



Universiteit Leiden

Course and Examination Regulations 2009-2010

Research Master's Programmes Middle Eastern 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*)¹ 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 General Provisions

Article 1.1 Scope of the Regulations

These regulations apply to the teaching and examinations of the master's degree programme Middle Eastern Studies, hereinafter referred to as the programme. The programme is offered by 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*]²: 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*]²: 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*): register³ 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. 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,
 - 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

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

- particular skills;
- l. prospectus: a document containing details and binding information on the programme;
 - m. 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;
 - n. the Act: the Higher Education and Research Act [*Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek*] (WHW).
 - o. working day: Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays;
 - p. master's thesis: the result of one of the practicals as referred to under k.;
 - q. thesis supervisor: the lecturer associated with the programme responsible for the supervision of the MPhil-thesis or final project report;
 - r. 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;
 - s. 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.

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*]⁴ shall apply to the programme and its courses.

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

Chapter 2 Description of the Programme

Article 2.1 Objectives of the Programme

After a five-year educational programme the research masters student is expected to be able to function as scholarly researcher at the beginning of his or her career, either in a semi-scholarly position or at the university. With this, the student is well equipped to round off successfully a doctoral research project within the allotted time. In other words, the student has been trained to the level of a fully-fledged academic, who has learned to solve complex scholarly problems independently in a critical and creative manner, and is able to deliver an excellent report thereof both verbally and in writing. As the result of the international orientation of the research masters programme, which guarantees that accordance with foreign institutions is assured, after the two years' master the student can continue his or her studies abroad. The programmed sojourn abroad during the second or third semester can form the initial impetus to this.

Article 2.2 Specialisation(s)

The programme offers the following specialisations:

- Arabic, Persian and Berber;
- Christianity of the Middle East;
- Egyptology;
- Hebrew and Aramaic;
- Islamic studies;
- Mesopotamia and Anatolia;
- Turkish.

Article 2.3 Achievement Levels

The following achievement levels apply with regard to the programme:

- I. Knowledge and insight
 - i. thorough knowledge of and insight into the content of the discipline and into the content of the discipline and into the core concepts, the mechanisms, the research methods and techniques, and the development of the specialisation;
 - ii. thorough knowledge of and insight into the interdisciplinary position of the specialisation;
 - iii. insight into the societal relevance of the specialisation.
- II. Skills
 - i. the ability to select and compile discipline-related literature and sources independently, with the help of traditional and modern techniques (heuristic skills);
 - ii. the ability to independently study discipline-related literature and sources and to assess these as to their quality and reliability;
 - iii. the ability to formulate under expert supervision a clear and substantiated problem definition and to reduce this to well organised and easily manageable sub-problems;
 - iv. the ability to explicate the results of research in a clear and substantiated manner in an oral and a written report that meet the criteria laid down for the relevant specialisation;
 - v. the ability to set up and execute a research project under expert supervision.

Article 2.4 Structure of the Programme

The programme offers full-time tuition only.

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 120 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 semesters⁵.

Article 2.8 Language of Instruction

In compliance with the Code of Conduct regarding Foreign Languages [*Gedragscode Voertaal*⁶] the language(s) of instruction and examination in the programme is English.

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.

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.

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

Chapter 3 Curriculum

Article 3.1 Compulsory Components

3.1.1 The compulsory components (including the master's thesis) are listed in the prospectus. 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 procedure involved in the appointment of the thesis supervisor (and a second reader /referee) by the board of examiners, and the procedure regarding the assessment of the master's thesis and the division of responsibilities between the thesis supervisor and the second reader / referee.

Chapter 4 Examinations and Final Examination

Article 4.1 Frequency of Examinations

- 4.1.1 For each component, examinations will be held two times 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 Not applicable.
- 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*^f].
- 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*], the 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.

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 4.9 below which provides for the access of students to examination scripts – and of appeals procedure.

Article 4.7 Presentation 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 ten 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 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 is awarded to those who have passed the final examination, with the additions «of Arts».

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 Research Master's Programme

Section 5.1 Direct Admission

Article 5.1 Direct Admission

Not applicable.

Section 5.2 Conditional Admission

Article 5.2 Proof of Admission

5.2.1 Proof of admission is required for enrolment.

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*]⁷.

Article 5.3 Admission Requirements

Without prejudice to the provision in paragraph 5.2.2 regarding the capacity, those will be admitted to the programme who:

- have a demonstrated affinity with and ability for scholarly research; and
- possess the skills, understanding and knowledge that may have been acquired at the end of a bachelor's programme, in particular:
 - sufficient reading and translation skills in the language or languages that are of essential importance within the track concerned; and
- have earned the degree of Bachelor (preferably in the field of Middle Eastern or Islamic Studies or another equivalent degree with a relevant specialisation) at a university not being a university of professional education, or demonstrate to meet the requirements for such a degree; and
- are sufficiently proficient in English (a 6.5 score (IELTS) or a 570/230/88-90 (TOEFL-test)), to be assessed by the board of admissions.

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 **Error! Reference source not found.**, the board of admissions will compile a bridging programme with tests.

5.4.4 If a student is admitted to the programme under paragraph **Error! Reference source not found.**, 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.

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

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

Appendix A: 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 2-year research master's corresponds to a minimum of 30 ECTS and a maximum of 40 ECTS, which generally corresponds to a maximum of 30,000 words including notes, bibliography and appendices.

Article 3. Language

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

Article 4. Supervision

1. The coordinator of the programme is responsible for putting the student in the early stages of the proceedings 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: Generic regulation on examination re-sits

Not applicable.