This policy paper sets out an UvA-wide assessment policy framework. It is vital for both educational institutions and students that institutions can vouch for the exit level of their students. This has resulted in a major focus on assessment and assessment policy, including within the degree programmes at the University of Amsterdam.

New legislation, the new accreditation system and the major importance that the UvA attaches to study success have prompted an urgent review of our assessment policy. In particular, this entails looking at how Examinations Boards can fulfil their weightier role, how the quality of the local assessment policy can be improved at the institutional level, how the Executive Board can effectively be 'in control', and which aspects of the assessment policy can reinforce the UvA's approach to study success.
Disclaimer: This translation is provided for information purposes only. In the event of a difference of interpretation, the original Dutch version of this document is binding.
# Contents

2 1. Introduction

5 2. Background

5 2.1. Approach

5 2.2. Principles and targets

6 2.3. Definition of assessment

8 3. Conditions for the assessment process

8 3.1. Clear relationship between descriptors, learning outcomes, educational objectives and assessment

10 3.2. Choosing the assessment/test format

12 3.3. Test design

12 3.3.1. Design and prior checking of test questions

15 3.3.2. Checking the test questions

15 3.4. Administering the test

18 3.5. Marking the test

19 3.5.1. Allocating marks

20 3.5.2. Publication of results and the validity period

21 3.6. Feedback on tests

22 4. Conditions for the scheduling and distribution of assessments

22 4.1. Continuous assessment of curriculum components

24 4.2. Numbers of final tests and compensation

25 4.3. Resits

27 5. Conditions for assessing work placements and final projects

30 6. Conditions for rules and regulations

30 6.1. Teaching and Examination Regulations and Rules and Guidelines

31 6.1.1. Fraud and plagiarism

32 6.2. Evidence

33 7. Conditions for the quality assurance of assessment and testing

33 7.1. Responsibilities

33 7.1.1. The Executive Board

34 7.1.2. The dean

34 7.1.3. The College and Graduate School director/programme director

35 7.1.4. The Examinations Board

36 7.1.5. The examiners

36 7.1.6. The department chair

36 7.2. Procedure for evaluating assessments

37 7.2.1. Random evaluation of tests, work placement reports and theses

38 7.2.2. Regular teaching evaluations

38 7.2.3. Evaluation of complaints and appeals

39 Appendices
1. **Introduction**

It is vital for both educational institutions and students that institutions can vouch for the exit level of their students. Since the initiation of the Bologna process, the spotlight has focused increasingly on the quality of graduates. More than ever, Dutch graduates are expected to meet the standards of the international marketplace. This has resulted in a great deal of attention being paid to assessment and assessment policy, including within the degree programmes at the University of Amsterdam.

For a number of reasons, however, extra attention must be paid in the short term to assessment and testing:

1. When the (Dutch) Administration Reinforcement Act\(^1\) took effect in September 2010, it strengthened the role and position of the Examinations Boards. More explicitly than in the past, the Act stipulates, among other things, that the Examinations Board is the authoritative body that guarantees exam quality and therefore the exit level of the students. A national survey conducted by the Education Inspectorate in 2009 showed that only a small proportion of the Examinations Boards were prepared for this weightier role. In order to carry out their duties, the Examinations Boards need to be well informed about their required composition and tasks, and to have access to formats for annual reports and other documents, a rules and guidelines model, and assessment policy frameworks.

2. In line with the Administration Reinforcement Act, the importance of assessment and testing has also been bolstered by the new accreditation system that came into effect in 2011. Under the new system, a programme is no longer granted accreditation if the *assessment and testing* aspect is judged ‘unsatisfactory’. Unlike under the old procedures, this aspect cannot be compensated for by other aspects. Under the new system, the institution can opt to take part in an institutional audit. If it passes this audit, the programmes can participate in a limited, more targeted programme accreditation.

\(^1\) Bulletin of Acts, Orders and Decrees, no. 119 (2010).
The institutional audit requires the board of the institution to be in control of the quality of the programmes, with a specific focus on assessment policy.

3. At the UvA, the improvement measures identified in the Study Success Action Plan are closely linked to the assessment policy. Following a series of discussions with the programme representatives, the Study Success Task Force concluded that there was a need to draw up a number of university-wide practical guidelines for local assessment policy.

The new legislation, the new accreditation system and the major importance that the UvA attaches to study success have prompted an urgent review of our assessment policy. In particular, this entails looking at how Examinations Boards can fulfil their weightier role, how the quality of the local assessment policy can be improved at the institutional level, how the Executive Board can effectively be ‘in control’, and which aspects of the assessment policy reinforce the UvA’s approach to study success.

To this end, this policy paper presents an UvA-wide assessment policy framework. This Framework has arisen out of a dialogue with representatives of the Colleges and Graduate Schools and the Examinations Boards. Supplementary to this Framework, models for rules and guidelines were made available in autumn 2010, together with formats for the annual reports of the Examinations Boards.

This Framework outlines the preconditions that the assessment policy for UvA programmes must comply with. As a result of the Framework, the assessment policy for programmes needs to be critically reviewed and, where necessary, adjusted. The programmes remain at liberty, however, to decide on their own interpretations of the preconditions if different approaches are possible. The UvA-wide framework seeks to make agreements on the generic quality of assessment and testing at the UvA and makes no claim to prescribing the best approach for individual programmes (see also Principles and targets, Section 2.2).

The Assessment Policy Framework is divided into five sections: conditions for the assessment and testing process, from test formats to marking (Section 3); conditions for the scheduling and distribution of assessments (Section 4); conditions for the assessment and testing of major course components such as work placements and final projects (Section 5); conditions for rules and regulations concerning assessment (Section 6); and conditions for the quality
assurance of assessment and testing (Section 7). These sections are based on the assessment literature, current UvA education policy and the national legislation and regulations that must be complied with. They result in the preconditions that together make up the Assessment Policy Framework. A preparation and decision-making process has led to agreement on this set of preconditions.

**Reader’s guide**

The preconditions in the Assessment Policy Framework are outlined in the body of the text. The conditions that the assessment policy and assessments at the UvA must comply with can easily be found in the text because they are numbered and italicised. A summary of all the conditions can be found in Appendix 1. Because this document is intended for a wide audience within the UvA, it seeks not only to explain how the Framework was established, but also to serve as a guide for possible ways to implement it. Lecturers, programme directors, directors of Colleges and Graduate Schools and members of the Examinations Boards are therefore referred – via ‘Intermezzos’ and references to the literature, websites and best practices – to possibilities for translating the Framework to their own situation. Any reader who is not primarily interested in these aspects can of course skip these passages, all of which are clearly marked.
2. Background

2.1. Approach

The preparation of the UvA Assessment Policy Framework was inspired by a similar approach adopted by the University of Groningen. There, an Assessment Project Group was charged with making a proposal for an effective assessment policy and with formulating the required preconditions. This led to a report in 2007 identifying 18 preconditions for effective assessment and testing. These preconditions were not intended as restrictions, but rather as a framework for the assessment policies of each faculty and programme. Each faculty was then tasked with devising its own assessment policy that satisfied the preconditions outlined in the framework.

A discussion in May 2010 with the UvA’s Examinations Boards and College and Graduate School directors revealed broad support for developing a similar model for the UvA. In the summer of 2010, the programmes therefore compiled an inventory of all existing documents in the field of assessment and testing which could serve as a basis. Various other available documents on assessment were also consulted, including a report and discussion paper by the Study Success Task Force and a recommendation for an UvA-wide online testing service. The Framework presented below owes its origins to these documents and to the Groningen framework.

2.2. Principles and targets

Two key principles were adhered to in the formulation of the UvA Assessment Policy Framework:

1. Assessment is already well regulated for the majority of programmes. This is evident from an inventory conducted among the Examinations Boards in the summer of 2010, as well as from judgements made in the ‘assessment’ category of the accreditation procedures for the programmes. Of the 168 evaluations carried out in the period 2004-2010, on no occasion was the ‘assessment’ category deemed to be unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, the accreditation reports and the inventory revealed that there was still room for improvement.
Moreover, the new accreditation system means that the assessment policy needs to be made more explicit.

*This Framework is intended to contribute to these two aims of improving and clarifying the assessment policy.*

2. Ownership of assessment policy must continue to reside with the programmes. With assessment and testing, it is essential that the form and content of tests should tie in closely with the objectives and nature of the programmes. This Framework therefore only sets out the minimum requirements for an effective assessment policy. It is then up to the programmes to define and establish the assessment policy for their own needs. In other words:

*This Framework sets out what a good assessment policy must contain, but leaves it up to the programmes to decide how to give specific shape to that policy in keeping with their own situation.*

2.3. **Definition of assessment**

Assessments guide student learning and motivate students to make an effort. A good assessment gives students information about which aspects they have or have not mastered. In addition, assessments provide information about the level of student knowledge, understanding and skills, including for lecturers and programme directors.

This policy paper adopts the following definition of an assessment:

*Any instrument used by a programme when making decisions about a student’s knowledge, understanding and/or skills.*

---

There are essentially two ways to assess a student’s progress and level:

1. *Formative assessment*
   This type of assessment is intended primarily as an evaluation tool to find out where a student stands at a particular moment. The results show what still needs to be done for the student to attain the desired final objective. Diagnostic assessments are prime examples of formative assessment.

2. *Summative assessment*
   A summative assessment is one that takes place at the end of a study component or study period for the purpose of allocating a final mark and corresponding ECTS credits (hence also partial assessments that yield a mark).
3. Conditions for the assessment process

The first part of this Assessment Policy Framework sets out the preconditions that UvA programmes must meet in order to ensure a high-quality assessment process. The programmes will be able to interpret and lay down these conditions partly in the Teaching and Examination Regulations (OER), the Rules and Guidelines and the course catalogue, and partly in an assessment policy that is drawn up separately.

A high-quality assessment process begins with clearly formulated educational objectives that assessments must tie in with. An appropriate test format needs to be chosen for each course component. In addition, explicit attention should be paid to reliability and validity in the design of the test. The test needs to be properly administered, as does the marking, the publication of results and providing feedback. These aspects are explained in the following sections on the basis of the literature on testing and assessment and are translated into an initial set of preconditions. ‘Intermezzos’ subsequently refer the reader to practical examples and tools that may be useful in terms of implementation for lecturers, Examinations Boards and those responsible for the programmes.

3.1. Clear relationship between descriptors, learning outcomes, educational objectives and assessment

The Dublin Descriptors were drawn up in 2004 by a group of European higher education specialists to explain the level of a curriculum (applied/HBO and research university/WO, Bachelor’s and Master’s). The development of these descriptors was prompted by a desire to align the levels of programmes across Europe, in part to assist students wishing to take part of their study programme.
at a university abroad. The Dublin Descriptors provide a general description of the level that a student must have attained in five areas:\footnote{See Appendix 2 for a comprehensive description of the Dublin Descriptors.}

1. knowledge and understanding
2. application of knowledge and understanding
3. making judgements
4. communication
5. learning skills.

The Dublin Descriptors are expressed in very general terms, however. Each programme has to interpret these areas in a way that is appropriate to the content and culture of the programme and discipline concerned. The programme-specific interpretation of the descriptors must be reflected in the learning outcomes for the programme.

The programme curriculum is therefore a translation of the learning outcomes into practice. The content and design of the curriculum enables students to attain the learning outcomes of the programme. For this to happen, it is vital that the learning outcomes be covered by the various curriculum components as a whole, or conversely, for the learning outcomes to be developed into concrete, testable educational objectives for each curriculum component. Educational objectives indicate what students should achieve in a given period and they tie in with the level of the curriculum component (introductory, basic, in-depth, specialisation). A well-formulated educational objective should satisfy the following criteria:

- the knowledge, understanding or skills that the student must have acquired are expressed as concretely as possible,
- behaviour that the student must be able to demonstrate is described in terms of observable activities.

An assessment must then be able to determine whether the student has sufficiently mastered the educational objectives. In other words, assessment and testing should always relate clearly to the educational objectives of a curriculum component. The teaching method is inextricably bound up with this, as it too must tie in with these objectives. In other words, educational objectives, assessment and teaching methods must form an integrated whole.
Condition 1

There is a clear (i.e. explicit) relationship within the programme between the Dublin Descriptors, learning outcomes, educational objectives of curriculum components, teaching methods and assessment/test formats. This occurs as follows. The programme has clearly formulated learning outcomes based on the Dublin Descriptors. The educational objectives of curriculum components are collectively consistent with the learning outcomes of the programme. The educational objectives, test formats and teaching methods tie in with one another.

3.2. Choosing the assessment/test format

The test format must tie in with the educational objectives and teaching methods of a curriculum component. It is one of the key factors driving the learning behaviour of students, who will adopt a different study approach for a multiple-choice test than for an oral exam. Choosing a suitable test format can be difficult at times, for example in the case of educational objectives relating to academic training, professional competences and complex skills. In such instances, combined test formats are often chosen to establish and assess whether a student has achieved all the educational objectives. Research shows that offering a range of test formats has a positive effect on student learning behaviour and improves assessment quality. Choosing one or more formats is of course often a matter of choosing what is best under the circumstances, because each test format has both advantages and disadvantages.

The following criteria play a role in the choice of test format, or combination of formats:

1) alignment with educational objectives and teaching methods;
2) test validity: the test must measure what it is supposed to test (see also page 12);
3) test reliability: the risk that outcomes are influenced by random factors should be minimised (see also page 13);
4) the possibilities offered by a test, involving both the elements that can be measured by a particular test format and a suitable test format for the size of the group;
5) costs/efficiency: for all tests it is important to weigh up whether the information yielded justifies the investment involved.
Intermezzo: Bloom’s taxonomy

In 1956, a committee of professors led by Prof. Benjamin Bloom devised a classification system for educational objectives. This was a general theoretical model for the purposes of inter-examiner communication. The result became known as ‘Bloom’s taxonomy’. This taxonomy is still used, albeit in a slightly modified form, to ensure that the content of an assessment matches the stated educational objectives.

Bloom et al. used six individual categories for cognitive educational objectives, whereby a progression through the different levels requires an ascending level of intellectual activity. In 2001 Anderson et al. adapted Bloom’s taxonomy on the basis of new insights.

---


6 For a more comprehensive overview, see http://www.uwsp.edu/education/lwilson/curric/newtaxonomy.htm.
Bloom and valid or invalid assessment and testing: an example

A team of lecturers that devotes considerable tutorial time in a Bachelor’s module to establishing links and helping students form opinions should make sure that this is also reflected in the assessment. Here, a test filled with knowledge details would not tie in logically and would put students on the wrong foot. The reverse also applies: if the emphasis during lectures is on establishing a knowledge base, lecturers should not automatically assume that students are therefore able to write a coherent argument as part of a test assignment. In short, there must be congruence between the targets that lecturers set themselves, the way they organise their teaching and how they assess. Educational psychologist John Biggs (1999) uses the term ‘constructive alignment’ to describe this congruence.7

3.3. Test design

3.3.1. Design and prior checking of test questions

When devising a test, the lecturer has to pay attention to validity, reliability and transparency. To better safeguard these aspects, there needs to be a way of organising feedback (see also Section 3.6).

Validity

Validity is the extent to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure. Two features contribute to the validity of a test, namely relevance and balance. Relevance refers to whether the items or tasks relate to the stated objectives of the programme, as well as to the desired level (or degree of difficulty). Balance refers to whether the number of items or tasks is consistent with a topic’s importance.

---

7 J. Biggs (1999), Teaching for Quality Learning at University, SRHE and Open University Press, Buckingham.
Intermezzo: Test blueprints

The specification model or test blueprint is a tool for guaranteeing the validity of a test. It juxtaposes the curriculum content and mastery level in table form. As well as ensuring that a test is valid, a test blueprint has other key functions:
- preventing too many assignments that target the same subject matter or skill,
- increasing the equivalence between two tests on the same subject matter (e.g. regular exam and resit) by developing both tests on the basis of a single blueprint,
- serving as a rationale for the test content vis-à-vis other stakeholders, such as colleagues, Examinations Board or assessment panel,
- if the complete set of test blueprints is taken together, providing a good overview of the structure of the programme in terms of level, complexity and knowledge structure, making it possible to assess whether learning outcomes have been achieved.

Reliability

If a test yields the same results when administered repeatedly under the same conditions, it is deemed reliable. The following features contribute to a test’s reliability:

Objectivity The questions are worded unambiguously and the response options are sufficiently distinct as to allow for consistency of assessment (in other words, independent of assessment time, assessor, etc.).

Specificity The questions are worded in such a way that only students who have mastered the content can answer them correctly. The different items should also be as discrete as possible.

Differentiation It should be possible on the basis of both the individual questions and the test as a whole to distinguish between students who have mastered the subject matter well and those who have mastered it less well.

Test length The number of questions is large enough to rule out lucky guesses.

Transparency

Students must know in advance what is expected of them during the test and what they will be assessed on. This means among other things that the educational objectives and the form of assessment are announced in advance through course catalogues, Teaching and Examination Regulations or other
sources. In addition, proper instructions are indispensable for and during the test. This can be done by means of a test cover page, or by publishing the information in a practical guide or posting it on the course’s Blackboard page. The instructions should contain at least:

- course, code, test format
- a clear explanation of the test procedure
- where necessary, instructions on how to complete the test
- a description of how the points are distributed across the questions or tasks
- information about the cut-off score
- time allotted for the test.

An example of a format for a test cover page can be found in Appendix 4.

Students also need to be familiar with the subject matter and skills to be mastered; in other words, the test should not present any surprises to students who have prepared well. It is therefore highly advisable, where possible, to administer a pilot test or make old exam papers with their answers available.

Finally, test layout is important for the purposes of transparency. Aspects to consider with regard to layout are:

- the questions should be easily distinguishable
- the numbering should be clear
- all references to a text or image should be correct
- there should be a clear distinction between questions and question components or response options (in multiple-choice questions).

**Condition 2**

*Examiners ensure, with a view to transparency, that the objectives and the type of assessment for a curriculum component are communicated in advance through course catalogues, Teaching and Examination Regulations or other sources, and that the test instructions are clear and comprehensive.*
### 3.3.2. Checking the test questions

Once the test has been devised, it is important to obtain some idea of the quality of the individual questions and of the test as a whole before it is administered. Although it is not possible to truly ascertain the quality of a test until it has been marked, some test features can nevertheless be evaluated in advance. These include relevance, clarity, objectivity, specificity and representativity in relation to the subject matter covered. To obtain the most objective judgement, the examiner should submit the test to a peer reviewer who is not involved in the course. This is not always feasible in practice, but having it checked by, say, a seminar lecturer will already greatly benefit the quality of the test.

**Condition 3**

*Lecturers apply a form of peer review or other check by third parties when devising a written or online test in order to test the relationship to the educational objectives and to obtain a judgement regarding its validity and reliability.*

### 3.4. Administering the test

The conditions under which a test is administered can have a major impact on the result.

**Infrastructure**

A sound infrastructure is indispensable when implementing an assessment policy that involves a wide variety of assessment formats. Different formats call for different facilities, such as display monitors, computers (equipped with the right software) or an adequate supply of chemicals, or simply a room with enough desks and chairs. To administer a test properly, these facilities have to be present and available in sufficient numbers and must meet certain quality standards.

**Condition 4**

*The programme director ensures that there are adequate facilities for administering the test by making timely agreements with the departments responsible (e.g. timetabling, Facility Services, Central Computer Services).*
Intermezzo: Online testing

Online testing has become an indispensable part of everyday testing practice. Its key benefits can be found in the area of efficiency. Online testing saves a great deal of time when it comes to marking and assessing tests for large numbers of students. It can also provide a solution in a study culture that emphasises regular (formative) assessment of progress.

Besides efficiency, online testing offers several other key advantages over ‘paper’ testing. The main advantages are:

a. Online testing makes it easier to give immediate feedback. This may take different forms, depending on the purpose of the test. Students could be given an overview of the questions they answered correctly or incorrectly, or could receive feedback on the content of their answer, perhaps with reference to additional literature.

b. Tests can be administered independent of time and place.

c. Because it is possible to use multimedia, online testing offers a range of new question types that are not possible on paper. In its simplest form, for example, this means that a listening test can be administered more efficiently. A more complex example from the programme in Medicine involves the use of ‘serious gaming’ to test the various (complex) skills required in an emergency department.

d. Online testing offers good analysis possibilities. If the results are available online, it is simple to conduct a question analysis, thereby increasing the reliability and quality of the test questions.

Online testing does of course also have its disadvantages. The main ones are:

1. Administering online testing places high demands on the infrastructure.
2. Online testing places demands on the IT competences of both the lecturers and students.
3. There is a risk that teaching will focus on knowledge that can be easily tested online.
4. Authentication: is the person sitting the online test actually who they say they are?

Recent years have seen a major focus on online testing at the UvA using the Proeve program. The results of projects carried out in this context give a clear picture of the possibilities that online testing can offer. They also shed light on what can and cannot be done using this technology and on the challenges facing lecturers. All this has helped lay the foundation for a UvA-wide assessment landscape.

More information on online testing can be found at http://www.ic.uva.nl/proeve and http://wiki.uva.nl/proeve-uva.
Exam supervision
Invigilators play a vital role in maintaining order during an exam. They are the first point of contact for students, they are responsible for admitting students to the examination room or denying them entry, and they play a role in detecting fraud. It is therefore important for invigilators to be well prepared in advance for their duties. Given the high rate of turnover among invigilators and the fact that they are sometimes hired in from outside the university, the programmes need to draw up clear instructions for this group. An example of a protocol for invigilators can be found in Appendix 5.

Condition 5
The Examinations Board establishes an invigilation protocol outlining the preconditions for exam supervision (the number of invigilators per room or student; invigilator criteria) and the duties, powers and responsibilities of the invigilators.

Intermezzo: Observers during oral exams
It is advisable to have an observer present during oral exams. This observer could be a second examiner, but also a random colleague or even another student. In this case the observer’s role is not so much to co-assess but rather to monitor the course of the oral exam. This can help prevent incidents, such as complaints about intimidation or sexual harassment.

Special arrangements
Because of special circumstances such as a disability, some students are eligible for an individual arrangement when it comes to sitting exams. This may involve an alternative test format, extending the exam time, etc. The Teaching and Examination Regulations (OER) set out the conditions under which students are eligible for a special arrangement. They state what this arrangement broadly entails and explain what a student must do to take advantage of these special provisions. The OER must also stipulate how lecturers and/or invigilators are to be notified about this matter.

Condition 6
The Teaching and Examination Regulations of a programme set out the options for alternative forms of assessment for students with a disability.
3.5. **Marking the test**

Marking a test containing closed test items does not take long if the test is administered online or if a scoring form is used. For tests with open questions, as well as test formats involving essays/short essays, etc., model answers are indispensable, especially if more than one person is involved in the marking. These need not be full answers; keywords can be used to refer to elements that the answers must contain. A set of model answers can also be used as a tool for giving feedback to students (see also Section 3.6).

Marking a test or statistically analysing it may reveal that it has failed to meet the quality criteria on a number of points; in the most extreme cases this may apply to the test as a whole. This could be in relation to the level of difficulty, the extent to which the test questions have a discriminating aspect, or shortcomings relating to content. It is important to check the test for these aspects before marks are allocated.

**Condition 7**

*A set of model answers is available for each test.*

3.5.1. **Allocating marks**

**Cut-off mark**

The cut-off mark for a test is the score that marks the boundary between a pass and a fail. There are two ways of determining the cut-off mark for a written test:

1. Absolute cut-off mark: this indicates which part of the curriculum students need to master in order to attain the cut-off mark, for example 55% (taking into account the chance of guessing). This formulation of the cut-off mark corresponds to the pass mark, expressed in numbers. The UvA observes a pass mark of 5.5.

2. Relative cut-off mark: the boundary between a pass and a fail is determined on the basis of the performance of the group as a whole.

Both methods have their advantages and disadvantages. An absolute cut-off mark does not take into account the quality of a test or contingencies. Using a relative cut-off mark means that students who did not adequately prepare for the test can influence the performance of the group, which could result in undeserving students passing.
A mix of an absolute and relative cut-off mark can mitigate both advantages.\(^8\) For example, an absolute cut-off mark could be used, which is then modified if more than, say, 40% of students fail. This option could be chosen, for example, if the test is a new one and its level of difficulty has not yet been sufficiently established.

The method for determining the cut-off mark is primarily the responsibility of the examiner or the programme. It is important to inform students about which method will be used. If it emerges, for example, that a test item was open to multiple interpretations, a proviso can be added whereby the pass mark is adjusted. If an absolute cut-off mark is used, it must also be clear what procedure will be followed in the event that an unacceptably high percentage of students fail.

**Grading schemes**
The Executive Board of the UvA has defined six grading schemes for establishing students’ results/final results. These are as follows:

a. 1-10  
b. 1-10, whole and half numbers  
c. 1-10, one decimal point  
d. Dutch letter grade  
e. international letter grade A-F, with + and –  
f. NAV/AVV (i.e. requirements fulfilled/requirements not fulfilled).

In addition, there are general, non-numerical annotations, namely:

NA = not present/not attended  
VR = exempt  
– = not yet completed

The examiner can add the annotation ‘–’ (not yet completed) to indicate that a calculation of the final mark that is done outside the administration system will not yield a result (e.g. because not all the partial results are known and the calculation cannot be made).

---

Appendix 6 shows the different letter grades and the corresponding numerical values in greater detail.

**Condition 8**

*The examiner communicates clearly to students how cut-off marks are determined and which grading schemes are used.*

3.5.2. **Publication of results and the validity period**

Responsibility for publishing the official final results rests with the relevant administrations. Students can only derive rights from results posted in the Student Information System (SIS). If lecturers post results on a Blackboard site, for example, these results must always be made anonymous; in other words, only student numbers should be reported.

The validity period for marks is defined for each programme in the Teaching and Examination Regulations (OER).

**Condition 9**

*The programme establishes a clear procedure for the publication of results that complies with the rules for the protection of personal information.*

3.6 **Feedback on tests**

Every test that a student learns nothing from is a missed opportunity. While all results that students obtain are already a form of feedback, a mark alone is not enough to give students an idea of the extent to which they have mastered the material. Marking a test should involve qualitative feedback that is useful for students. It is not enough to simply cross something out or add a comment like ‘unclear’. Marking needs to be substantiated in such a way that students can use it to improve their performance.

After every written test, students must be given an opportunity to discuss and/or inspect the tests. Students should be given the model answers. Allowing them to inspect model answers is not an optional matter; jurisprudence has established that students have a right to the answer key.
How and when feedback is given is not laid down. It is not mandatory to post the correct answers (multiple-choice) or model answers (open questions, essay questions, etc.) on Blackboard immediately after the exam. In this context, it can also suffice to post them when the marks are announced or to organise inspection or debriefing sessions in which the right answers are announced.

**Condition 10**

*The test procedures make provision for adequate feedback. Tests are assessed within a predetermined timeframe and are made available to students for inspection. These procedures form part of the Teaching and Examination Regulations and are evaluated and modified annually. The maximum marking period for final tests is set at 20 working days.*
4. Conditions for the scheduling and distribution of assessments

Improving study success rates is a policy priority at the UvA. The report by the Study Success Task Force places a great deal of emphasis on the ‘now-or-never’ culture that departments and faculties should strive for in their programmes. The aim is to encourage students to study throughout their programme and not just towards the end when the assessment occurs. The examination and resit policy has to tie in with this endeavour. Given that students tend to match their study activity to the assessment schedule, this is a way of promoting the desired study habits.

There is also a need for a different study culture. It should become a matter of course for students to pass and for resits to be an exception. This can be encouraged or enforced through the use of assignments and (compensatory) partial tests during the course and through a stricter resit policy. The following sections outline ways in which this can be achieved.

4.1. Continuous assessment of curriculum components

In the ‘enrol on time = participate actively = complete successfully’ system, student study habits are primarily encouraged by means of midterm tests and assignments. Having assignments and midterm tests count towards the final mark and permitting some degree of compensation helps students to study throughout the course, thereby ensuring that they are better prepared for the final test. There are of course many ways to achieve this, such as by introducing partial tests, optional assignments that yield bonus points, take-home assignments or Blackboard tests (attractive for large programmes).

The important point is that students are rewarded for studying hard during the course. Assignments and midterm tests therefore need to be substantial and representative (i.e. they should produce a result and students need to know what is expected of them) and there has to be some degree of compensation (especially for partial tests). In addition, it has to be clear that these
opportunities are only offered during the course. As a rule, assignments, partial
tests and midterm tests cannot be repeated or resubmitted. Under such a system
all students enrolled in a course also automatically take part in all tests,
assignments and the final test. This has now become standard practice at the
Faculty of Humanities of the UvA, among others.

It is especially important in the first year of the Bachelor’s programme to teach
students an active approach to studying by regularly administering tests. This
can be achieved through both formative and summative assessments. It has been
shown that students who learn good study habits at an early stage and who thus
have a good study pace maintain this attitude and pace for the remainder of
their educational career.

When scheduling midterm assignments and partial and final tests, it is essential
that there be coordination between the various curriculum components.
Competition between the different tests must be avoided. Where such competition
does exist, students will decide which test takes precedence, thereby devoting less
attention to other tests, which may result in a study completion delay.

**Intermezzo: Examples of continuous assessment**

Continuous assessment within a course can be achieved by means of partial exams or
midterm assignments, but there are also other ways to encourage students to study
during the course.

Several courses within the Physics and Astronomy programme have introduced take-
home-assignment arrangements. The most common type is one in which students who
pass 80% of the take-home assignments can earn bonus points for the exam. This
arrangement offers both a substantial reward for student effort (bonus points) and a
form of compensation (80% must be completed with a pass).

Students in the European Cultural Canon course must submit a thesis as their final
project. During the course there are also deadlines for submitting the thesis proposal,
annotated bibliography and thesis introduction. This ensures interim guidance for the
student’s learning process, without the need for an assessment involving a mark
(formative assessment).
Condition 11
Assessments of a curriculum component, particularly in the first year of a Bachelor’s programme, are distributed evenly across several assessment times during a course.

Condition 12
Competition between assessments for different curriculum components is avoided when scheduling the various assessment times.

4.2. **Numbers of final tests and compensation**

The report of the Study Success Task Force looks at the ‘cross-country model’, in which students have to pass many exams in order to successfully complete the year. While a large proportion (e.g. about 70%) pass a particular interim test, there are other students who fail that test. The more final tests there are, the less likely it becomes that a substantial percentage of that year’s group will pass everything. Or, conversely, the fewer final tests there are, the greater the chance that a substantial proportion of the students will pass them all.

In order to increase the likelihood that students will complete a full year, consideration could be given to introducing compensation systems. There are various ways of doing this. Some programmes operate by the rule that ‘fails’ (e.g. a single 5) can be compensated by higher marks in another course (in fact, the method used for final exams at secondary school). This approach can certainly be defended for the first year of a Bachelor’s programme because of the broad range of courses on offer. Another option is to make the results in certain related courses (e.g. research methods and statistics) eligible for mutual compensation in order to create larger entities and reduce the number of final tests. This system is sometimes referred to as ‘lots of tests and little accountability’.

Condition 13
A maximum of 10 final tests are scheduled for each academic year.
4.3. **Resits**

At present, it is common for several resits to be offered, which in practice can prompt students to adopt a ‘wait-and-see’ approach and to procrastinate. In the ‘now-or-never’ system that the UvA is striving for, it is counter-productive and even paradoxical to offer many resits. The number of resit opportunities should therefore be kept to a minimum.

Various studies have also shown that study success rates for second resits in particular are minimal. Added to that, as with the scheduling of regular tests, there cannot be any competition between the regular programme and the resits. In order to improve study success rates at the UvA in terms of duration of study programme and study success, resits should be reassigned their original function, which was to help students affected by bad luck or *force majeure*.

Making resits unattractive increases the chance of success during the regular assessment. There are several ways of doing this:

- The previous section describes a system of midterm assessment, whereby assessments within a curriculum component can be mutually compensated or students can earn a bonus. Assignments, partial tests and midterm tests cannot as a rule be retaken or resubmitted. In an arrangement of this kind, resits are unattractive because bonuses, midterm tests and final tests lapse if the student does not gain a pass. Students who fail are obliged to repeat the entire exam and they lose bonuses and compensations.

- With regard to scheduling, resits should as a matter of course only take place during and shortly after holiday periods or after days off because otherwise preparation will always be at the expense of the efforts needed for the scheduled (new) teaching.

At Utrecht University, which has introduced a university-wide system of midterm assessment and where resits have been rendered unappealing, remedial assignments are used for students who have performed adequately during the course but who have just missed out on a final pass mark. The cut-off mark was initially set at 5; this was later adjusted to 4. The system is based on the principle that ‘a resit must be earned’. The idea is that quick remedial opportunities can be offered to a limited group who deserve it, thereby limiting the risk that they will face study completion delay.
**Condition 14**

*Each curriculum component offers no more than one resit per academic year, organised at a time that does not compete with the regular programme.*

**Condition 15**

*In consultation with the lecturers, the programme director organises the assessment and testing times in the annual teaching schedule in such a way as to make it attractive for students to take part in the regular assessment times.*
5. Conditions for assessing work placements and final projects

Key components of the final phase of most programmes are the work placement, thesis, literature thesis and final project. Depending on the structure of a programme and the practices within a particular discipline, this can comprise separate components. Alternatively, the final project could also comprise a work placement and/or thesis.

The final project in particular marks the completion of an academic programme and, in that sense, it is an end product that is a test of academic competence. Given the importance of these components and the specific circumstances involved in their assessment, the Assessment Policy Framework devotes attention to them separately. The primary focus here is the concluding component of a programme (henceforth referred to as the Bachelor’s or Master’s project), but most points also cover a work placement or thesis that is programmed elsewhere in the curriculum.

Although a Bachelor’s or Master’s project culminates in a single mark in the vast majority of cases, students are in fact assessed on many aspects at the same time. Moreover, assessment of progress needs to occur at several different times in order to detect potential problems at an early stage. This begins with the choice of topic (assessing the academic content of a topic) and progresses via midterm evaluations (Is the student on schedule? Is the learning process running smoothly?) to the final assessment (Is the final result at a satisfactory level?). Many factors play a role here and it therefore needs to be clear in advance which requirements the students and supervisors, as well as the midterm and end products must meet. The most appropriate way to establish this is by means of a so-called ‘graduation handbook’ (also referred to as graduation, work placement or thesis regulations).

A graduation handbook sets out as clearly and comprehensively as possible the information about the Bachelor’s or Master’s project for each programme. This information is also made available to external stakeholders, for example for final projects conducted outside the UvA.
The graduation handbook addresses the following:
- the scope of the Bachelor’s or Master’s project and its place in the curriculum
- the admission requirements for the Bachelor’s or Master’s project
- the set requirements for the topic and how a student can make the topic choice
- where applicable, the set requirements for an action plan
- the maximum period for completing the project and how to deal with any overrun
- agreements on supervision and midterm evaluation times
- the set requirements for end products (report length and structure, layout, duration of presentation, etc.)
- the type of assessment for the end product(s), including assessment criteria
- options regarding complaints or problems.

Condition 16

*Each programme has a graduation handbook containing the elements in the above text box.*

Because the Bachelor’s or Master’s project is such an important assessment tool for testing a student against a programme’s learning outcomes, transparency and reliability are essential. Assessment reports by quality assurance agencies (Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities, QANU, and Certikik) and the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) explicitly address these two issues in instances where they are judged to be satisfactory and in situations where the assessment panel has identified shortcomings. The main criteria for a positive or negative judgement are:
- the presence or absence of a graduation handbook and assessment forms; these forms must contain assessment criteria that relate directly to the educational objectives of the Bachelor’s or Master’s project,
- whether or not it is standard practice for the end product (as a rule) to be assessed by several people.

To increase the reliability of the final judgement, the end product of a Master’s project needs to be assessed by the supervising lecturer and a second assessor. This is often not practicable in the large Bachelor’s programmes, although the same criterion does of course apply there too. However, there are other options for increasing the reliability of the final assessment.
Intermezzo: Peer assessment in the Psychobiology programme

The Bachelor’s project in the Psychobiology programme entails writing a research proposal (in English), with the guidelines for an NWO application serving as the starting point. At the end of the Bachelor’s project, the students must present the research proposals to a plenary session attended by both fellow students and the responsible lecturers. The student peers assess the research proposals using a ranking system. In addition, the supervisor and a second lecturer assess the presentation and the defence of the proposal. The student who has submitted the best proposal is celebrated at the end of the session.

NWO = Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research

Condition 17

The programme uses assessment forms to assess the end products of the Bachelor’s or Master’s project.

Condition 18

The Master’s thesis is always assessed by more than one person. In the Bachelor’s programme, a method appropriate to the programme is established for increasing the reliability of the final judgement.
6. Conditions for rules and regulations

Each programme must have Teaching and Examination Regulations (OER) and Rules and Guidelines. There are also statutory provisions that apply to the archiving and storage of test-related documents. This section addresses these matters in turn.

6.1. Teaching and Examination Regulations and Rules and Guidelines

Students must at all times be fully and clearly informed about the assessment schedule for the programme. The (Dutch) Higher Education and Research Act refers to two documents that should set out the rules and regulations regarding testing and assessment: the Teaching and Examination Regulations (OER) and the Rules and Guidelines.

The Teaching and Examination Regulations describe the learning outcomes and content of the programme. They also regulate the following matters regarding testing and assessment:

- the number and sequentiality of tests
- type of assessment
- exemptions and admission requirements
- announcing results and the right of inspection
- resit opportunities
- validity period for exams
- provisions for students with a disability.

The Rules and Guidelines set out procedures for the Examinations Boards with regard to interim and final exams. They supplement the Teaching and Examination Regulations. By law, the content of the Rules and Guidelines is the exclusive prerogative of the Examinations Boards.

Various bodies have the right to be consulted or the right of approval with respect to the Teaching and Examination Regulations. The Board of Studies has the right to be consulted, while the Faculty Student Council has the right to be
consulted and, on a number of points, the right of approval. However, neither body has the right to be consulted or the right of approval with respect to the Rules and Guidelines.

In the event that the Rules and Guidelines are incorporated into the Teaching and Examination Regulations, the right to be consulted and the right of approval as laid down for the latter shall apply to all provisions, including therefore to provisions that actually belong in the Rules and Guidelines. Some Teaching and Examination Regulations refer to the course catalogue for the type of assessment and details of the admission requirements. In such cases, the Faculty Student Council and the Board of Studies have the right to be consulted with respect to the relevant sections of the course catalogue.

The UvA has drawn up a model for both the Teaching and Examination Regulations and the Rules and Guidelines. Some of the provisions in these models are binding. The models can be downloaded from the UvA website.

**Condition 19**

The Teaching and Examination Regulations and the Rules and Guidelines are worded clearly and unequivocally, and are based on the relevant available models.

### 6.1.1. Fraud and plagiarism

Standard regulations governing fraud and plagiarism for UvA students, established by the Executive Board, apply at the University of Amsterdam. These regulations contain clear definitions as to what constitutes fraud and plagiarism, and which sanctions apply. In addition, a website with information on fraud and plagiarism has been set up for students. The website and the relevant regulations can be found at the Student Service Point.

The UvA has entered into a university-wide licence with Ephorus to check for plagiarism. Ephorus compares the submitted text with existing texts on the internet and with other essays in its database. The results of these checks are sent to the lecturer. Where similarities to existing texts are detected, the degree of similarity is expressed as a percentage. Ephorus displays the essay excerpts alongside the texts from the possible source. More information on Ephorus can be found at the Staff Service Point under ‘Plagiarism’.
6.2. Evidence

In order to demonstrate the quality of the assessment and testing to external and internal committees, all assessment material (tests, model answers, assessment forms, completed exams, theses, etc.) needs to be archived. The following rules apply:

1. Exam questions and student answers, including essays and other written materials for which a mark or partial mark is allocated, are kept for at least two years after the exam result has been determined.
2. Bachelor’s and Master’s theses or final projects are kept for at least seven years.
3. Exam results (diploma supplements, source documents) are kept for at least 30 years.

Condition 20
The programme makes provision for a proper archiving system for all the relevant assessment material.
7. Conditions for the quality assurance of assessment and testing

A good assessment policy and good assessment procedure will not be effective unless there is proper involvement at all levels in implementing the policy. For this to happen, tasks and responsibilities need to be clearly defined and an effective evaluation system must be in place.

7.1. Responsibilities

The tasks and responsibilities with respect to the assessment process, as assigned within the UvA, are outlined below.

7.1.1. The Executive Board

The Executive Board:
• encourages a teaching and testing culture that embraces a ‘now-or-never’ approach;
• provides frameworks that the assessment policy of a faculty/programme must comply with;
• supports examiners so that they are able to perform their testing and assessment duties in a professional manner. This means incorporating into staff and training policy the principle that lecturers can gain (further) qualifications in the area of assessment. To this end the Board will ensure a suitable range of training courses;
• is responsible for a sound infrastructure surrounding the implementation of assessment.

The training of new lecturers in, for example, the area of assessment and testing is incorporated and hence defined in the various Basic Teaching Qualification
(BKO) programmes. In addition, the Amsterdam Institute for Lifelong Learning in Education (CNA) offers various training and refresher courses in the field of assessment and testing.

7.1.2. **The dean**

The dean:
- establishes the Teaching and Examination Regulations (OER) annually, bearing in mind the provisions contained in the model OER and the guidelines of the Executive Board;
- sets up an Examinations Board for each programme or cluster of programmes;
- appoints the members on the basis of their expertise (on the recommendation of the College or Graduate School director/programme director);
- ensures that the independent and expert functioning of the Examinations Board is guaranteed.

7.1.3. **The College or Graduate School director/programme director**

The College or Graduate School director/programme director:
- is responsible for formulating the learning outcomes for the programme and ensures that these satisfy the relevant criteria, i.e. that they conform to the Dublin Descriptors and to requirements from the national and international discipline/professional field;
- is responsible for the content of the programme: which courses, which scope, which period;
- ensures in consultation with lecturers that the stated learning outcomes are covered by the content of the curriculum (courses, educational objectives, etc.);
- establishes the assessment policy, incorporating recommendations from the Examinations Board;
- establishes a graduation handbook (see Section 3).
The Examinations Board

The tasks of the Examinations Board outlined below are confined to those aimed specifically at the assessment of course components or the programme as a whole. An overview of all the statutory duties of the Examinations Board can be found in Appendix 7.

The Examinations Board:
• is responsible for the ultimate assessment as to whether a student has satisfied the learning outcomes for the programme;
• safeguards the quality of assessments and tests through (random) evaluations (see also Section 7.2);
• appoints examiners to administer the tests and determine the results;
• can provide guidelines for examiners on assessing a curriculum component;
• establishes the Rules and Guidelines (see also Section 6).
If necessary, the Examinations Board can delegate some of its tasks to an evaluation committee under its jurisdiction.

Intermezzo: The role of Examinations Boards in joint programmes
In some programmes the teaching is provided by several institutions, as for example the Master’s in International Criminal Law (in partnership with Columbia University) or the joint Master’s in Natural Sciences offered together with VU University Amsterdam.

In the first instance (partnership with a university abroad), the UvA Examinations Board must nevertheless vouch for the exit level of the students. However, the Board does not have all the authorities over the exam components offered by the other university because Dutch laws and regulations do not apply there. In other words, while quality needs to be assessed at the programme level, the partner university is responsible for assessing and testing the components it provides. In this arrangement, the UvA recognises the components assigned to the partner university as part of the curriculum. Since the (Dutch) Administration Reinforcement Act took effect, a person holding an appointment at the partner university may be appointed to the UvA Examinations Board.

In the second instance (partnership with a Dutch university), a decision may be taken to form a joint Examinations Board.
7.1.5. The examiners

The examiners:
• are primarily responsible for test content, format and quality;
• ensure that a test satisfies the quality criteria of validity, reliability and transparency;
• ensure that there is clear communication to students about assessment and testing;
• are responsible for giving effective feedback to students on their performance.

Monitoring the academic content of curriculum components is a recurring point of discussion in the various external assessments. This relates primarily to work placements and final projects that are conducted externally (rather than at one of the UvA’s research institutes), but sometimes also to courses that are given mainly by guest lecturers. In such cases, the supervisor or guest lecturer is often not an examiner employed by the UvA. To guarantee the academic content of these curriculum components, an examiner appointed by an Examinations Board must always carry final responsibility for the curriculum component.

Condition 21

An examiner nominated by the Examinations Board always carries final responsibility for the quality of a curriculum component.

7.1.6. The department chair

The department chair is responsible for implementing staff and training policies with respect to lecturers in his or her department. This mainly involves the planning (content and weight) of tasks, training, and assessing a lecturer’s performance. He/she liaises in this regard with the College or Graduate School director.

7.2 Procedure for evaluating assessments

One of the tasks of the Examinations Board laid down in the (Dutch) Higher Education and Research Act is to monitor the quality of assessment and testing. The Administration Reinforcement Act has added further weight to this role
(see Appendix 7). To this end, it is important for the Examinations Board to regularly take note of the tests administered in the programme. After all, the Board is ‘the body that determines, in an objective and expert manner, whether a student satisfies the requirements set by the Teaching and Examination Regulations in relation to the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to obtain a degree’.\(^9\) This section sets out some ways in which quality can be monitored.

In instances where regular evaluation of assessment quality is already taking place, there is often a separate evaluation committee containing a testing and assessment expert. This arrangement could offer a solution, provided that the committee comes under the auspices of the Examinations Board, since the Board carries ultimate responsibility for monitoring quality.

### 7.2.1. Random evaluation of tests, work placement reports and theses

Assessments may be randomly evaluated by an Examinations Board, an evaluation committee or a testing and assessment expert. The evaluation looks not only at the validity, reliability and transparency of an assessment, but also at the content. An evaluation of content is mainly important for curriculum components where the focus is on the testing of skills (essays, theses, work placement reports, etc.), because the validity and reliability of these components are generally more difficult to establish than for a written exam.

The evaluation of assessment can occur in a more targeted fashion if the programme takes into account information about pass/fail percentages and average marks when selecting the tests. This latter information is available at the UvA through UvAdata.

External assessments often emphasise the involvement of Examinations Boards in the assessment of the end products of a Bachelor’s or Master’s project. In some programmes, this matter is automatically regulated by a provision stipulating that a member of the Examinations Board should be involved in assessing the end

---

\(^9\) (Dutch) Higher Education and Research Act, Article 7.12 (2).
product. In programmes where there is no standard procedure, the Examinations Board needs to conduct random checks on Bachelor’s and Master’s theses.

7.2.2. **Regular teaching evaluations**

The regular teaching evaluations (i.e. course evaluations) look at testing and assessment within a course. Although the appraisal of course evaluations is first and foremost the job of the Board of Studies, the Examinations Board may use the information contained in the evaluation as input to look more closely at how a course is assessed. Another option is to agree on a procedure whereby the Board of Studies involves the Examinations Board in its recommendations in cases where an evaluation reveals that the aspects of assessment and testing have scored below par.

7.2.3. **Evaluation of complaints and appeals**

An evaluation of complaints lodged with the Examinations Board and of appeals involving the Examinations Board of the programme in question can yield information about the quality of testing and assessment within the programme. If this evaluation reveals a trend, improvement measures can be taken where necessary.

**Condition 22**

*Systematic evaluations of the assessment schedule are conducted at both the module and programme level.*
Appendix 1

UvA Assessment Policy Framework: list of conditions

Condition 1
There is a clear (i.e. explicit) relationship within the programme between the Dublin Descriptors, learning outcomes, educational objectives of curriculum components, teaching methods and assessment/test formats. This occurs as follows. The programme has clearly formulated learning outcomes based on the Dublin Descriptors. The educational objectives of curriculum components are collectively consistent with the learning outcomes of the programme. The educational objectives, the test format and the teaching method tie in with one another.

Condition 2
Examiners ensure, with a view to transparency, that the objectives and the type of assessment for a curriculum component are communicated in advance through course catalogues, Teaching and Examination Regulations or other sources, and that the test instructions are clear and comprehensive.

Condition 3
Lecturers apply a form of peer review or other check by third parties when devising a written or online test in order to test the relationship to the educational objectives and to obtain a judgement regarding its validity and reliability.

Condition 4
The programme director ensures that there are adequate facilities for administering the test by making timely agreements with the departments responsible (e.g. timetabling, Facility Services, Central Computer Services).

Condition 5
The Examinations Board establishes an invigilation protocol outlining the pre-conditions for exam supervision (the number of invigilators per room or student; invigilator criteria) and the duties, powers and responsibilities of the invigilators.
Condition 6
The Teaching and Examination Regulations of a programme set out the options for alternative forms of assessment for students with a disability.

Condition 7
A set of model answers is available for each test.

Condition 8
The examiner communicates clearly to students how cut-off marks are determined and which grading schemes are used.

Condition 9
The programme establishes a clear procedure for the publication of results that complies with the rules for the protection of personal information.

Condition 10
The test procedures make provision for adequate feedback. Tests are assessed within a predetermined timeframe and are made available to students for inspection. These procedures form part of the Teaching and Examination Regulations and are evaluated and modified annually. The maximum marking period for final tests is set at 20 working days.

Condition 11
Assessments of a curriculum component, particularly in the first year of a Bachelor’s programme, are distributed evenly across several assessment times during a course.

Condition 12
Competition between assessments for different curriculum components is avoided when scheduling the various assessment times.

Condition 13
A maximum of 10 final tests are scheduled for each academic year.

Condition 14
Each curriculum component offers no more than one resit per academic year, organised at a time that does not compete with the regular programme.
Condition 15
In consultation with lecturers, the programme director organises the assessment and testing times in the annual teaching schedule in such a way as to make it attractive for students to take part in the regular assessment times.

Condition 16
Each programme has a graduation handbook containing the components indicated in the text box on page 28.

Condition 17
The programme uses assessment forms to assess the end products of the Bachelor’s and Master’s project.

Condition 18
The Master’s thesis is always assessed by more than one person. In the Bachelor’s programme, a method appropriate to the programme is established for increasing the reliability of the final judgement.

Condition 19
The Teaching and Examination Regulations and the Rules and Guidelines are worded clearly and unequivocally, and are based on the relevant available models.

Condition 20
The programme makes provision for a proper archiving system for all the relevant assessment material.

Condition 21
An examiner nominated by the Examinations Board always carries final responsibility for the quality of a curriculum component.

Condition 22
Systematic evaluations of the assessment schedule are conducted at both the module and programme level.
Appendix 2

Dublin Descriptors for Bachelor’s and Master’s programmes

**Bachelor’s degrees are awarded to students who**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge and understanding</th>
<th>Have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in a field of study that builds upon and supersedes their general secondary education, and is typically at a level that, whilst supported by advanced textbooks, includes some aspects that will be informed by knowledge of the forefront of their field of study.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applying knowledge and understanding</td>
<td>Can apply their knowledge and understanding in a manner that indicates a professional approach to their work or vocation, and have competences typically demonstrated through devising and sustaining arguments and solving problems within their field of study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making judgements</td>
<td>Have the ability to gather and interpret relevant data (usually within their field of study) to inform judgements that include reflection on relevant social, scientific or ethical issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Can communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning skills</td>
<td>Have developed those learning skills that are necessary for them to continue to undertake further study with a high degree of autonomy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Master's degrees are awarded to students who

Have demonstrated knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances that typically associated with Bachelor's level, and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context.

Can apply their knowledge and understanding, and problem-solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study; have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity.

Have the ability to formulate judgements with incomplete or limited information, but that include reflecting on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgements.

Can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously.

Have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous.
Appendix 3

Sample test blueprint for Liability Law

Name of course: Liability Law
Course code: B 1000

Place in skills chain:
- Oral skills: <test format>
- Written skills: <test format>
- Research skills: <test format>

Educational objectives

| Knowing legal rules and jurisprudence pertaining to Liability Law | 5 |
| Understanding relationships between tenets of Liability Law | 10 |
| Applying rules of law to legal problems pertaining to Liability Law | 15 |
| Analysing legal problems pertaining to legal liability | 20 |
| Analysing, evaluating and solving legal problems involving legal liability, supported by arguments | 50 |

Total value of educational objectives | 100% |

Composition of mark

* The cognitive levels refer to the levels in Bloom’s taxonomy.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive level*</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Cognitive level*</th>
<th>Assessment format</th>
<th>Weighting II (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Questions and assignments during tutorial</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Open questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Questions and assignments during tutorial</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Open questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Questions and assignments during tutorial</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Open questions</td>
<td>1+2+3 = 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Questions and assignments during tutorial</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Open questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Questions and assignments during tutorial</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Open questions</td>
<td>4+5 = 50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ECTS:** 5  
**Bachelor/Master:** Bachelor
Appendix 4
Sample cover page for exams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examination:</th>
<th>&lt;course and course code&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date and time of the exam:</td>
<td>&lt;date and time&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of the exam:</td>
<td>&lt;duration&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You must identify yourself with your UvA identification card or your UvA student card and passport or driving licence or any other valid proof of identification for students containing a photograph.

If you did not register for this exam, your exam will not be marked. If you believe that your exam should be marked despite this omission, you can write a letter to the director of the College or Graduate School specifying arguments and containing proof of your claims.

Write your name and student number on every sheet of paper you hand in.

Warning against cheating: Do not cheat! In the event of cheating, the maximum punishment will be exclusion from all examinations for the period of one year.

Your mobile phone should be switched off and should be put in your bag. Your bag needs to be closed and placed on the floor beside your desk.

During the exam, you are not allowed to go to the toilet unless the examination supervisor gives you permission to do so.

Tools allowed: <pencil, pen, eraser, ruler, (graphic) calculator, books, tablets, articles, etc.>

Specific information on this exam: <number of exercises, number of pages, maximum number of points that can be earned, etc.>

The results of this exam will be published within 15 working days after the date of the exam. <if relevant, add additional necessary comments>
Appendix 5

Sample protocol for invigilators

Exam supervision – guidelines and instructions for invigilators

Definitions:
Supervising lecturer: The lecturer responsible for the course being examined or a subject expert nominated as a supervising lecturer by the lecturer.
Invigilator: The person who supervises students during exams.

The powers of supervising lecturers and invigilators

1. At least one supervising lecturer and one invigilator are present at each exam.
2. The supervising lecturer is responsible at all times for the smooth running of the exam.
3. The number of invigilators is governed by the number of exam rooms and the capacity of the rooms. The number of invigilators per room is the room capacity divided by 50.
4. If the invigilator detects cheating during the exam, he or she notifies the student concerned and informs the supervising lecturer as quickly as possible. The invigilator makes a written account of the incident. Depending on the seriousness of the case, the supervising lecturer can on behalf of the Examinations Board immediately bar the student from further participation. The supervising lecturer confiscates the exam work that the student has produced thus far, together with any evidence. These are handed as soon as possible to the Examinations Board. The Rules and Guidelines for the Examinations Board regulate how the incident should be dealt with further.
The duties of supervising lecturers and invigilators

1. The supervising lecturer and invigilator need to report to the concierge in the building where the exam is being held at least 30 minutes before the start of the exam. The invigilator fetches the key to the exam room from the concierge and checks whether the building manager has placed enough exam papers and jotting paper in the room.

2. When the supervising lecturer and invigilator enter the room, they check whether the desks and chairs are arranged in readiness for the exam and that the room is of a satisfactory standard. The supervising lecturer and invigilator place the exam papers and jotting paper on the desks.

3. Fifteen minutes before the start of the exam the invigilator lets students enter the exam room.

4. The invigilator does not allow any student to enter who arrives more than 30 minutes after the exam has started.

5. The invigilator allows students wishing to leave the exam room the opportunity to do so, provided that this is not within the first 30 minutes following the start of the exam.

6. The invigilator announces at the start that any work from a student who has not registered via TAS (at the UvA, the Student Information System SIS) and who does not have an exam slip from the Examinations Board will not be assessed; this student can take part in the exam at his/her own risk. The invigilator will not enter into discussion with the student and will refer him/her to the Examinations Board.

7. At the start of the exam, the invigilator announces which exam is being administered in the room and hands out the exam papers.

8. The invigilator asks the students to turn off and put away their mobile phones, and to place their student ID card face-up on the desk for identification purposes. Students who do not have their student ID card with them may identify themselves by means of another valid form of identification.

9. The invigilator ensures that students do not lend each other books, calculators, etc. during the exam.

10. The invigilator checks the student ID cards in the first 30 minutes. Students who have forgotten their student ID or other ID card must write their signature on their exam paper and must take their student ID card to the lecturer the next day. The invigilator notes down the names of the students concerned.
11. If a student has a content-related question about an exam question, the invigilator refers him or her to the supervising lecturer, who gives an appropriate response.

12. The invigilator ensures that students who complete the exam within the time available hand in the completed exam work to him/her.

13. At the end of the exam session, the invigilator announces that the exam time is up. He/she collects the exam papers from all the students who are still present.

14. The invigilator allows dyslexic students with a declaration from the study adviser to spend a further 30 minutes maximum on the exam.

15. Once all the students have left the room, the invigilator locks the door and returns the key to the concierge.
# Appendix 6

## Grading Scheme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UvA grades</th>
<th>UvA letter</th>
<th>Grade point</th>
<th>UvA descriptive grade</th>
<th>Grade point</th>
<th>UK letter*</th>
<th>US letter*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.0 – 10.0</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>A+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.5 – 8.9</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.3 – 8.4</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.0 – 8.2</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.8 – 7.9</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.5 – 7.7</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3 – 7.4</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>Sufficient</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5 – 6.6</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>Sufficient</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1 – 6.3</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5 – 6.0</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6 – 5.4</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0 – 4.5</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The given conversion scheme is suggested for broad orientation purposes only. For more information on the Dutch grading culture in comparison to that of other cultures, please consult [www.nuffic.nl](http://www.nuffic.nl).
Appendix 7

Legislation regarding Examinations Boards*

* (Dutch) Higher Education and Research Act

Article 7.12 Examinations Board

1. Each programme or cluster of programmes at the institution has an Examinations Board.
2. The Examinations Board is the body that determines, in an objective and expert manner, whether a student satisfies the requirements set by the teaching and examination regulations in relation to the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to obtain a degree.

Article 7.12a Appointment and composition of the Examinations Board

1. The board of the institution will set up the Examinations Board and appoint its members on the basis of their expertise in the subject area of the programme or cluster of programmes in question. At least one member will be associated as a lecturer with the programme or with one of the programmes that make up the cluster of programmes.
2. The board of the institution will ensure sufficient guarantees of the impartial and expert functioning of the Examinations Board.
3. Before appointing a member, the board of the institution will hear the members of the Examinations Board in question.
Article 7.12b Tasks and authorities of the Examinations Board

1. Alongside the tasks and authorities laid down in Articles 7.11 and 7.12 [sic], second paragraph, an Examinations Board has the following tasks and authorities:
   a. to ensure the quality of the examinations, without prejudice to Article 7.12c,
   b. the adoption of guidelines and instructions within the context of the teaching and examination regulations referred to in Article 7.13, in order to assess and record the results of examinations,
   c. the granting of permission by the most appropriate Examinations Board to a student to follow a programme compiled by that student, as referred to in Article 7.3d, the final examination of which leads to the obtaining of a degree, whereby the Examinations Board will also indicate to which programme at this institution the programme is deemed to belong for the purposes of the application of this Act, and
d. the granting of exemptions from taking one or more examinations.

2. In the event that a student or external candidate is guilty of fraud, the Examinations Board may deny the person in question the right to take one or more interim or other examinations to be specified by the Examinations Board, during a period of no more than one year, to be determined by the Examinations Board. In the case of serious fraud, the board of the institution may, at the suggestion of the Examinations Board, permanently terminate the enrolment in the programme of the student in question.

3. The Examinations Board will draw up rules regarding the implementation of the tasks and authorities referred to in the first paragraph (items a, b and d), and the second paragraph, and on the measures it may take in this regard. The Examinations Board may, subject to conditions it may set, determine that a student need not pass every interim examination in order to pass the final examination.

4. In the event that a student submits a request or complaint to the Examinations Board concerning an examiner who is a member of the Examinations Board, the examiner in question will take part in processing the request or complaint.

5. Each year the Examinations Board will draw up a report on its work. The Examinations Board will submit this report to the board of the institution or to the dean.
**Assessment Policy Framework**

This policy paper sets out an UvA-wide assessment policy framework. It is vital for both educational institutions and students that institutions can vouch for the exit level of their students. This has resulted in a major focus on assessment and assessment policy, including within the degree programmes at the University of Amsterdam.

New legislation, the new accreditation system and the major importance that the UvA attaches to study success have prompted an urgent review of our assessment policy. In particular, this entails looking at how Examinations Boards can fulfil their weightier role, how the quality of the local assessment policy can be improved at the institutional level, how the Executive Board can effectively be ‘in control’, and which aspects of the assessment policy can reinforce the UvA's approach to study success.