



## Rules and Guidelines of the Examinations Board MSc Logic

Academic year 2016-2017

### 1. *General provisions*

#### **Article 1.1 – Applicability of the Rules and Guidelines**

These *Rules and Guidelines* (as referred to in Section 7.12b paragraph 3 of the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act (*Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek*, WHW, hereinafter referred to as “the Act”) apply to the Master's programme in Logic, hereinafter referred to as “the programme”. These Rules and Guidelines apply to any person enrolled in this programme in the academic year indicated, regardless of the date on which he or she commenced the programme.

#### **Article 1.2 - Definitions**

The terms defined in the Teaching and Examination Regulations (Onderwijs- en Examenregeling, OER) also apply to these Rules and Guidelines. In these Rules and Guidelines, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

- a) *Examination*: an assessment of the student's knowledge, understanding and skills relating to a component. The examination can be held in many forms; typical forms are: *written classroom exams* (a written exam that takes place in a fixed room during a fixed time under the supervision of the examiner and/or invigilator(s)), *take-home exams* (a written exam that is done by the students at home and submitted before a fixed deadline), *oral exams* (an examination in the presence of the two examiners), *term papers* (research papers written by the students over a longer period of time), *presentations* (an oral presentation in front of the entire class), *homework* exercises (regular homework exercises to be handed in before a given deadline), or others. The assessment is expressed in terms of a final mark. The examination for a course may consist of one or more partial examinations. A resit always covers the same material as the original examination.
- b) *Invigilator*: the person appointed by an examiner to be present on his or her behalf (and if possible with him or her) during an examination. The examiner must ensure that the invigilator will not experience any conflicts of interests by performing his or her tasks as an invigilator;

The other terms have the meanings ascribed to them in the Act.

## **Article 1.3 – Principles**

In making decisions, the Examinations Board or examiner shall be guided by the following principles, and in cases of conflict shall weigh the interest of one principle against that of the other:

- a) to uphold the quality and selection requirements of examinations;
- b) the efficacy of requirements as manifested in, among other things, efforts to minimise delays for students preparing for examinations;
- c) to show clemency towards students whose study progress is in danger of being delayed due to circumstances beyond their control.

## **2. The Examinations Board**

### **Article 2.1 – Composition of the Examinations Board**

1. The Examinations Board shall consist of at least two members. The members are experts in logic. At least one member is external, i.e., a person unconnected to the Master's programme in Logic. Any person who has financial responsibilities within the University of Amsterdam cannot be a member of the Examinations Board.
2. The members of the Examinations Board shall be appointed by the Dean on the basis of their expertise in logic.
3. The Examinations Board chooses one of its members as chair. External members cannot be the chair of the Examinations Board. The chair shall identify a second member as the vice-chair who shall replace the chair when he or she is not available.
4. The Dean shall request advice from the Examinations Board before appointing a new member.
5. A member of the Examinations Board is appointed for a period of three years and can be re-appointed.
6. The Dean shall guarantee that the Examinations Board can function independently and with competence.

### **Article 2.2 - Duties of the Examinations Board**

The duties and powers of the Examinations Board are regulated in the Act. These include determining the rules for the execution of duties and powers and taking measures with regard to:

- a) determining objectively and professionally whether a student satisfies the requirements laid down in the OER with regard to the knowledge, understanding and skills required to obtain a degree;
- b) ensuring the quality of examinations;
- c) establishing guidelines and instructions within the framework of the OER as the basis for marking and awarding results in examinations;
- d) granting exemptions from (parts of) one or more examinations;
- e) taking measures in the event of fraud;
- f) appointing examiners to conduct examinations and determine their results;
- g) issuing the degree certificate, with the diploma supplement attached, as proof that the student has graduated;

- h) granting a student permission to take a set of electives, the examination for which will lead to the awarding of a degree;
- i) issuing transcripts to students, including students who have passed one or more examinations but for whom a degree certificate cannot be issued;
- j) granting students admission to the programme, in correspondence with the framework drawn upon in the OER;
- k) drawing up an annual plan and report on its activities.

### **Article 2.3 – Decision period for Requests to the Examinations Board**

1. Petitions and complaints must be submitted to the Examinations Board with a letter explaining the reasons for the petition or complaint.
2. Any request to deviate from the curriculum must be submitted in writing, stating reasons, to the Examination Board not later more than eight weeks before the commencement date of the component for which the replacement is being requested. Such a petition will in any case be refused if the level and scope of the proposed replacement component(s) is/are not at least equal to those of the component to be replaced.
3. The Examinations Board shall take a decision within six weeks of receiving a written request at the latest.

### **Article 2.4 – Meetings of the Examinations Board**

1. The entire Examinations Board shall normally meet at least twice per academic year, or more often if deemed necessary by its chairperson. This meeting is closed to the public.
2. The agenda and minutes will be determined by the chairperson in consultation with the members.
3. Advisers may be consulted at the invitation of the Examinations Board. These advisers may attend all or part of the meetings as guests.
4. Decisions of the Examinations Board can also be reached by discussions via electronic mail.
5. In the event of a request or complaint involving a member of the Examinations Board, the matter will be discussed in that member's absence.
6. The Examinations Board shall make decisions by a majority of votes present; in cases where the votes are tied, the chairperson shall have the casting vote.

## **3. *Examiners***

### **Article 3.1 - Examiners**

1. The Examinations Board shall appoint examiners on an annual basis to conduct examinations and determine their results.
2. The Examinations Board is entitled to appoint experts from outside the institution as examiners.
3. The examiners shall furnish the Examinations Board with any relevant information requested.

## **4. Examinations**

### **Article 4.1 – Dates and times of examinations**

1. Written classroom examinations shall be conducted on dates and times that shall be determined and made known to students under the responsibility of the Examinations Board at least 30 days before the commencement of the teaching concerned.
2. Other examinations shall be conducted at dates and times to be determined by the examiner(s), where possible following consultation with the student.
3. In determining the dates and times of examinations, the best effort shall be made to try to prevent examinations from coinciding, where relevant.
4. The set dates and times shall only be modified in exceptional circumstances and if all relevant parties agree.
5. The Examinations Board monitors compliance with the rules set out in paragraphs 1 to 4 inclusive. Students may report deviations from these rules to the Examinations Board.

### **Article 4.2 – Deregistering for examinations**

In the event that a student fails to appear at the prescribed time for an examination for which he or she has registered, the examiner shall record this as an unused opportunity to take that examination (by means of the mark of 'no show' (*niet aanwezig*, n.a.), with repercussions for the potential applications of other regulations relating to additional examination opportunities. The student may also be excluded from participation in the examination of the component during the current academic year.

### **Article 4.3 – Order during examinations**

1. The examiner determines the order during examinations.
2. Special adaptations of the order during examinations for students with a disability are regulated by the OER and the *Nota Begeleiding van studenten met een functiebeperking Universiteit en Hogeschool van Amsterdam*.
3. Students must complete examinations entirely independently, unless determined otherwise by the examiner.
4. Students must follow all instructions from the Examinations Board, the examiner or the invigilator issued before, during or immediately after the examination. This also applies to instructions issued prior to the examination by way of the UvA Course Catalogue, the component website, Blackboard or Sakai. If a student fails to follow one or more instructions, he or she may be excluded by the Examinations Board or the examiner from further participation in the examination concerned, while taking into account the stated in paragraph 5. If a student is excluded, he or she will not receive a result for that examination (the mark/final mark will be recorded as 'no show' (*niet aanwezig*, n.a.)).
5. In case of doubt of the identity of the student, the examiner or invigilator may request proof of identity by means of valid proof of registration (student card) and a valid identity document, with a passport photograph showing a good likeness. Any students unable to identify themselves can be refused access to the examinations.
6. In the case of suspected fraud during an examination, the examiner has to send a written report of the incident to the Examinations Board.
7. For written classroom examinations, the examiner shall ensure that sufficient numbers of invigilators are appointed in order that the examination can proceed in good order. In the case of 50 or more students at least two invigilators are required to be present.

8. For written classroom examinations, students not enrolled in the class (see Article 4.2) may be refused admission to the examination room or may be asked to leave the examination.
9. For written classroom examinations, the duration of the examination shall be such that students can be reasonably expected to have sufficient time to answer the questions. Written classroom examinations have a maximum duration of three hours.
10. For written classroom examinations, no student may leave the room within the first 30 minutes of the exam. During these 30 minutes, students arriving late to the exam may be admitted at the discretion of the examiner or invigilator. In exceptional cases, the examiner or invigilator may deviate from this rule.
11. For written classroom examinations, the examiner or invigilator decides about the rules of leaving the examination room during the examination. Students who have left the examination room are bound by the rules of the exam and are not allowed to use aids not permitted by the rules of the examination while not in the examination room.
12. For written classroom examinations, students are not permitted to use aids such as mobile telephones, laptops and the like or study materials during an examination unless the examiner or invigilator gives explicit permission for this. If specific electronic equipment is permitted for the purpose of completing the examination, the examiner shall set further rules for this. These rules shall be specified in writing on the exam paper.
13. For written classroom examinations, in the event of detected or suspected fraud during an examination, the student shall always be permitted to complete the examination. The invigilator shall fill in a report form and hand it to the examiner. The examiner shall inform the Examinations Board. Sanctions may be imposed by the Examinations Board in accordance with the Fraud and Plagiarism Regulations of the University of Amsterdam.
14. Oral examinations shall take place in the presence of a third person. The examiner shall write a written examination report. This report shall be signed by the third person and shall be kept for at least two years after the oral examination. Examiners can only replace a written examination with an oral examination with the consent of the examined student.

#### **Article 4.4 - Assessment**

1. Each examination shall consist in the examiner testing the candidate's knowledge, understanding and skills and assessing the results of that test.
2. Examination questions and problems shall never exceed the examination content announced in advance. Examination questions shall be clear and unambiguous and such that students can correctly judge how extensive and detailed their answers should be. The subjects of the questions shall be representative of the whole of the component content. The content and scope of the examination shall be fixed as from the commencement of the component and not subject to any change before the examination.
3. The manner in which the examination for each component will be administered will be announced in the UvA Course Catalogue before the component in question commences, specifying:
  - a) the form that the examination and/or resit will take;
  - b) to what extent the different examination components will be taken into account in the final assessment;
4. The Examinations Board shall ensure that examinations are assessed within the time frames mentioned in the OER and on the basis of transparent standards.

5. If more than one examiner is involved in the marking of an examination, the Examinations Board shall ensure that all examiners apply the same standards to their marking.
6. Marking shall take place in such a way that examinees can verify how their examination results were determined.
7. The most recent result shall determine the final mark. Some examination components do not allow resits due to their nature (e.g., homework, presentations, practical work).
8. If practical exercises involve several students making a contribution to a single joint assignment, the Examinations Board shall apply the following guidelines: If in the examiner's opinion one or more students have made an insufficient contribution to the joint assignment, the examiner will discuss this with the student(s) in question. The student concerned will be given an opportunity to expand his or her contribution. If this does not yield the desired improvement according to the examiner and/or if the Examinations Board deems it necessary, the Examinations Board may take appropriate measures.
9. The assessment of the Master's thesis is described in detail in Article 4.7.

#### **Article 4.5 – Assessment of the Master's thesis, part I: The thesis committee**

1. The Master's thesis serves as a demonstration of thorough knowledge of the selected topics and of a solid grasp of the pertinent research methods by the candidate. It is supposed to prove that the candidate possesses high-level independent learning, written communication and information retrieval skills.
2. The Master's thesis shall be evaluated by a thesis committee consisting of a chair, the supervisor(s) and independent evaluators. The chair must be a member of the Examinations Board and is appointed as the examiner for the thesis, taking responsibility for the grade.
3. The first step in the preparation for the assessment of a Master's thesis is the assignment of the chair of the thesis committee. It is the responsibility of the supervisor(s) to contact the Examinations Board and ask for the assignment of an examiner. After his or her assignment, the chair of the thesis committee is in charge of all procedural decisions in this committee.
4. The supervisor(s) shall submit a list of potential members of the thesis committee to the chair. It is preferred that this list contains more names than necessary to allow the chair to choose committee members from the list (cf. item 7).
5. The chair and the supervisor(s) shall be members of the thesis committee.
6. The thesis committee must meet the following requirements:
  - a) All committee members must hold an MSc or equivalent degree.
  - b) At least three committee members must have a PhD.
  - c) The number of independent evaluators must be at least as big as that of the number of supervisors. For this purpose, the chair may count himself or herself as an independent evaluator if he or she decides to take an active role and is an expert in the field of the thesis.
  - d) The strict majority of the committee members should be affiliated with the ILLC (exceptions to this rule may be granted by the Examinations Board).
7. The chair shall choose the independent evaluators on the basis of the list submitted by the supervisor(s). The chair can select none, some or all of the names on that list and add further members to the committee. The chair makes sure that the committee meets the requirements of item 6. The chair does not have to justify this selection.

8. The thesis committee advises the chair in making decisions about failing and passing as well as about the grade. All final decisions about failing and passing as well as the grade remain with the examiner. If the thesis committee is unable to reach a decision, they can report to the Examinations Board and request a decision from them.

#### **Article 4.6 – Assessment of the Master's thesis, part II: Defense Date and Submission Deadline.**

1. The members of the thesis committee and the student shall agree on a defense date. The defense date shall be communicated to the programme administrator at least four weeks before the defense. The programme administrator shall book the room for the defense and announce the defense among the members of the ILLC and the students.
2. The date of the defense determines the submission deadline which is exactly three weeks before the defense.
3. The thesis shall be submitted by e-mail as a pdf file that is sent to the entire committee with a copy to the programme administrator. The submitted thesis must contain the official ILLC M.Sc. thesis titlepage. The chair of the committee checks whether the formal requirements are satisfied.
4. If the student does not submit by the deadline, the chair can cancel the defense.
5. Before the deadline, the student can request an extension. Extensions are only given in exceptional cases and only if the student sends the request in due time. Very short extensions (a day) can be granted by the chair without consulting the committee. Longer extensions (at most three days) require consent from every single committee member.

#### **Article 4.7 – Assessment of the Master's thesis, part III: Pre-Assessment.**

1. In order to be accepted as an MSc thesis, the text needs to meet the minimal standards regarding the following five criteria: correctness, writing, difficulty, originality, and independence. The meaning and scope of these criteria is described in item 6.
2. In order to get a grade of 8 or higher, a thesis must be evaluated as “above the university average for Master’s thesis” for all five criteria, and well beyond this level for at least one of them.
3. All committee members shall send pre-assessments of the thesis to the committee chair at least seven days before the defense. Pre-assessments shall contain a grade range and a brief statement about each of the evaluation criteria, correctness, originality, writing, independence, and difficulty. Pre-assessments shall be sent only to the chair, not to the entire committee. If the chair has not received all pre-assessments seven days before the defense, he or she can cancel the defense.
4. A committee member who thinks the student should receive a failing grade must contact the chair immediately. In that case, the chair needs to check the opinions of all committee members, and if necessary involve the chair of the Examinations Board or the entire Examinations Board. It is not intended to have a public defense in the case that the committee will not give the student a passing grade. If there is no majority in the committee to pass the student, the defense should be cancelled (at least one week before the defense date) and the student shall receive the grade NAV. The student shall get detailed feedback from the committee to revise the thesis in order to pass in a second attempt.
5. After all pre-assessments have been received, the chair shall disclose the pre-assessments to the entire committee. The committee members can have an e-mail discussion before the defense. The chair shall compile the pre-assessments into a draft of the thesis assessment that will form the basis of the discussion of the committee after the defense. The assessment shall consist of a brief comment (one to two sentences) on each of the five criteria and a summarizing paragraph. The text shall not mention any grades.
6. The five criteria listed in item 1 are defined as follows:

- a) The criterion of *correctness* judges whether the thesis contains mistakes, either of mathematical or scholarly nature. Mistakes can be mathematical or technical errors, historical misattributions, improper use of experimental or other empirical techniques, faulty arguments, improper bibliographical work, or, in general, any lack of skill that will be expected of a researcher in the field of the thesis. For a grade of 8 or higher, only minor and easily fixable mistakes of this type may be contained in the thesis.
- b) The criterion of *writing* judges the level of academic writing of the candidate. This includes the technical jargon of the field of the thesis and the accepted writing style of papers in that research area as well as the communication to a wider academic audience, highlighting the achievements of the thesis for a non-specialist readership. For a grade of 8 or higher, a thesis has to exhibit a firm command of both writing skills.
- c) The criterion of *difficulty* encompasses things like the mathematical subtlety of the topic, the problems with the empirical experiments that were encountered, the amount of reading that was required, and in general scholarly and scientific skills that were required for writing the thesis, depending on the area the thesis is written in.
- d) *Originality* is not a requirement for M.Sc. theses in general, but is one of the main discerning factors for the different grades of 8 or higher. Originality is witnessed by results that go beyond the published literature, possibly even including results that are strong enough to be published in a good journal or a proceedings volume of a selective conference of the field. Any grade of 8 or higher requires at least some level of originality.
- e) As with originality, *independence* is not a requirement for M.Sc. theses in general, but is one of the main discerning factors for the different grades of 8 or higher. The research in an M.Sc. thesis was independent when some results were produced by the student without direct intervention of the supervisor. Grades of 8 or higher require at least some level of independence

**Article 4.8 – Assessment of the Master's thesis, part IV: the defense.**

1. The student shall publicly defend his or her thesis in a *thesis defense*. The performance in the thesis defense is taken into account in the determination of the mark. In general, defenses take place between 1 September and 30 June. If the committee members agree, the chair of a committee can grant an exception and allow for a defense to be scheduled during the months of July and August.
2. All committee members shall be physically present at the defense; the chair can grant an exception to this and allow one committee member to join the defense via an audio/video connection or ask questions *in absentia* by sending them in writing to the chair.
3. The chair can appoint one or more external advisors for the defense. External advisors are not members of the thesis committee, but join the non-public committee meeting after the defense; the chair shall determine in each case what the precise role of the external advisors is.
4. The defense consists of 20 minutes of presentation by the candidate aimed at the general audience and 30 minutes of questions. After that, the non-public committee discussion typically takes between 30 and 45 minutes. In total, between 90 and 120 minutes should be scheduled for a defense.
5. The chair shall introduce the candidate to the audience and keep track of the time during presentation and questions. The chair shall introduce the committee members to the audience, if necessary.
6. The question period shall start with questions from the general audience. After that, the chair shall decide on the order of opposition. The larger part of the question time shall be given to the independent evaluators. The supervisor or the supervisors and the chair can ask questions, but are not required to.



7. After the question period, the committee retires to another room or asks the candidate and the audience to leave the room. The committee discussion is not public.
8. The chair shall coordinate the committee discussion, discuss the possible grades, and collect opinions of the committee members about the grades. If a grade of 8 or higher is proposed, the chair shall critically check whether all criteria are satisfied. The chair arranges the decision process for the grade.
9. After the grade is determined, the chair shall revise the draft assessment text on the basis of the committee discussion and the decided grade. The assessment text shall be fair and honest, reflect the given grade accurately, and shall not avoid criticism of the thesis or the candidate. The final assessment can comment on the candidate's performance in the public defense.
10. After the committee has agreed on the assessment text, the candidate shall be asked to join the committee. The assessment text shall be read to the student, the grade shall be announced, and the student shall have the opportunity to ask questions in private.
11. Then the student and the committee shall return to the room with the audience (or invite the audience back into the room), the chair shall announce that the student has passed, shall publicly congratulate the student, and finally, shall give the word to the supervisor for personal words. After this, the shall chair close the meeting.
12. Both the grade and the assessment text are private information and shall not be made public.

## **5. Graduation**

### **Article 5.1 – Date of graduation**

1. The examination date recorded on the diploma is the date on which a student applied for a diploma. The date on which the certificate is awarded may be later than the examination date.
2. Following a substantiated request by a student who qualifies for a diploma, the Examinations Board may delay setting the date of the final examination.

### **Article 5.2 – Degree classifications (Iudicia)**

1. The Examinations Board assesses whether to add the qualification of *cum laude* to the diploma.
2. This can and shall be done if
  - a) no component is marked with less than a 7 (seven);
  - b) the result for the Master's thesis is at least an 8 (eight);
  - c) the weighted average of all Master's programme components, excluding the thesis, is at least an 8 (eight).
3. Students who have taken more than two resits or have not completed the programme within 30 months shall not receive the qualification of *cum laude*.
4. When determining the requirements of item 2., the mark for each component will be assigned a weighting factor corresponding to the number of credits that the component is worth. Examination components marked with a 'pass' will not be included in the calculation of the weighted average.
5. Exemptions will not count towards awarding the qualification of *cum laude*, unless the Examinations Board decides otherwise. Where more than 1/3 of a curriculum is comprised of exemptions, the qualification of *cum laude* will not be awarded.

6. These *cum laude* guidelines replace all previous cum laude guidelines. Students who believe they qualify for a *cum laude* qualification on the grounds of expectations derived from previous guidelines can submit a substantiated request to the Examinations Board.
7. In exceptional cases relating to individual study programmes the Examinations Board may deviate from the provisions of paragraphs 2 to 5 of this Article.

## **6. Exemptions and Transfer Credits**

1. The Examinations Board can exempt a student from the requirement of taking an obligatory component. The Examinations Board shall do that if the student provides evidence that he or she has mastered the material of that component. The Examinations Board will typically consult the examiner of the relevant component.
2. The Examinations Board can allow a student to replace an obligatory component with another component. The Examinations Board will typically consult the examiner of the relevant component.
3. A student may apply to the Examinations Board for the approval of credits for courses taken at a different postgraduate programme at the UvA or another university. This is only possible for courses at Master's level that are directly relevant to the MSc Logic programme and only in case there is no overlap with other courses taken by the student. These courses will be registered in SIS as exemptions, unless the Examinations Board decides otherwise.
4. Transfer credit from universities outside of the Netherlands shall always be registered without a numbered grade (i.e., with the grade AVV). Transfer credit from Dutch universities can be registered with a grade at the discretion of the Examinations Board.
5. If the course was taken while the student was registered for the MSc Logic, courses are generally accepted as transfer credit and treated as if they had been taken at the UvA. In this case, courses from other Dutch universities are usually registered with grades.
6. If the course was taken while the student was not registered for the MSc Logic (typically before he or she came to Amsterdam), courses can only be accepted as transfer credit if
  - a) they have not been used for graduation for any degree at some other university
  - b) the content of the course is such that it could be part of the list of electives in the MSc Logic.
7. Courses that have been used for other degrees cannot be used as transfer credit.
8. A student can be exempted by the Examinations Board from the requirement of doing one or more of the obligatory courses on the basis of courses done at other universities, even if they have been used for graduation. This exemption does not count as transfer credit.
9. The Examinations Board can accept up to 40 ECTS credits as exemptions or transfer credits.

## **7. Retention periods**

Paper versions of Master's theses shall be retained for at least seven years. Digital versions shall be retained indefinitely. For examination papers and scripts, including any assignments and other written materials for which a (partial) mark has been awarded, and for examination results the retention periods are determined by the *matrix bewaartermijnen opleidingsdocumenten DIV (appendix 1)*.

**8.      *Hardship clause***

The Examinations Board may make exceptional arrangements in cases in which the provisions of these Rules and Guidelines have unreasonable or unacceptable repercussions for the student.

**9.      *Appeal 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 (COBEX) within six weeks of that decision. The appeal procedure is available on the website of the UvA.

**10.     *Amendments***

No amendments to these Rules and Guidelines may be made that affect the current academic year, unless the changes are not detrimental to the students' interests.

**11.     *Effective date***

These Rules and Guidelines shall come into force as of 1 September 2016.