

Teaching and Examination Regulations Reading Guide

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The Reading Guide for the Teaching and Examination Regulations (*Onderwijs- en Examenregeling*, OER) aims to make them easier to read. No rights may be derived from the Reading Guide. The OER is the place where much of the formal side of your degree programme is documented and is therefore often where you will need to look if you are having problems. The OER consists of two parts: part A that includes regulations that apply across the faculty and a part B for each degree programme. Part A therefore applies to all Faculty of Science students and you should use part B if you have questions that are specific to your degree programme.

What does the OER A contain?

In the OER A, you will find regulations that apply faculty-wide for both the Faculty of Science (FNWI) and the Faculty of Sciences (FEW)/Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences (FALW), science faculties at VU Amsterdam. The OER A contains the following: educational entry requirements, the structure of the academic year and examination rules (e.g. periods for inspecting completed examination scripts, marking periods, resits, etc.). The OER A is valid for all degree programmes, but some degree programmes make exceptions in situations that depart from the norm. Details of these can be found in the OER B of the specific degree programme. Further regulations on such issues as examining and *cum laude* are included in the FNWI's Rules and Guidelines of the Examinations Board (RRvE).

What does the OER B contain?

Regulations that apply to specific degree programmes can be found in the OER B. This is what makes the OER B slightly more enthralling! In the OER B, you will find around 12 pages on the exceptions that apply to such areas as the standard semester structure, the structure of the curriculum, the objective of the degree programme, testing and assessment methods, educational entry requirements, electives, entry requirements for specific courses and attendance requirements for tutorials and practical training..

Course manual

The course manual is a course-specific document that includes the details of that course. For example, it may include further details concerning the rules on compulsory tutorials or information on exactly which assignments count towards your final mark. The course manual features everything you need to know about how a course is run and is binding for that specific course only. If something happens that is not included in the course manual or in the OER B, or the course manual contradicts the OER and this causes you difficulties, you should first go to the course coordinator. If this does not work, you can always contact the study adviser or the Faculty Student Council (B0.112 or fnwi@studentenraad.nl).

Need an exception?

Even if a firmly-established rule causes you problems, it is possible for exceptions to be made. Many rules are generally quite reasonable, but can affect a small number of students very seriously. Lecturers and programme directors appreciate this and may be able to make an exception in your case. This is not included in the rules themselves, but in what is known as the hardship clause, Article 6 in the OER A. If an exception needs to be made in your case, we recommend that you have this reconfirmed on paper or by email. This can prevent a lot of difficulty at a later stage. If you do not know who you should turn to, the study adviser can always provide assistance.

Unable to find your problem in the OER?

The OER does not cover every situation but this does not mean that you do not have rights and responsibilities in that case. Often, it is possible to resolve personal problems with specific courses by discussing the matter with the lecturer, without the OER needing to come into play at all. For more serious problems, you will need to contact the study adviser who in turn will help you to contact the programme director or examinations board. For example, the examinations board assesses whether examinations were sat in accordance with the law, run properly or whether a student meets the requirements for being awarded a pass *cum laude*. If you believe that you have failed an examination unfairly, it is up to the examinations board to make a judgement on this. At student.uva.nl, you will also find a lot of useful information, including on how to submit complaints. If you have doubts about your problem, do not hesitate to drop by the Faculty Student Council. This applies for problems with both the OERs and the course manual.