



Universiteit Leiden

# Course and Examination Regulations 2009-2010

## Master's Programmes Religious Studies

These course and examination regulations have been drawn up in accordance with Section 7.13 of the Higher Education and Research Act [*Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek*] (*WHW*)<sup>1</sup> and additional quality marks as set out in the framework document Leiden University Register of Study Programmes [*Leids universitair register opleidingen*].

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1. The Dutch Higher Education and Research Act [*Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek*] came into effect on 1 September 1993. It is sometimes referred to by its acronym *WHW*.

## Chapter 1 Provisions

### Article 1.1 Scope of the Regulations

These regulations apply to the teaching and examinations of the master's degree programme(s) of Religious Studies hereinafter referred to as the programme. The programme is offered by the the Faculty of Humanities of Leiden University, hereinafter referred to as: the faculty.

### Article 1.2 Definitions

In these regulations the following definitions apply:

- a. board of admissions: the committee that, under the aegis and on behalf of the faculty board, and in accordance with the admission requirements, decides which students are to be admitted to the programme;
- b. board of examiners: the board of examiners of the programme, established in accordance with Section 7.12 of the Act;
- c. component: a study unit of the programme as defined in Section 7.3 of the Act. The course load of each component is expressed as whole credits. Every component involves an examination;
- d. credit: the unit expressing the course load of a course component pursuant to the Act. According to the ECTS one credit equals 28 hours of studying;
- e. ECTS: the European Credit Transfer System;
- f. examination [*tentamen*]<sup>2</sup>: an evaluation of the knowledge, understanding and skills of the student in respect of a particular component, and an assessment thereof, in accordance with Section 7.10 of the Act, by at least one examiner appointed to this purpose;
- g. examiner: the person appointed by the board of examiners to conduct examinations and examinations, in accordance with Section 7.12 of the Act;
- h. final examination [*examen*]<sup>2</sup>: evaluation whereby the board of examiners, in accordance with Section 7.10 of the Act, verifies whether the candidate (student) has successfully completed all components and other requirements of the master's degree programme;
- i. Leiden University Register of Study Programmes (*Leids universitair register opleidingen*): register<sup>3</sup> of the programmes offered by Leiden University, kept under supervision of the Executive Board;
- j. level: the level of a component according to the abstract structure as defined in the framework document of the Leiden University Register of Study Programmes;
- k. master's thesis: the result of one of the practicals as referred to under m.;
- l. portfolio: A dossier of monitoring and assessment kept by students (1) to demonstrate that they have attained the level of academic education required for the diploma, (2) to illustrate the personal process of academic development during the programme, and (3) to facilitate counselling and career advising.
- m. practical: practical assignment as defined in section 7.13 (2) (d) of the Act, in one of the following forms:
  - the writing of a thesis,

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2. The *examen* is actually a review of the student's academic achievements to decide whether or not (s)he has completed all requirements for graduation. The Dutch term used for a test of the student's knowledge or skills is '*tentamen*'.

3. The framework document *Leids universitair register opleidingen* [Leiden University Register of Study Programmes] can be found at the following website: [www.bamainfo.leidenuniv.nl](http://www.bamainfo.leidenuniv.nl)

- the writing of a paper, the design and implementation of a project, or the creation of a technological design,
  - the implementation of a research assignment,
  - the participation in fieldwork or an excursion,
  - the completion of a traineeship, or
  - the taking part in another educational activity aimed at acquiring particular skills;
- n. prospectus: a document containing details and binding information on the programme;
- o. second reader / referee: lecturer associated with the programme or – should that be preferred given the nature or subject matter of the thesis – a lecturer from outside the department, who will, in consultation with the thesis supervisor, assess the thesis and who may be involved in the supervision of the student;
- p. student: a person registered with Leiden University for the purpose of taking courses, the sitting of examinations and the taking of examinations of the programme;
- q. the Act: the Higher Education and Research Act [*Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek*] (WHW).
- r. thesis supervisor: the lecturer associated with the programme responsible for the supervision of the MPhil-thesis or final project report;
- s. working day: Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays;

Other terms have the meaning given to them by the Act.

### **Article 1.3 Code of Conduct regarding ICT and Education**

The Code of Conduct regarding ICT and Education [Gedragscode ICT en Onderwijs]<sup>4</sup> shall apply to the programme and its courses.

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4. The Code of Conduct for Teachers and Students in ICT supported education [*Gedragscode docenten en studenten binnen ICT en onderwijs*] was adopted by the Executive Board on 26 May 2005 and can be found at the following website: [www.ictbeleid.leidenuniv.nl](http://www.ictbeleid.leidenuniv.nl)

## **Chapter 2 Description of the Programme**

### **Article 2.1 Objectives of the Programme**

The programme has the following objectives: ...

### **Article 2.2 Specialisation(s)**

The programme offers the following specialisation(s):

- Biblical Studies
- Christianity in the Middle East
- Comparative Religion
- Enlightenment and Modernism in Christianity and Judaism
- Islam in the Contemporary West
- Religion in Contemporary Society
- Religion, Science, and Ethics: Philosophical Approaches

### **Article 2.3 Achievement Levels**

The following achievement levels apply with regard to the programme:

- the master is able to design, conduct and evaluate research in the field of Religious Studies in general and the field of specialisation in particular, against the background of current and past academic debates;
- the master is able to employ the scholarly methods commonly used in his or her discipline of specialisation;
- the master has the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, formulate judgements with incomplete or limited information, offer suggestions for further research and arguments for solution of problems;
- the master is able to adequately and creatively use his or her knowledge and skills in professions that require knowledge of Religious Studies in general and his or her field of specialisation in particular;
- the master can communicate conclusions of his or her research, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences, clear and unambiguously.

### **Article 2.4 Structure of the Programme**

The programme offers both full-time and part-time tuition. The part-time programme is offered as a daytime.

### **Article 2.5 Start of the programme**

The programme will start on 1 September and on 1 February of each year.

### **Article 2.6 Study Load**

The course load of the programme is 60 credits.

### **Article 2.7 Uniform Structure of the Academic Year**

As to taught courses, the programme is based on the uniform structure of the academic year, with the academic year being divided into semesters<sup>5</sup>.

### **Article 2.8 Language of Instruction**

In compliance with the Code of Conduct regarding Foreign Languages [*Gedragcode Voertaal*<sup>6</sup>] the language(s) of instruction and examination in the programme is : English.

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5. The uniform structure of the academic year and the explanatory notes to the new semester structure were adopted by the Executive Board on 14 October 2004.

Students are required to be sufficiently proficient in the language or languages of instruction used in the programme.

**Article 2.9 Quality**

The programme must comply with the applicable national and international quality requirements, and with the quality standards with regard to education set out in the framework document Leiden University Register of Study Programmes.

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6. The Code of Conduct regarding Foreign Languages [*Gedragscode voertaal*] was adopted by the Executive Board on 11 July 2002 and can be found at the following website: [www.reglementen.leidenuniv.nl](http://www.reglementen.leidenuniv.nl)

## **Chapter 3 Curriculum**

### **Article 3.1 Compulsory Components**

3.1.1 The study load and level have been stated for each of the components. The number of credits is stated to indicate the study load.

3.1.2 The prospectus will include more detailed information on the content and structure of each compulsory component.

### **Article 3.2 Practicals**

The prospectus lists the components which include practicals, stating the nature and the student's workload for these practicals, and indicating whether participation in these practicals is mandatory for entry to the examination of the component. The board of examiners may grant exemption from a practical; in that case, the board may or may not impose alternative requirements.

### **Article 3.3 Registration for Courses**

Participation in courses is in order of registration, with the provision that students who are registered in a programme are guaranteed access to courses of that programme.

### **Article 3.4 Master's Thesis**

Appendix A states the size and study load of the master's thesis. Furthermore, said Appendix states the criteria with which the thesis or the traineeship report must comply, as well as the relevant procedures, including the way in which the supervisor is appointed and a substitution is made if a supervisor is no longer able to perform his/her tasks as such.

## Chapter 4 Examinations and Final Examination

### Article 4.1 Frequency of Examinations

4.1.1 For each component, examinations will be held at least twice per academic year.

4.1.2 If a component contains a practical part, students may only sit the examination as referred to in paragraph 4.1.1 if they have successfully completed the practical, unless the board of examiners provides otherwise.

4.1.3 In accordance with Section 7.13 (2) (h) of the Act, the examination dates have been included in the prospectus.

4.1.4 The student is required to sit the examination at the first occasion after the course has ended, unless the board of examiners in individual cases decides otherwise.

4.1.5 Not applicable

4.1.6 Students are not admitted to further examinations for subjects for which they have already obtained a pass grade.

### Article 4.2 Obligatory Order

Not applicable.

### Article 4.3 Methods of Assessment and Examination Formats

4.3.1 The prospectus states whether assessment may take place by means of either a written or an oral examination or a skills test.

4.3.2 In special cases, on request of the student, the board of examiners may allow the student to take the examination in a manner that deviates from the one prescribed in the prospectus.

4.3.3 Students with a disability may take examinations in a manner that has been adjusted to their particular disability, in order to accommodate their disability as much as possible. If necessary, the board of examiners will seek expert advice before reaching a decision.

4.3.4 All examinations shall comply with the code of conduct on the language of instruction and examination [*Gedragcode voertaal*].

4.3.5 Students will be assessed on an individual basis if a component involves presentations, research, reports or other course activities that require students to work in groups.

### Article 4.4 Oral Examinations

4.4.1 An oral examination may involve only one student at a time, unless the board of examiners has provided otherwise.

4.4.2 Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 4.4.1, the oral examinations of the components listed in the prospectus will be conducted with two or more students.

4.4.3 Oral examinations are public, unless the board of examiners or the examiner concerned has decided otherwise, owing to special circumstances, or unless the student objects.

### Article 4.5 Academic Fraud

4.5.1 In accordance with Section 7.12, subsection 4 of the Act, the board of examiners has set out, in the Examination Rules and Regulations [*Regels en Richtlijnen voor de examens*], measures to be taken in the event of academic fraud, including plagiarism.

4.5.2 In accordance with Section 7.12, subsection 4 of the Act, the board of examiners shall set out rules regarding the proper procedures during examinations and the measures to be taken to that end. The board ensures the right of the student to appeal against decisions of the board or the examiners; in this respect, it shall at least set out rules regarding

- the provision of a copy of their marked examination paper to students;
- safeguarding the legal rights of students during oral examinations, for instance by recording those or by having those attended by a second examiner.

#### **Article 4.6 Assessment**

4.6.1 Immediately after the oral examination, the examiner shall inform students of their result and hand them a written notification of that result.

4.6.2 Within fifteen working days after the date of the examination, the examiner shall mark any written or other test and provide the administration office of the department with the information necessary to present the student with a written notification of the result of the examination. A different period of time applies to checking the MA thesis; please see appendix A.

4.6.3 If the examiner is unable to comply with section 4.6.2., which provides that results must be submitted to the department's administration within fifteen working days, the student shall be notified thereof within said time limit. The student shall also be informed of the relevant procedure in such cases.

4.6.4 The written or electronic notification of the examination result shall inform students of their right to view their marked examination scripts – referred to in Article 4.8 below which provides for the access of students to examination scripts – and of appeals procedure.

#### **Article 4.7 Assessment of the Master's Thesis**

Not applicable

#### **Article 4.8 Period of Validity of Results**

The board of examiners may oblige students to take an additional or a substitute test for examinations that were passed more than 10 years ago.

#### **Article 4.9 Access to Marked Examination Scripts and Evaluation**

4.9.1 Students have the right to view their marked examination script, at their request, for a period of at least thirty days following the publication of the results of the written examination.

4.9.2 During the period referred to in the first paragraph, the examination questions and assignments, as well as – if possible – the marking criteria may be inspected.

4.9.3 The marked test will be evaluated with the examiner if the student so requests. An opportunity for evaluation will be announced together with the examination results.

4.9.4 The board of examiners is authorised to decide whether the test will be evaluated collectively or individually.

4.9.5 The board of examiners determines where and when the evaluation will take place.

4.9.6 Students who, due to circumstances beyond their control, are unable to attend the evaluation referred to in paragraph 4.9.5 shall be granted another opportunity for evaluation, if possible within the period referred to in paragraph 4.9.1 above.

#### **Article 4.10 Exemption from examinations and/or practicals**

At the student's request and after consultation with the examiner involved, the board of examiners may grant the student exemption from one or more examinations or practicals under the following conditions:

- The student has successfully completed, at a university or an institute of higher professional education, one of a programme's components that is similar in content and level to the component for which the student requests exemption;
- The student has demonstrated, through relevant work or professional experience, sufficient skills and knowledge in relation to the component.

#### **Article 4.11 The Final Examination**

4.11.1 The board of examiners determines the result of the final examination when the student provides sufficient proof that all tests have been passed. Furthermore, the student must have earned a bachelor's degree as referred to in Article 5.1, or possess proof of admission as referred to in Article 5.2. Students must file their applications for the final examination with the study coordinator.

4.11.2 Before determining the result of the final examination, the board of examiners may itself conduct an examination to establish whether the student has achieved the programme's attainment level.

4.11.3 The final examination may be held at any time during the academic year.

4.11.4 The board of examiners sets out rules indicating the conditions under which they will exercise the power granted to them in Section 7.10 (3) of the Act to determine the result of the final examination notwithstanding the fact that not all tests have been passed, and/or the conditions under which results of subtests may compensate one another.

#### **Article 4.12 The Master's Degree**

4.12.1 The degree of Master of Arts is awarded to those who have passed the final examination.

4.12.2 The degree certificate states the degree awarded.

4.12.3 A supplement complying with the guidelines of the Act and of the Leiden University Register of Study Programmes [Leids universitair register opleidingen] is attached to the degree certificate.

4.12.4 Persons awarded a master's degree are eligible to pursue a doctorate.

## Chapter 5 Admission to the Master's Programme

### Section 5.1 Direct Admission

#### Article 5.1 Direct Admission

Requirements for direct admission to the master's programme are:  
a bachelor's degree obtained after completion of the Godgeleerdheid and Wereldgodsdiensten programmes at Leiden University

### Section 5.2 Conditional Admission

#### Article 5.2 Proof of Admission

5.2.1 The faculty board must grant proof of admission to students who meet the admission requirements laid down in Article 5.3, insofar as the maximum number of students to be enrolled will not be surpassed. The maximum number is set by the Executive Board.

5.2.2 Students may apply for proof of admission in accordance with the rules laid down in the Regulation for Admission to Master's Programmes [Regeling toelating masteropleidingen]<sup>7</sup>.

#### Article 5.3 Admission Requirements

Without prejudice to the provision in article 5.2.1 regarding the capacity, those will be admitted to the programme who:

- possess the skills, understanding and knowledge that are required for earning the bachelor's degree referred to in Article 5.1;
- have earned the degree of Bachelor at a university not being a university of professional education, or demonstrate to meet the requirements for such a degree;
- are sufficiently proficient in the language(s) of instruction, to be assessed by the board of admissions (at least a 6.5 score (IELTS) or 570/230/88-90 (TOEFL-test)).

#### Article 5.4 Deficiencies

5.4.1 Students who have obtained a bachelor's degree or an equivalent degree, but who still have a deficiency of x (*ranging from 1 to 15*) credits, may be admitted to the programme if it can be reasonably expected that they will meet the admission requirements within a limited amount of time.

5.4.2 Students with the deficiencies referred to in paragraph 5.4.1 may participate in the programme after admission, but will not be allowed to take examinations nor the tests named by the faculty board when granting admission to the programme.

5.4.3 For the admission referred to in paragraph 5.4.1, the board of admissions will compile a bridging programme with tests.

5.4.4 If a student is admitted to the programme under paragraph 5.4.1, tests that are taken in order to meet the admission requirements cannot be part of the curriculum of the master's programme.

#### Article 5.5 Bridging Programmes

Not applicable.

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7. The Regulation for Admission to Master's Programmes [Regeling toelating masteropleidingen Universiteit Leiden] was adopted by the Executive Board on 27 April 2005 and reviewed on 20 December 2005 and 6 March 2007; it can be found at [www.reglementen.leidenuniv.nl](http://www.reglementen.leidenuniv.nl)

5.5.1 The department has compiled the following bridging programme in order to make up for deficiencies:

- one-year programme for students with a bachelor's degree Theology, of the Christelijke Hogeschool Ede, average grade '7' or higher and including a number of mandatory subjects

In case deficiencies of graduates from other institutions range between 16 and 60 ECTS, individual bridging programmes can be composed, consisting usually of courses of the appropriate bachelor programme.

5.5.2 Information on the bridging programmes may be obtained from the department.

## **Chapter 6 Student Counselling**

### **Article 6.1 Student Progress Report**

- 6.1.1 The department keeps records of the results of individual students.
- 6.1.2 The department provides each student with a copy of the results obtained at least once a year.
- 6.1.3 If the department concludes that a student is experiencing a significant delay in comparison to the nominal study progress, it shall inform the student of the support available for drawing up an individual study plan.

### **Article 6.2 Introduction and Student Counselling**

The department takes care of the student's introduction to the programme and student counselling.

### **Article 6.3 Supervision of the Master's Thesis**

- 6.3.1 The student draws up a graduation plan together with the supervisor referred to in Article 3.4. This plan is based on the study load laid down in the appendix referred to in Article 3.4.
- 6.3.2 The plan referred to in the first paragraph includes details on the frequency of sessions with the thesis supervisor and the manner of supervision.

### **Article 6.4 Professional Sports**

Students who play sports at a professional level are offered the opportunity to adjust their study programmes to their sporting activities wherever possible. The department follows the guidelines drawn up by the Executive Board to determine who fits into this category.

### **Article 6.5 Permanent Disabilities**

Where possible, students with a disability or chronic illness are offered the opportunity to adjust their study programmes in accordance with the limitations resulting from their disability or illness.

## **Chapter 7 Final Provisions**

### **Article 7.1 Amendments**

7.1.1 Amendments to these regulations are implemented by a separate order of the faculty board with the prior consent of the faculty council.

7.1.2 Amendments to these regulations which also apply to a particular academic year shall be implemented before the beginning of that year and published in the prescribed manner, unless earlier implementation of an amendment to the regulations is strictly necessary and in all reasonableness does not harm students' interests.

7.1.3 Furthermore, amendments to the regulations may not adversely affect any prior decision pertaining to students taken by the board of examiners on the basis of these regulations.

### **Article 7.2 Publication**

The department takes care of the appropriate publication of these regulations, of the rules and guidelines set by the board of examiners, and of any amendment to these articles.

### **Article 7.3 Entry into Force**

These regulations will enter into force on 1 September 2009.

## Appendices

A: Master's thesis regulations

B: Bridging programmes

C: Generic regulation on examination re-sits

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## Appendix A: Master's thesis regulations

### Regulations concerning the procedure surrounding the master's thesis

#### Article 1. General terms

The thesis is a written report of research which the student carried out under supervision by a lecturer but with a high degree of independence. In principle, the thesis must be of sufficient quality (possibly following some modifications) to be published in an academic journal in the relevant field. The thesis must demonstrate among others that the student is able to:

- a. Completely independently formulate a research question which displays insight into the methodological principles, central issues and state of the art of his or her field of research;
- b. Independently formulate a realistic research plan which fulfils the criteria set in the relevant field of research;
- c. Critically and analytically report on existing academic debates *and* propose creative solutions based on secondary literature;
- d. Apply the more complex concepts/methods of his or her field to a corpus of primary source material (whether existing or collected during the student's own research);
- e. Formulate ideas clearly and correctly.

#### Article 2. Scope

A thesis for a 1-year research master's corresponds to a minimum of 20 ECTS, which generally corresponds to a maximum of 20.000 words including notes, bibliography and appendices.

#### Article 3. Language

The thesis is written in Dutch, English or (depending on the circumstances) in the target language of the programme.

#### Article 4. Supervision

1. The department is responsible in the early stages of the proceedings for putting the student in contact with a lecturer who will supervise his or her thesis. This should preferably take place upon commencement of the programme. This lecturer (the supervisor) must be an expert in the field of research covering the thesis topic.
2. In consultation with the supervisor, the student formulates a thesis plan and makes this known to the Board of Examiners.
3. The Board of Examiners appoints the supervisor as first reader. Following the advice of the first reader, the Board of Examiners then appoints a second reader. Should the nature or contents of the thesis make such a step desirable, a second reader can be appointed from experts outside the Department.
4. The first reader bears primary responsibility for the supervision of the thesis writing process;
5. The second reader reads and evaluates the final version of the thesis (see below). He or she is in principle not involved in the supervision unless his or her specialised knowledge in the field of the thesis topic is makes such a step desirable. Agreements concerning this must be made with the first reader/supervisor.
6. Following approval of the thesis plan, the student and the supervisor agree on the term within which the thesis will be handed in.
7. *At the very minimum*, the following communications must take place between student and supervisor:
  - a. An introductory discussion concerning the choice and scope of the thesis topic, the research question, the literature, the source materials, the general approach, consultation with appropriate experts, etc.;
  - b. A discussion of the working plan for the thesis;
  - c. A discussion of one or more intermediate stages of the thesis;
  - d. A discussion of the final version of the thesis, in which the evaluation of the thesis is made known and explained.
8. If, in the course of supervision, problems should occur between the student and his or her supervisor(s), the Board of Examiners, after having heard all parties, is responsible for reaching a final decision.

## **Article 5. Assessment**

1. The student submits at least three copies of the thesis: two for the supervisors/reviewer and one for the Department.
2. A thesis must be marked within four weeks. Between 1 June and 31 August, this period is extended to a maximum of six weeks.
3. The final mark for the thesis is determined by the first reader in consultation with the second reader.
4. The thesis is assessed on at least the following aspects:
  - a. The originality of the research question and the manner in which it has been put into practice;
  - b. The critical analysis of secondary literature;
  - c. The critical analysis of source materials;
  - d. Language use, structure and style;
  - e. The degree of independence displayed during the research and supervision process.
5. If the first and second reader disagree on the final mark, the Board of Examiners determines the mark.

## **Article 6. Appeals**

The student can appeal against the assessment of his or her thesis to the Board of Examiners or the Examinations Appeal Board. For more information, please contact the coordinator of the programme.

## **Article 7. Fraud, plagiarism, copyright, archiving**

1. Fraud is understood to mean, among others:
  - a. Entirely or partially copying texts/formulations of other authors without the use of quotation marks and accurate mention of the source (plagiarism);
  - b. Commissioning others to write (parts of ) a text;
  - c. Creating fictitious data.
2. Cases of fraud (or suspicion of fraud) are reported by the first reader to the Board of Examiners who – depending on the nature, scope and frequency of fraud – may decide to declare the thesis null and void. In this case, the student is expected to write an entirely new thesis.
3. Copyright for the thesis belongs to the student.
4. The Department is obliged to keep one copy of all theses for a minimum of seven years in the Department's archive or the Departmental library.

## **Appendix B: Bridging Programmes**

Not applicable.

## **Appendix C: Generic regulation on examination re-sits**

Not applicable.