founded reason) will be given an opportunity to inspect their exams at another time. Work and leisure-time activities are not well-founded reasons.

Article 7.2 – Order during exam inspections
1. Students may inspect their own assessed work and compare it with the standard answers drawn up by the lecturer. Students and third parties are not entitled to inspect the assessed work of others.
2. Inspections are arranged for each separate test, including interim exams. Students may only inspect work for which the inspection is intended, not other exams or interim exams.
3. Students must follow all the instructions from the Examinations Board, the examiner or the invigilator which are issued before, during and immediately after the end of the inspection. If a student fails to follow one or more instructions, he or she may be excluded from further participation in the inspection.
4. Students may not adjust their answers. If this happens, the exam will be confiscated, an official report drawn up and the Examinations Board informed.
5. In the event of fraud, the Examinations Board may declare the exam invalid and exclude the student in question from all exams for a maximum period of 12 months.
6. During inspections, students may only inspect their own work individually and not enter into a discussion. The invigilators present shall ensure that students do indeed inspect their work individually.
7. Inspections generally last 1 hour. Students may take part in the inspection up to 15 minutes after the start thereof. No students may enter the inspection area after the first 15 minutes.
8 – Final examinations

Article 8.1 – Date of final examinations
If a student meets the requirements, the Examinations Board will, in principle, automatically proceed to award the degree certificate, unless the student requests otherwise. The Examinations Board may decide not to honour this request, but must have well-founded reasons for doing so.

Article 8.2 – Diploma classifications
If the weighted average of all (examination) components is 8.10 or higher and the thesis has been awarded a minimum mark of 8.0, the Examinations Board shall consider awarding the cum laude qualification. This decision is also based on the list of marks and the assessment of the Bachelor's/Master's thesis. This means that a cum laude qualification is not automatically awarded. Other diploma classifications shall be listed on the diploma supplement.

9 – Exemptions
An exemption from an exam or final examination implies that the student is deemed to have passed the relevant exam or final examination, without a mark being awarded. Requests for exemption from an exam or final examination must be submitted to the Examinations Board.

10 – Retention periods
Exam questions and model answers, including assignments and other written materials for which a mark or partial mark is awarded, as well as the results of exams, including Bachelor’s theses or final assignments and Master’s theses, degree certificates and diploma supplements, shall be retained for the periods referred to in the Archiving Guide for Programme Administrations.

11 - Hardship clause
The Examinations Board may make exceptional arrangements in cases where the provisions of these Rules and Guidelines have unreasonable or unfair repercussions for the student.

12 – Appeals procedure
If a student does not agree with a decision by an examiner or the Examinations Board, he or she has the option of lodging an appeal against the decision with the Examination Appeals Board within six weeks of that decision. The appeals procedure can be found at www.uva.nl.

13 – Amendments
These Rules and Guidelines shall not be amended during the current academic year, unless such amendments can be reasonably assumed not to damage students’ interests.

14 - Effective date
These Rules and Guidelines shall enter into effect on 1 September 2018 and applies until the new version of the Rules and Guidelines has been defined.
Thus drawn up by the Examinations Board for the University of Amsterdam Communication Science study programme(s) on 1 September 2018.