

## **TEACHING AND EXAMINATION REGULATIONS 2024-2025**

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Throughout this text, the male pronoun is used to cover references to both male and female for the sake of brevity and convenience. No gender preference is intended.

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## **TITLE I. - SCOPE, DEFINITIONS, ABBREVIATIONS AND GENERAL PROVISIONS**

### **CHAPTER I. - Scope**

#### **Article 1      **(Scope)****

These teaching and examination regulations apply to all bachelor’s programmes, master’s programmes (master-after-bachelor and advanced master’s programmes), preparatory programmes, bridging programmes and postgraduate programmes.

For guest students who have their primary enrolment at another higher-education institution, these regulations apply insofar as they are applicable to their situation or have explicitly been deemed - fully or partially - applicable.

For doctoral programmes and the attainment of a PhD, specific regulations, approved by the Academic Council, apply.

For inter-university programmes, provisions other than those set out in these regulations may apply, provided they do not violate the relevant decrees.

### **CHAPTER II. - Abbreviations and definitions**

#### **Article 2      **(Abbreviations)****

For the purpose of these regulations, the following abbreviations are used (some are derived from Dutch, so do not necessarily match the English explanation given):

**ACTO:** Academic Language Centre;

**BEV:** Paid educational leave;

**DHO:** Higher Education Database;

**EEA:** European Economic Area;

**EVC:** Previously Acquired Competencies;

**EVK:** Previously Acquired Qualifications;

**IDLO:** Interfaculty Department for Teacher Training;

**IES:** Institute for European Studies;

**IRMO:** International Relations Office;

**MNM:** Advanced master's programme;

**OWSA:** Education and Student Administration;

**VLIR:** Flemish Interuniversity Council;

**VLIR-UOS:** Flemish Interuniversity Council – University Development Cooperation

**VOV:** Flemish training leave;

**WPO:** Tutorials, practical work and exercises.

### **Article 3 (Definitions)**

For the application of these regulations, the following definitions shall apply:

**Start of lectures:** start of week 2 of the academic calendar.

**Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations:** a set of regulations drawn up by the faculty in question specifying supplementary provisions added to the central Teaching and Examination Regulations. A supplementary Teaching and Examination Regulations document can be drawn up for the teacher training programme; for programmes organised by the Institute for European Studies (IES), it is the Supplementary IES Teaching and Examination Regulations document that is used.

**Academic year:** a one-year period starting on 1 September at the earliest and 1 October at the latest, and ending on the day before the start of the following academic year; in exceptional

circumstances, the governing body may decide to deviate from the one-year period by declaring an earlier or later start to the academic year.

**Aptitude inquiry:** the inquiry into a student's competencies prior to issuing an aptitude certificate.

#### **Scholarship students:**

- Students entitled to an educational grant from the Flemish Government.
- Students not entitled to the Flemish Government educational grant because they do not meet the study criteria but who do meet the financial and nationality criteria set out in Art I.3, point 14, b or c of the Higher Education Code. However, this does not apply to advanced post-graduate courses or students enrolled on the basis of an examination contract;
- Scholarship holders related to a Master Mind Scholarship – Flemish Government Fellowship Programme for Excellent Students.

**Certificate of aptitude:** proof or record showing that a student has acquired particular competencies as part of "EVC" (Previously Acquired Competencies) or "EVK" (Previously Acquired Qualifications).

#### **Almost-scholarship students**

- Students meeting the nationality criteria set out in Art. I.3, point 16 of the Higher Education Code who are not entitled to a Flemish Government educational grant but for whom the reference income does not exceed the ceiling for eligibility for an educational grant by more than EUR 3.768,00 (amount for the 2023-2024 academic year).
- Students meeting the nationality criteria set out in Art. I.3, point 16 of the Higher Education Code who are not entitled to a Flemish Government educational grant because their "cadastral income" (i.e. the hypothetical rental value of property as listed in the property register for tax purposes, specific to Belgium) constitutes too great a proportion of their total taxable income.

**Pre-exam study week:** the period preceding the examination period which is kept free of lectures and examinations or other methods of assessment - barring the exception included in Article 8. This period is reserved for students to prepare for examinations.

#### **BRUFACE masters:** Brussels Faculty of Engineering masters

English language master's programmes jointly organised by Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) and Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB) and Dutch language variations of such master's programmes organised by Vrije Universiteit Brussel:

Master of Science in Architectural Engineering;

Master of Science in de ingenieurswetenschappen: architectuur;

Master of Science in Civil Engineering;

Master of Science in de ingenieurswetenschappen: bouwkunde;

Master of Science in Electromechanical Engineering;  
 Master of Science in de ingenieurswetenschappen: werktuigkunde-elektrotechniek;  
 Master of Science in Chemical and Materials Engineering;  
 Master of Science in de ingenieurswetenschappen: chemie en materialen;  
 Master of Science in Electrical Engineering;  
 Master of Science in de ingenieurswetenschappen: elektronica en informatietechnologie.

**Cali:** Campus Lifecycle, student information system.

**Credit certificate:** formal recognition of the fact that a student has shown, by passing an examination, that he has acquired the competencies associated with a particular course unit. This recognition is set out in a document or a record and expressed in terms of the number of ECTS credits acquired.

**Credit contract:** a contract entered into by a student with the university under which the student enrolls with a view to acquiring a credit certificate for one or more course units.

**Diploma contract:** a contract entered into by a student with the university under which the student enrolls with a view to obtaining a degree or diploma for a study programme or enrolls in a preparatory or bridging programme.

**Threshold package:** The course units a student takes when initially enrolling for a bachelor's programme. This package of course units must be completed in threshold year 2;

**Threshold year 1:** the first year of enrolment in a specific bachelor's programme in Flanders;

**Threshold year 2:** the second year of enrolment in a specific bachelor's programme in Flanders. All course units of the threshold package must be completed in threshold year 2;

**ECTS credit:** an international unit, recognised within the Flemish Community, which corresponds to no less than 25 and no more than 30 hours of stipulated teaching, learning and assessment activities and indicates the study load of each programme and course unit.

**First examination period:** this consists of a first set of examinations (weeks 17 to 20) and a second set of examinations (weeks 38 to 42) during which the student uses his first and, in some cases, only examination opportunity. The first examination period ends with a deliberation and electronic announcement of the results.

**Enabel:** Belgian Development Agency for the implementation and coordination of the Belgian international development policy;

**Previously acquired competencies (Eerder Verworven Competenties – EVC):** the total sum of knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes acquired through learning processes not attested by a study certificate.

**Previously acquired qualifications (Eerder Verworven Kwalificaties – EVK):** a previously acquired qualification, i.e. proof of study from a domestic or foreign institution, insofar as it does not concern proof of credits obtained within the institution or study programme for which the certified qualification is to be used.

**Exam, Examination:** any assessment of the extent to which a student has acquired the competencies associated with a particular course unit as a result of his studies,.

**Examination contract:** a contract entered into by a student with the university under which the student has enrolled in accordance with the conditions determined by the university (these conditions are the same as for a credit and diploma contract) for the purpose of taking exams with a view to acquiring:

- a) a degree or diploma; or,
- b) a credit certificate for one or more course units.

**Examination period:** the period during which examinations and/or preliminary examinations are taken.

**Examination schedule:** the document in which the time and place of examination are determined for each student within a certain examination period.

**First-time student:** a student enrolling in a bachelor's programme (or a programme of higher professional education) in the Flemish higher education for the first time by way of a diploma contract;

**Weighted credit deficit (GPT):** the weighted credit deficit is calculated per course unit by multiplying the examination mark (= number of points below 10/20) deficit by the number of ECTS credits for that course unit.

For a student with one or more deficits, the total weighted credit deficit is calculated as the sum of the weighted credit deficits for the selected course units.

**Degree:** designation as a Bachelor, Master or Doctor, granted at the end of a study programme or after graduation with the presentation of a diploma.

**Individual study path:** a study programme for an individual student governed by specific conditions regarding study load, deliberation and study progress monitoring.

**Full-year course unit:** a programme unit spanning two semesters. Examinations for full-year programme units (with the exception of preliminary examinations) are held in the examination period following the second semester.

**Prospective student:** anyone wishing to enrol at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

**Qualification:** a certificate or diploma issued on successful completion of a formal educational training or study programme.

**Degree qualification:** add-on referring to the programme completed or, in the case of a doctorate, a specialisation.

**Study account:** the total number of ECTS credits that a student may use during his studies, either towards enrolment under a diploma contract in an initial bachelor's or master's programme or towards enrolment for a course unit under a credit contract. A student's study account changes depending on the number of ECTS credits enrolled for and obtained.

**Study outcomes:** these determine what a student is expected to know, understand and do on completion of a study programme and the way in which this can be shown.

**Lecture-free week:** a period in which no examinations, lectures or other educational activities take place, apart from the possibility of the faculties organising catch-up exams during this week in the context of a request for rescheduling;

**Master's thesis:** a final paper completing a master's programme which constitutes proof of the student's capacity for analytical and synthetic work, independent problem-solving skills at an academic level, or artistic creation. This paper reflects the student's general capacity for critical reflection or research.

**Micro-credential:** a type of programme offered within lifelong learning which results in proof of study outcomes attained following a learning experience of limited scope. The study outcomes are evaluated via transparent standards. The proof is recorded in a certified document stating the name of the holder, the study outcomes attained, the assessment method, the awarding body and, where applicable, the level in the qualification framework and the ECTS credits earned. Micro-credentials are the property of the student; they are divisible and transferable and can be combined to make up broader credentials or qualifications. They are supported by a quality guarantee in accordance with agreed standards in the sector. We distinguish between four types of credentials, with combinations of these also being possible:

1. Micro-credentials made up of one or more existing course units from the bachelor's and/or master's programmes.
2. Micro-credentials made up of one or more existing course units from the bachelor's and/or master's programmes, supplemented by an extra provision for lifelong learning.
3. Micro-credentials made up of new units with content from the bachelor's and/or master's

programmes.

4. Micro-credentials made up of new content or content of existing lifelong learning initiatives. The teaching and examination regulations apply for the first two types of credentials;

**Standard study path:** a study programme, approved by the Education Council, for a specific educational training programme, governed by general conditions regarding study load, deliberation and study progress monitoring.

**Education and Student Administration** (hereinafter referred to as OWSA): central service under the responsibility of the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs which manages all administrative aspects for all students during the entire study programme.

**Welcome week:** a period in which no examinations, lectures or other educational activities take place, except for induction and preparatory activities and qualification tests.

**Study programme:** a structural unit of the overall education programme. On successful completion of a study programme, a diploma or, solely for the application of these regulations, a certificate (preparatory programme, bridging programme, postgraduate programme) is awarded.

**Programme description:** a description of a study programme setting out the formal details and content of the programme, as defined in article 16 of these regulations, before the start of the academic year.

**Course unit:** a predetermined set of educational, study and evaluation activities designed for the acquisition of specific competences relating to knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes.

**Course unit description:** description of a course unit drawn up before the start of the enrolment period, providing the formal details and content as set out in article 17 of these regulations. The course unit description is submitted to the competent faculty body for approval.

**Permanent education:** a shorter study programme developed by the university itself or jointly agreed upon, in the framework of supplementary education.

**Postgraduate:** a study programme consisting of 20 or more ECTS credits within the framework of further professional training, aimed at widening or improving the competences acquired when completing a bachelor or master's programme.

**ReFlex students:** students who are eligible to be considered for reasonable flexible arrangements. This includes, but is not limited to top-tier sports students, students with a disability (sensory or physical disability, (chronic) medical conditions, psychological/psychiatric problems and learning difficulties), students appointed as student representatives within the VUB and students who find themselves in a specific situation, as determined by Study Counselling.



**Bridging programme:** a programme that can be made compulsory for a student wishing to enrol in a master's programme on the basis of a bachelor's degree from higher vocational education. The programme aims to provide the general scientific competencies and basic knowledge of scientific discipline, as referred to in Article II.141, § 2, 2° of the Higher Education Code.

**Student SelfService:** the portal where students can consult and manage their study activities, finances and personal data and where they can view their study outcomes.

**Semester-specific course unit:** a course unit spanning one semester. Examinations in semester-specific course units are held in the examination period following the semester in which the course unit was taught.

**Degree specification:** addition of the words 'of science', 'of arts', 'of law', 'of medicine', 'of veterinary science', 'of veterinary medicine' and 'of philosophy' to a degree.

**Start test (also referred to as 'mandatory benchmarking test')**: an institution-neutral test set up by the Flemish Government to assess the basic knowledge (and skills) in mathematics and/or sciences, in relation to the start level for the relevant bachelor's programme. Participation in a benchmarking test is a pre-requisite for specific programmes;

**Students with a disability:** students with long-term physical, mental or sensory disabilities which may - in interaction with various barriers - hinder their full and effective participation in higher education on equal terms with other students.

**Study Counselling:** a central service falling under the aegis of the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs which provides study counselling for all students throughout their entire studies; in conjunction with the programmes and faculties, staff (study advisers, student psychologists) strive to provide a broad range of counselling services with a view to enhancing both the student's well-being and his chances of succeeding in his studies considering the student's individual needs.

**Study certificate:** a document indicating that a formal study path, within an educational framework or otherwise, has been successfully completed.

**Study contract:** contract entered into by the student with the university under which a particular objective (degree, credit or examination contract) and a particular study path (standard or individualised) are selected;

**Tuition fee:** the fee payable by the student for participation in education activities and/or examinations.

**Study load:** the number of ECTS credits allocated to a course unit or for a study programme.

**Study path:** the way in which the student can participate in the programme.

**Preliminary examination:** written examination of part of the subject matter of a full year-course unit in the first year of a bachelor's programme, taken in the first set of examinations of the first examination period.

**Tolerable failing grade:** a result obtained after the examination concerning a course unit for which a student does not obtain a credit certificate, but on the basis of which the cumulative conditions have been met for being deemed to have passed the first year of the full-time standard bachelor's study programme (article 139), or for the entire course (article 143).

**Enrolment agreement:** an agreement between the university's governing body and the student according to which the latter agrees to the general terms and conditions as set out in the Teaching and Examination Regulations document.

**Second examination period:** this consists of one examination period (weeks 49 to 52) during which the student takes advantage of his second examination opportunity, if this is provided for. The second examination period is concluded by way of deliberation and electronic announcement of the results.

**Continuity requirement:** the rules drawn up by the university governing body, stating that a student must have attended or successfully completed a course unit or programme before being allowed to take an examination in another course unit or programme.

**Full-time study path:** a study path that enables students to complete a study programme with a minimum of 54 ECTS credits and a maximum of 66 ECTS credits per academic year.

**Preparatory programme:** a programme that may be made compulsory for a prospective student with prior academic education who does not have a diploma that provides direct entry to the course he wishes to enrol for. The aim of the programme is to impart the knowledge and competencies needed for the diploma so as to provide direct entry. If direct entry is via more than one diploma, this then concerns joint lacking competencies;

**Exemption:** removal of the obligation to sit an examination for a course unit or a part thereof.

### **CHAPTER III: - General provisions**

#### **Article 4 (Definitive and indicative time limits)**

The following rule governs the application of these regulations with respect to time limits: the periods within which students must complete a specific action shall be deemed to be definitive deadlines, unless specified otherwise.

#### **Article 5 (powers of the Dean)**

In case of the Dean not being available, the powers given to him under these regulations are carried out by the Vice-Dean.

## **Article 6 (modalities concerning teaching activities and communication)**

§ 1. Producing audio-visual recordings of teaching activities (including continuous assessment activities) and projected teaching materials is prohibited and is deemed to constitute a disruption of teaching activities, unless a specific arrangement is made with the lecturer concerned. Students must then indicate clearly what, how, when and for what purpose such recording is to be carried out. The recorded material may not be used for any purpose other than that for which consent was granted by the lecturer. If a student records teaching activities in breach of these provisions, the recording must be destroyed as soon as requested to do so.

§ 2. The Vrije Universiteit Brussel reserves the right to record classes for the purpose of distance education, etc., and to make these recordings available to the students and teaching staff involved, for educational purposes, through the electronic learning platform and/or the electronic video platform. When students participate in these classes, they automatically give permission to appear in these recordings for distribution through the electronic learning platform. The lecturer will inform the students at the beginning of such classes that the class is to be recorded. Under no circumstances may students distribute or edit these recordings, subject to disciplinary measures as provided for in the Order and Disciplinary Regulations for students of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

§ 3. Under no circumstances may students reproduce or disseminate study or examination material (exercises, slides, exam questions) for profit without the explicit prior consent of the owner. A student who nevertheless does so, in person or through a third party, may be sanctioned in accordance with the provisions of the Order and Disciplinary Regulations for Students of the VUB.

§ 4. All communication with the student under these regulations shall ensue exclusively via the VUB email address, unless specified otherwise.

## **Article 7 (access control)**

The access badge is strictly for personal use. Passing on the access badge to other students or third parties is not permitted; students who nonetheless do so expose themselves to disciplinary measures as provided for in the Order and Disciplinary Regulations for Students of Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

## TITLE II. - TEACHING REGULATIONS

### **CHAPTER I. - Breakdown of the academic year**

#### **Article 8** (Breakdown of the academic year)

§ 1. The academic year is divided into two semesters, followed by summer holidays and the second examination period:

Week 1: induction week

Week 2 - 14: lecture weeks

Weeks 15 – 16: winter break

Weeks 17 – 20: first examination period: first set of examinations

Week 21: lecture-free week

Weeks 22 – 36: lecture weeks including 2 weeks spring break

Week 37: pre-examination study week

Weeks 38 – 42: first examination period: second set of examinations and deliberation period (a minimum of 3 weeks is reserved for examinations)

end of the examination period for all faculties

Weeks 43 – 48: summer holidays

Weeks 49 – 52: second examination period and period for deliberation (a minimum of 3 weeks is reserved for examinations)

§ 2. The academic calendar is determined annually by the Academic Council before the start of the academic year and by 1 November at the latest.

§ 3. Deviations from the academic calendar may be permitted by the Education Council.

#### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

Interuniversity organized training courses can differ from the VUB academic calendar.

- MA in gender en diversiteit,
- MA in de literatuurwetenschappen,
- Research MA In Philosophy,
- MNM in de archivistiek: erfgoed- en hedendaags documentbeheer.

Programmes that offer work placements during the academic year may overlap the work placement period with a planned block period, lesson-free week or holiday period:

- MA in Linguistics and Literary Studies, profile Translation Studies
- MA in Vertalen
- MA in Journalistiek
- MA in Tolken

## **CHAPTER II. - Rules concerning the setting-up of programmes**

### **Section 1: Structure of the range of programmes**

#### **Article 9 (VUB range of programmes)**

Vrije Universiteit Brussel offers the following programmes:

- academic bachelor's programmes;
- initial master's programmes;
- advanced master's programme;
- postgraduate programmes;
- continuing education;
- micro-credentials;
- bridging and preparatory programmes;
- doctoral programmes;
- PhDs.

#### **Article 10 (Announcement of the study programmes)**

Apart from continuing education, the range of programmes is determined and announced before the start of the enrolment period.

#### **Article 11 (Bachelor's programme)**

An academic bachelor's programme has a study load of no less than 180 ECTS credits. The study load is always a multiple of 60 ECTS credits.

#### **Article 12 (Master's programme and advanced master's programme)**

A master's programme and an advanced master's programme have a study load of no less than 60 ECTS credits. The study load is always a multiple of 30 ECTS credits.

#### **Article 13 (Postgraduate programmes, continuing education and micro-credentials)**

A postgraduate programme has a study load of at least 20 ECTS credits. On successfully completing the postgraduate programme, the student receives a postgraduate certificate.

No minimum study load is set for continuing education. Consequently, there is no obligation to express the study load of continuing education in terms of ECTS credits. Depending on the nature of the continued education, this programme leads to a diploma or certificate of participation. A micro-credential has a minimum study load of 3 ECTS credits and a maximum of 19 ECTS credits. If a student passes a micro-credential, a certificate will be awarded.

#### **Article 14 (Bridging programme)**

Holders of a profession-oriented bachelor's degree can proceed to a master's programme if they enrol for a bridging programme first. The aim of this programme is to teach general scientific competencies and basic scientific-disciplinary knowledge.

A bridging programme has a minimum study load of 45 ECTS credits and maximum of 90 ECTS credits. The study load may be reduced depending on the student's prior education.

### **Article 15 (Preparatory programme)**

Holders of an academic bachelor's degree who are not eligible for direct entry to a particular master's programme may still be admitted, provided they take and pass a preparatory programme. The study load may be reduced depending on the student's prior education.

## **Section 2: Programme and course unit**

### **Article 16 (Programme description)**

**§ 1.** A programme description is drawn up for each programme and includes at least the following information:

1. Degree, qualification and specialisation of the programme;
2. Study load expressed in ECTS credits;
3. Possible graduation options, profiles and minors;
4. The programme's language of instruction;
5. Content and objectives of the programme, educational training programme, breakdown into course units;
6. Standard study programme;
7. Continuity rules for the course units and description of how the studies will progress;
8. Entrance competencies and study outcomes;
9. Organisation in the form of the standard study path and/or individualised study path;
10. Where applicable, organisation of a specific educational training path for working students;
11. Connecting programmes and subsequent programmes.

**§ 2.** The programme description is drafted in Dutch and English.

**§ 3.** For the programmes leading to the professions of physician, general practitioner, pharmacist and architect, the educational training programme shall comply with the requirements of European Directive 2005/36/EC. Compliance with the European Directive shall be specified in the teaching regulations.

### **Article 17 (course unit description)**

**§ 1.** A course unit description is drawn up for each course unit, containing at least the following information:

1. Code, faculty and department responsible;
2. Title of the course unit;
3. Type of programme to which the course unit primarily belongs;
4. Language of instruction;
5. Semester during which the course unit is organised or indication that the course unit is over the entire year;
6. Study load of the course unit expressed in ECTS credits;
7. Enrolment requirements, including pre- and co-requisites;
8. Working methods associated with the course unit;
9. The lecturer (responsible) and other teaching staff;
10. Specific design of the course unit organised for working students;
11. Indication whether it is possible to enrol via an examination contract and, if so, any specific requirements that are to be met by such students;
12. Study outcomes;
13. Course unit content;
14. Examinations: examination method, the way in which the result is determined, indication of whether or not a second examination opportunity is possible. This information can be supplemented with the information provided on the study platform at the start of the semester
15. Study programme materials;
16. Any additional costs related to the course unit.

**§ 2.** If a work placement, bachelor's thesis or master's thesis does not qualify for a credit contract, this will be indicated on the course unit description, together with the reasons for this.

**§ 3.** The programme description is drafted in Dutch and English. If the course unit concerns the study of a foreign language, the key provisions of the course unit description will always be formulated in Dutch.

### **Article 18 (study load and period of the course unit)**

The study load for each programme unit is expressed in terms of full ECTS credits. The study load of a programme unit equates to at least 3 ECTS credits. One ECTS credit corresponds to 25 to 30 hours of teaching and study activities or study time.

### **Article 19 (curriculum structure guidelines)**

Educational training programmes are developed in accordance with the relevant curriculum structure guidelines.

## **Section 3: Provisions concerning language of instruction**

### **Article 20 (principle regarding language of administration and language of instruction)**

The language of administration and instruction at Vrije Universiteit Brussel is Dutch. The principle that the language of instruction is always Dutch may be derogated from in accordance with Article 21.

**Article 21 (course units in another language without a justified reason)**

In the initial bachelor's and master's programmes for which Dutch is the language of instruction, a different language may be used for the following course units:

1. Course units, the subject of which is a foreign language and which are taught in that language;
2. Course units taught by guest lecturers and visiting professors who speak a different language;
3. Course units that are attended at a different higher education institution on the initiative of the student and with the approval of the university governing body;
4. Course units that can be explicitly shown to have added value for the student and the relevant labour market and enhance the functionality of the programme.

Students have the right to take the examination in Dutch, except in the case of course units, the subject of which the subject is a foreign language or if the student attends the course units at a different higher education institution.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

Students wishing to exercise that right must indicate this at least three weeks before the start of the examination period by sending an e-mail to the lecturer with [facw@vub.be](mailto:facw@vub.be) in copy.

**Article 22 (percentage of course units in another language)**

**§ 1.** The faculty can ask the Education Council to organise course units other than those set out in article 21 in a language of instruction other than Dutch if it demonstrates that this represents added value for the student and enhances the functionality of the programme. For bachelor's programmes, the organisation of course units in other languages is limited to 18.33% of the programme study load. For the calculation of this percentage, course units focusing on the study of a foreign language and course units attended at a different higher education institute are not taken into consideration.

**§ 2.** For master's programmes, the organisation of course units in other languages is limited to 50% of the programme study load. For the calculation of this percentage, course units focusing on the study of a foreign language and course units attended at a different higher education institute are not taken into consideration. The master's thesis and work placements/traineeships are considered to be Dutch course units.

**Article 23 (programmes organised entirely in another language)**



**§ 1.** Initial bachelor's and master's programmes may be organised entirely in a language other than Dutch when the programme is specifically designed for foreign students or if it can be adequately shown that it would provide added value for students and the related labour market and for the functionality of the programme, and also provided that a full educational training programme in Dutch is provided in the Flemish community.

**§ 2.** Institutions within the Flemish Community may jointly offer an equivalent initial bachelor's and master's programme. The students must take all course units of this jointly organised equivalent bachelor's or master's programme in Dutch at a single facility.

**§ 3.** Notwithstanding § 1, the requirement to set up a Dutch-language equivalent shall no longer apply if:

- it concerns a programme for which the Flemish Government has already granted an exemption from the equivalence requirement;
- it concerns a programme which has the status of an International Course Programme (ICP) or which has been selected in accordance with the provisions of a European programme to foster international cooperation in higher education, and for which multiple or joint degree diplomas are issued;
- the foreign-language initial bachelor's or master's programme is organised jointly with an institution outside the Flemish Community and is endorsed by a joint diploma, provided that the expertise required for the course units organised outside the Flemish Community is not available within the Flemish Community.

**§ 4.** The examinations are held in the language of instruction.

**Article 24 (Advanced master's programmes, postgraduate programmes and continuing education)**

The language of instruction may be freely determined for advanced master's programmes, micro-credentials, postgraduate programmes and continuing education. If the language of instruction is not Dutch, there is no obligation to organise an equivalent in Dutch. Examinations are taken in the language of instruction for the programme or that for the course unit if the latter differs from the language of instruction for the overall programme.

**Article 25 (Language coaching arrangements)**

**§ 1.** Students pursuing a foreign-language initial bachelor's or master's programme, or an initial bachelor's or master's programme with foreign language course units, can test their knowledge of that foreign language. More information concerning the language tests organised at VUB can be found on the ACTO website (<http://www.vub.ac.be/acto/>)

**§ 2.** The institution provides for specific measures in the initial bachelor's and master's programmes with foreign language course units or initial bachelor's and master's programmes taught in a foreign language. These language coaching arrangements may consist of:

1. language training course units offered as part of the package of mandatory course units or as an essential elective course unit;
2. language coaching measures incorporated into foreign-language course units. These language coaching measures provide proactive coaching for students and must therefore be clearly identifiable for students in the course unit.

**§ 3.** The requirement in § 2 above may be derogated from in the case of:

1. a consecutive master's programme, with the language coaching measures included in the preceding bachelor's programme;
2. a non-consecutive postgraduate programme, with the language coaching measures included in the preparatory or bridging programme.

**§ 4.** The institution provides a free and accessible range of Dutch and foreign language courses as well as language coaching measures to cover the relevant needs.

### **CHAPTER III. - Entry requirements**

#### **Section 1: General**

#### **Article 26 (conditions for enrolment in programmes and course units)**

**§ 1.** The following entry requirements apply to enrolment in degree programmes, bridging programmes and preparatory programmes, as well as enrolment in course units. They apply notwithstanding the specific conditions that may also be imposed and which will be stated in the programme and course unit description for each degree programme, bridging programme, and preparatory programme.

**§ 2.** A prospective student who wishes to enrol for a programme by means of a diploma contract and who enrolls for the relevant programme at the VUB for the first time, must do so by using the online registration app.

**§ 3.** A prospective student who wishes to enrol under a credit contract relating to course units for which he does not meet the entry requirements, should contact the Dean, who will decide whether the prospective student possesses the relevant competencies. Further details concerning the procedure for submitting such a request to the Dean are provided in the supplementary faculty provisions.

#### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

Student completes application at <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/apply-and-enrol-vub/application-and-enrolment/credit-and-exam-contract>

§ 4. A prospective student who wishes to enrol under an examination contract with a view to obtaining ECTS credits should contact the Dean. Further details concerning the procedure for submitting such a request to the Dean are provided in the supplementary faculty provisions.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

Student completes application at <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/apply-and-enrol-vub/application-and-enrolment/credit-and-exam-contract>

§ 5. An enrolment that is inconsistent with the study progress monitoring measures taken for a prospective student will be refused.

§ 6. In accordance with article 67 § 3, students who are in arrears with payment of their tuition fees will not be allowed to (re-)enrol.

**Article 27 (time frame for decision on entry requirements)**

Whether a prospective student meets the entry requirements is decided at the time of enrolment.

**Section 2: Admission requirements**

**Subsection 1: Admission to a bachelor's programme**

**Article 28 (General provisions)**

§ 1. A prospective student can be admitted to a bachelor's programme if he has obtained one of the following certificates/diplomas from an educational institution recognised by the Flemish, French or German-speaking Community:

- a certificate of secondary education;
- a diploma of profession-oriented bachelor's studies (tertiary education) (hoger onderwijs van het korte type met volledig leerplan - HOKT);
- a diploma of adult post-secondary education for social development purposes (hoger onderwijs voor sociale promotie), except for a Teaching Certificate for Secondary and Higher Education (Getuigschrift Pedagogische Bekwaamheid);
- a post-secondary ("gegradueerde") diploma or a certificate of higher vocational education (hoger beroepsonderwijs).

§ 2. A prospective student can also be admitted to a bachelor's programme if he has obtained a diploma or other proof of study outside Flanders:

- where the diploma or other proof of study is recognised as being equivalent to one of the diplomas referred to in § 1 above under statutory provisions, a European directive or an international agreement;

- where the diploma or other proof of study is recognised as being equivalent by the National Academic Recognition Information Centre – Flanders, NARIC Flanders (Agentschap van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap voor Kwaliteitszorg in Onderwijs en Vorming).
- where the diploma or other proof of study is recognised as being equivalent by the National Academic Recognition Information Centre for the French-Speaking Community (Le centre ENIC-Naric de la Fédération - Wallonie-Brussels).

These prospective students need to apply according to the procedures for enrolment based on a foreign diploma, as set out in these regulations.

**§ 3.** If the prospective student cannot produce a diploma, enrolment is possible only under the exceptional admission procedure set out in article 29.

**§ 4.** If the prospective student produces a different diploma or other proof of study, he needs to apply according to the procedures for enrolment based on a foreign diploma, as set out in these regulations.

### **Article 29 (special admission procedure for those who cannot produce a diploma)**

**§ 1.** A prospective student who cannot produce any of the diplomas mentioned in the previous articles may be allowed to undergo an aptitude test. For this, the student must cite humanitarian, medical, psychological or social reasons, or his general level of qualifications, merit or competencies. The student must submit a file to Study Counselling containing the information set out below.

**§ 2.** For enrolment in the first semester, the file can be submitted up to and including 15 August. For enrolment in the second semester, the file can be submitted up to and including 1 December.

**§ 3.** The prospective student must have reached the age of 21 at the time of enrolment, or reach that age during the calendar year in which he submits his request for admission.

**§ 4.** Taking part in an aptitude test in the framework of this special admission procedure is only allowed once per academic year.

**§ 5.** Prospective students who have taken a specific test "*examen d'admission aux études universitaires de premier cycle*" at a university in the French-speaking community and are able to present the corresponding certificate are exempted from the aptitude test.

### **Article 30 (file to be submitted and further investigation)**

**§ 1.** A file submitted on humanitarian grounds must include the following documents:

- Proof of identity;

- Proof that the prospective student is a recognised refugee, has the accompanying protected status or has applied for it and that this is still under consideration;
- Declaration that he is not in possession of the requisite diploma;
- Overview of the study path already undertaken, if possible with supporting documentation.

**§ 2.** A file submitted on medical, psychological or social grounds must include the following documents:

- Proof of identity;
- Evidence to support the medical, psychological or social reasons stated;
- Overview of the study path already completed, with supporting documentation;
- Copy of the most recent diploma or certificate of secondary education.

**§ 3.** A file submitted on the grounds of general level of qualification, merit or competencies must include the following documents:

- Proof of identity;
- Overview and proof of work experience;
- Overview of the study path already completed, with supporting documentation;
- Copy of the most recent diploma or certificate of secondary education.

**§ 4.** The file may be supplemented by opinions or recommendations from the University's service departments such as Study Counselling, medical services, etc.

**§ 5.** The Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs will decide whether the file is complete. If the decision is positive, the prospective student will be informed that he is eligible for an aptitude test.

### **Article 31 (admission after the aptitude test)**

**§ 1.** The Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs will decide after receiving the outcome of the aptitude test if the prospective student may enrol for the degree programme, study programme or course units for which he wishes to register. If the aptitude test shows that the prospective student has not reached the required level compared with the average group of secondary school graduates, he will not be allowed to enrol.

**§ 2.** The Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs will inform the prospective student of the decision within one month of receiving the findings of the aptitude test. A positive result is valid for a period of five years.

### **Article 32 (admission to the medicine programme and the subsequent stomatology and oral-maxillofacial surgery programme)**

**§ 1.** Those who wish to enrol for a bachelor's programme in Medicine or for course units within this bachelor's programme are required by law to have a favourable ranking based on the comparative entrance examination for doctors as stipulated by the relevant decree.

**§ 2.** A student enrolled in a dentistry master's programme, who wishes to enrol for basic medical training at VUB at the same time with a view to afterwards starting with the subsequent programme in stomatology and oral-maxillofacial surgery, can submit a request to the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy for exemption from the entrance examination for the complementary basic training.

The specific procedure is set out in the supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations.

**Article 33 (admission to certain bachelor programmes: start test/ (mandatory) benchmarking test)**

Anyone wishing to enrol in a bachelor's programme in bioengineering, biomedical sciences, pharmaceutical sciences, physics and astronomy, industrial sciences, engineering sciences: civil engineering, engineering sciences: architecture or mathematics and data science must have participated in a start test ('mandatory benchmarking test') or non-mandatory benchmarking test as stipulated in the cross-institutional regulation, notwithstanding the terms of admission set out in Articles 28 and 29.

Any student who does not obtain the set pass mark for the mandatory benchmarking test or start test must undertake a mandatory remedial course. This remedial course may be taken in an extra-curricular manner prior to the start of the academic year (digitally or via a preparatory course) or within the curriculum in the first year of the bachelor's programme. The scale of the remedial measure is between one and three ECTS credits. An extracurricular remedial measure may be imposed on students entering the second semester. If a student has not participated in the remedial measure imposed, the institution can take this into account during its deliberation on that student.

If the mandatory remedial measure is organised no later than in week seven of the academic year, the lecturer can determine in the course unit sheet that students who do not take part in such remediation should be given a second chance during the first examination period of the first exam session. No third chance is offered to students

**Article 34 (exemption from mandatory participation in the start test (mandatory) benchmarking test)**

In the event of not taking part in a start test (mandatory benchmarking test) or a non-mandatory benchmarking test, as stipulated in the aforementioned article 33, the student may, by way of a reasoned request, ask the Dean to be admitted to the relevant study programme. The student must submit his reasoned request in this regard by no later than 30 September. The request is

dealt with by the exemption committee which consists of: the Dean, a ZAP member, a study programme counsellor and a 'central study advisor for benchmarking tests'.

The student may be subjected to a remedial measure in the first year of the bachelor's programme as and when necessary.

**Article 34 bis (exemption from mandatory remediation within the framework of the start test/mandatory benchmarking test)**

In order to be exempted from the mandatory remediation described in the aforementioned Article 33, the student may submit a reasoned request to the Dean. The request will be dealt with by the exemptions committee, which consists of: the Dean, a ZAP member, a study track counsellor and a 'central study advisor for benchmarking tests'.

**Subsection 2: conditions for admission to a master's programme**

**Article 35 (admission to a master's programme: general rule)**

**§ 1.** To enrol for a master's programme (initial master's, not an advanced master's programme), the prospective student must hold an academic bachelor's degree.

**§ 2.** At least one academic bachelor's degree is indicated as a general entry requirement for each master's programme. Admission to a master's programme can be limited to an academic bachelor's programme with specific programme characteristics. For similar bachelor's programmes pursued at another educational institution, the master's programme may differ depending on similarity of content, without the study load being adjusted. A university and one or more university college(s) can, acting as an association, offer joint master's programmes for which the possession of a bachelor's degree in higher professional education applies as the general admission requirement.

**§ 3.** For someone with a different academic bachelor's degree, admission is possible if he successfully completes the preparatory programme specified for that purpose.

**§ 4.** For someone with a profession-oriented bachelor's degree, admission is possible if he successfully completes the bridging programme specified for that purpose.

**§ 5.** Exceptions to this general rule are set out in the articles below.

**Article 36 (special admission procedure for those who cannot produce a diploma)**

**§ 1.** A prospective student who has obtained an academic bachelor's diploma, but cannot produce this due to humanitarian reasons, may be allowed to sit a specific test to assess the knowledge required of the student based on the basic competencies needed for the master's programme concerned. This test is prepared by the Study Programme Committee for the master's programme in which the prospective student wishes to enrol. For this, the student must

submit a reasoned request to the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs. The student must submit a file containing the information set out below. The Study Programme Committee may decide, on the basis of the student's file, that he may be exempted from the test required for admission set out above. the prospective student must have shown that he possesses the necessary basic competencies in this regard.

**§ 2.** For enrolment in the first semester, the file can be submitted up to 15 August. For enrolment for the second semester, the file can be submitted up to 1 December.

### **Article 37 (file to be submitted and further investigation)**

**§ 1.** A submitted file must include the following documents:

- Proof of identity;
- Proof that the prospective student is a recognised refugee, has the accompanying protected status now or has applied for it, or is still under consideration;
- Declaration that the student is not in possession of the required diploma;
- Overview of the programme already undertaken, if possible with supporting documentation.

**§ 2.** At the request of the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs, university services such as Study Counselling, medical services, etc. may invite the student to provide advice so as to enable him to then complete his file.

**§ 3.** The Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs will inform the prospective student of the decision taken within one month of receipt of the request. If the decision is positive, the prospective student will be informed immediately that he can take the test.

### **Article 38 (taking the specific test)**

**§ 1.** The specific test is prepared by the Study Programme Committee for the master's programme in which the prospective student wishes to enrol.

**§ 2.** The Study Programme Committee may decide, on the basis of the student's file, that he may be exempted from the aforementioned test .

**§ 3.** The Study Programme Committee will immediately inform the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs of the decision concerning exemption, or whether the student has passed the specific test or not.

### **Article 39 (decision on admission or rejection)**

The Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs will inform the prospective student of the decision taken within one month of receiving the appraisal by the Study Programme Committee.

### **Article 40 (admission to the advanced master's programme)**



**§ 1.** To enrol in an advanced master's programme, the student must have obtained a master's degree. Furthermore, permission to enrol may be made dependent on an aptitude test. Where appropriate, a preparatory programme may be made mandatory. Admission to an advanced master's programme can be limited to a master's programme with specific programme characteristics. For similar master's programmes pursued at another educational institution, the advanced master's programme may differ depending on the degree of content similarity, without the study load being adjusted.

**§ 2.** Permission to enrol in the advanced master's programme in specialist medicine depends on an aptitude test, with a quantitative restriction possible determined for each specialisation, based on the available training capacity. The specific conditions are set down in separate regulations.

#### **Article 41 (admission to the educational master's degree)**

**§ 1.** More specific enrolment requirements are established for each discipline by the Interfaculty Department for Teacher Training (IDLO). These requirements can be found on the Vrije Universiteit Brussel website.

**§ 2.** The diploma for the condensed teacher training master's programme can only be awarded if the diploma for the relevant master's programme has been obtained.

#### **Subsection 3: Combination of enrolments**

#### **Article 42 (combination of enrolments in bachelor's and master's programmes)**

**§ 1.** Any student who was enrolled in a bachelor's programme, and has not yet obtained the bachelor's degree required for entry into a subsequent master's programme, can enrol in this master's programme at the same time under the conditions set out below. The restrictions listed in article 59 and article 88, § 3 shall nonetheless apply.

This rule also applies to inter-university, combined enrolments, both domestic and international.

**§ 2.** If a student needs fewer than 30 ECTS credits to obtain his bachelor's degree, he can enrol in a subsequent master's programme or for course units of that master's programme, without prior approval, in accordance with the relevant continuity requirement rules.

#### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

More information about the combination of your Bachelor- and Master program, can be found at <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/apply-and-enrol-vub/application-and-enrolment/combined-enrolment>

**§ 3.** If the student needs 30 ECTS credits or more to obtain his bachelor's degree, he can enrol in a subsequent master's programme or for programme units of that master's programme in

accordance with the relevant continuity requirement rules, providing he is granted permission to do so. The student or prospective student must submit a request to the Dean in this regard.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The student requests admission from the dean by filling in the following form correctly and completely and submitting it online: <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/study-guidance/study-path/study-path-exceptions>

More information can be found at <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/apply-and-enrol-vub/application-and-enrolment/combined-enrolment>.

§ 4. When deciding on the student's request, the Dean will consider, for example, the knowledge required for the programme units in the master's programme, the master's thesis and possible work placement/traineeship. Further details concerning the procedure for submitting such a request to the Dean are provided in the supplementary faculty provisions.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The student requests admission from the dean by filling in the following form correctly and completely and submitting it online: <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/study-guidance/study-path/study-path-exceptions>

§ 5. The master's degree can only be awarded once the relevant bachelor's degree has been obtained.

**Article 43 (other combinations)**

§ 1. The same rules as outlined in the previous article apply equally to a student who was enrolled in a bridging or preparatory programme and has not yet obtained the corresponding ECTS credits. He can already enrol in the subsequent master's programme, under the conditions set out in the previous article.

§ 2. The same rules also apply equally to a student who has not yet obtained a master's degree required for admission to an advanced master's programme.

**Section 3: Language proficiency**

**Subsection 1: Requirements in relation to language proficiency**

**Article 44 (language of instruction)**

§ 1. The language of instruction for each study programme is determined annually. It is indicated in the course unit description.

**§ 2.** The student who enrolls for a degree programme, a study programme, or a course unit must have a thorough command of the language in which the education is provided, at an academic level. Details of how he can provide proof of his language proficiency are set out in the following sections.

### **Subsection 2: Proof of language proficiency on enrolment**

#### **Article 45** (proof of language proficiency)

Students must provide proof of their knowledge of the language of instruction when they enrol.

#### **Article 46** (proof of knowledge of Dutch)

**§ 1.** Prospective students can provide proof of sufficient knowledge of Dutch as the language of instruction by meeting one of the following criteria:

1. having a diploma of secondary or higher education where Dutch was the language of instruction;
2. having successfully completed at least one school year of secondary education where Dutch was the language of instruction;
3. having successfully completed higher education course units with at least 54 ECTS credits where Dutch was the language of instruction;
4. having passed the entrance examination for doctors or dentists organised by the Ministry of the Flemish Government;
5. having obtained a certificate of continuing education “hoger onderwijs voor sociale promotie” where Dutch was the language of tuition;
6. having passed the Dutch State Examination for Dutch as a Second Language (NT2), Programme II;
7. having passed a test set in accordance with European Union reference framework level B2, particularly the Certificaat Nederlands als Vreemde Taal (CNaVT) – ‘Educatief Startbekwaam’, (Certificate of Dutch as a Foreign Language), (until 2014: the Profiel taalvaardigheid hoger onderwijs (PTHO) (Higher education language proficiency certificate)), and the Interuniversitaire Taaltest Nederlands voor Anderstaligen (ITNA – ERK B2) (inter-university Dutch language test for non-native speakers).
8. Certificates and other proof of language tests may not pre-date the first enrolment by more than five years.

**§ 2.** Each faculty may require a higher level of language proficiency for a specific programme. This is referred to in the programme description.

**§ 3.** The Interfaculty Department of Teacher Training can apply specific language requirements to programmes that fall within its responsibility, as outlined in article 41 § 4.

**§ 4.** Exceptions to language requirements may be granted by the Chairman of the Study Programme Committee on the basis of an overall assessment.

**§ 5.** Each faculty has the discretion to decide that students do not need to submit proof of their knowledge of the language of tuition when they enrol for a postgraduate or advanced master's programme. This is referred to in the programme description.

**Article 47 (proof of knowledge of English)**

**§ 1.** Prospective students can provide proof of sufficient knowledge of English as the language of instruction by meeting one of the following criteria:

1. having a diploma of secondary education where English was the sole language of instruction, excluding possible language courses;
2. having a diploma of higher education with English as the language of instruction;
3. having successfully completed secondary education organised (by an educational establishment accredited) by the Flemish, French-speaking or German-speaking Community;
4. having successfully completed one of the following language proficiency tests corresponding to the Common European Framework of Reference with a minimum level of B2:
  - TOEFL iBT (home edition) with minimum level: 79;
  - IELTS with minimum level: academic module 6.5;
  - ITACE with minimum level: B2 in at least 4 of the 5 parts of the ITACE test;
  - Cambridge English Qualification Scale with the following minimum level: B2 First (FCE) with a minimum score of 170;

Certificates and other proof of language tests may not pre-date the first enrolment by more than five years.

**§ 2.** Each faculty may require a higher level of language proficiency for a specific programme. This is referred to in the programme description.

**§ 3.** Exceptions to language requirements may be granted by the Chairman of the Study Programme Committee on the basis of an overall assessment.

**§ 4.** Each faculty has the discretion to decide that students do not need to submit proof of their knowledge of the language of tuition when they enrol for a postgraduate or advanced master's programme. This is referred to in the programme description.

**Article 48 (language test)**

**§ 1.** The Academic Language Centre (*Academisch Centrum voor Taalonderwijs - ACTO*) can test a prospective student who was unable to provide proof of sufficient knowledge of the language, in accordance with the conditions posted on the ACTO website.

§ 2. A student who changes his enrolment and wants to transfer to a programme that has different language requirements must take a new language test.

**Article 49** (course units in a different language)

A prospective student who wishes to enrol exclusively for course units that are taught in a language different to that of the overall programme need not produce evidence of knowledge of the language of instruction for the programme, but must do so for the language of the course unit, should the faculty so desire.

Proof of knowledge of the language of the course unit as outlined in Articles 46 to 48 must be submitted at the time of enrolment.

**Section 4: Terms of admission regarding study account**

**Article 50** (terms of admission regarding study account)

§ 1. Students may enrol in a bachelor's programme under a diploma contract insofar as they have a positive study account.

§ 2. Students may enrol in one or several course units under a credit contract insofar as they have a positive study account.

§ 3. Notwithstanding § 1, students enrolled in a bachelor's programme whose study account is lower than or equivalent to zero may be admitted for one academic year in order to complete that bachelor's programme, insofar as they satisfy the terms of admission and have to complete a maximum of 30 ECTS credits for that bachelor's programme.

§ 4. Students whose study account is lower than or equivalent to zero will also be allowed to start or continue a master's programme with a negative study account insofar as they satisfy the terms of admission.

§ 5. These provisions apply notwithstanding any study progress decisions, including study progress monitoring measures.

**CHAPTER IV. - Study contracts and other enrolment regulations**

**Section 1: Enrolments and study contracts**

**Subsection 1: Enrolments**

**Article 51** (general provisions)

§ 1. The prospective student may enrol for:

- One programme or multiple programmes simultaneously;

- One course unit;
- Multiple course units that are part of one or more programmes;
- A bridging programme;
- A preparatory programme.

§ 2. A student enrolled under a diploma contract must subsequently register his annual programme.

§ 3. The prospective student who wishes to enrol under an examination contract or a credit contract should register via the central registration procedure.

#### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

More information about the combination of your Bachelor- and Master program, can be found at <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/apply-and-enrol-vub/application-and-enrolment/combined-enrolment>

### **Subsection 2: Study contracts**

#### **Article 52 (types of study contract)**

§ 1. The prospective student enters into an enrolment agreement with the University on enrolment. On enrolment, the student may choose one of the following contracts:

- Diploma contract, with a view to obtaining a degree;
- Diploma contract, if the student enrolls for a postgraduate, micro-credential or a bridging or preparatory programme;
- Credit contract, with a view to obtaining a credit certificate for one or more course units;
- Examination contract, with a view to obtaining a diploma;
- Examination contract, with a view to obtaining a credit certificate for one or more course units.

§ 2. Students can opt for a combination of study contracts. The following two contract combinations are, however, not permitted for the same programme:

- combining a diploma contract and examination contract with a view to obtaining a diploma;
- combining a credit contract and examination contract with a view to obtaining ECTS credits.

#### **Article 53 (permission)**

When concluding the enrolment agreement, the student grants permission by declaring that he is in agreement with his enrolment and the associated terms and conditions on the Student SelfService portal or by signing the study contract.

#### **Article 54 (examination and credit contracts: characteristics and restrictions)**

§ 1. Those enrolled for course units under an examination contract are not entitled to take part in the associated educational activities.

§ 2. Whether enrolment under an examination contract is permitted is stated in the course unit description. It is possible for enrolment under an examination contract to be allowed for a course unit, provided that the student undertakes substitute activities. In that case, the course unit description will state which substitute activities are required.

§ 3. It will be indicated in the course unit description, together with the reasons, if a work placement, bachelor's thesis or master's thesis does not qualify for the purposes of a credit contract.

#### **Subsection 3: Changing a study contract**

##### **Article 55 (changing the type of contract)**

Changing the type of study contract chosen is possible throughout the academic year. The student is to contact OWSA with a view to discontinuing the current study contract and registering for a new type of study contract.

##### **Article 56 (change of programme)**

§ 1. When choosing to change their programme, students must de-register for the entire study programme for which they had enrolled and immediately enrol in a different programme. This change of curriculum may affect the student's study account.

§ 2. Any such change in the choice of programme can only ensue under a diploma contract.

§ 3. In the event of a change, any additional tuition fees that may be due will be charged pursuant to Article 70.

#### **Subsection 4: Standard study path versus individualised study path**

##### **Article 57 (standard study path)**

§ 1. A standard study path is determined for all programmes that can be enrolled in via a diploma contract. The standard study path is divided into programme years.

§ 2. A student follows a standard study path if he follows the path approved by the Education Council with more than 54 and less than 66 ECTS credits each year.

## **Article 58** (individualised study path)

A student follows an individualised study path if he:

- does not take a package of course units of between 54 and 66 ECTS credits per year; or,
- deviates from the course unit sequence as outlined in the standard study path; or,
- deviates from the total study load for the programme.

### **Subsection 5: Scope of enrolment**

## **Article 59** (scope of enrolment)

§ 1. Enrolment for a study programme, bridging or preparatory programme is allowed for a maximum of 72 ECTS credits, except for a student finding himself in a situation as referred to in Article 78, § 3 and Article 88, § 3. This maximum also applies to an enrolment that combines more than one type of contract.

§ 2. An exception to the maximum of 72 ECTS credits can be requested. For this, the student must submit a request to the Dean. Further details concerning the procedure for submitting such a request to the Dean are provided in the supplementary faculty provisions.

### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The student requests admission from the dean by filling in the following form correctly and completely and submitting it online: <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/study-guidance/study-path/study-path-exceptions>

§ 3. Notwithstanding the rules concerning the study account, a student subject to a binding condition within the framework of a specific programme has the right to take a minimum of 45 ECTS credits in that programme within the academic year to which the binding condition relates unless continuity rules do not permit this.

## **Section 2: Enrolment arrangements**

### **Subsection 1: General provisions**

## **Article 60** (enrolment period)

§ 1. The first period for submitting an application for enrolment runs from 1 July to 23 September<sup>1</sup>. Prospective students who wish to enrol for the first semester must complete their online registration by 23 September at the latest. From 24 September onwards, enrolment is only possible with the explicit approval of the Dean. Such admission is subject to the student

<sup>1</sup> By way of derogation from Article 160, the deadline of 23 September will come into effect from the 2025-2026 academic year. The deadline of 30 September will be applied in the 2024-2025 academic year.



completing his online application within 7 calendar days of receiving the decision. Registration in the first term is no longer possible from 1 December onwards.

**§ 2.** For those who wish to start in the second semester, the second period for submitting an application for enrolment is from 1 December to 15 February. Prospective students who wish to enrol for the second semester must complete their online registration by 15 February, at the latest. As of 16 February, enrolment is only possible with the explicit approval of the Dean. Such admission is subject to the student completing his online application within 7 calendar days of receiving the decision. Registration for the second period is no longer possible from 16 March onwards.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

For certain courses, the faculty strongly advises against starting in the second semester!

More info can be found on this page: <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/study-guidance/study-path/study-path-counselor-languages-and-humanities>

**§ 3.** Students who have received approval to enrol, and who can sign the enrolment contract, should complete this (online) signing of the contract within 30 calendar days.

**§ 4.** Students wishing to re-enrol should complete re-enrolment by 15 February at the latest.

**§ 5.** After enrolling in a study programme, the student must register his course units in accordance with article 78 within the following deadlines:

- For first semester course units and full-year course units, registration is only possible up to 8 October<sup>2</sup>.
- For second semester course units, registration is only possible up to 28 February.

The registration of course units outside these deadlines is only possible with the explicit approval of the Dean. In order to obtain such approval, students should send a corresponding request to the Dean in accordance with article 79, § 3 - § 6. Further details concerning the procedure for submitting such a request to the Dean are provided in the supplementary faculty provisions.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The student requests admission from the dean by filling in the following form correctly and completely and submitting it online: <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/study-guidance/study-path/study-path-exceptions>

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<sup>2</sup> By way of derogation from Article 160, the deadline of 8 October will come into effect from the 2025-2026 academic year. The deadline of 15 October will be applied in the 2024-2025 academic year.

**§ 6.** Notwithstanding §§ 1-3, a student wishing to enrol in an advanced master's programme in specialist medicine can do so over the entire academic year.

Moreover, notwithstanding § 4, a student can be enrolled in an advanced master's programme in specialist medicine without registering for any course units.

**§ 7.** Likewise notwithstanding §§ 1-3, if traineeships remain after the quota has been used up, a student who does not require a visa can enrol in the advanced master's programme for specialist medicine over the entire academic year.

**§ 8.** A different enrolment period is possible for postgraduate students if the scheduling of the postgraduate programme differs from the academic calendar approved by the Academic Council.

**§ 9.** Notwithstanding § 1 above, students enrolling in a programme with tuition fees to be paid before 1 July, and who already have a diploma granting them entry to the programme concerned, may enrol from 1 January of the year in which the academic year starts.

**§ 10.** Those who have their main enrolment at another institution for higher education, and who have the permission to take one or more course units at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, should enrol as a guest student no later than one month after the start of the academic year or after the start of the second semester respectively. After that date, enrolment is only possible with the explicit consent of the Dean. Enrolment as a guest student is no longer possible in the first period from 1 December. Enrolment as a guest student in the second period is no longer possible from 16 March.

## **Article 61 (enrolment documents)**

**§ 1.** A prospective student enrolling in a new programme at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel for the first time will be required to present the following documents, insofar the University does not already have these:

1. identity card or passport;
2. a formal document showing the National Register Number or the INSZ (national social security number);
3. for students requiring a visa: a passport with a temporary residence permit for study purposes (visa type D) or valid residence permit, on the understanding that the (prospective) student can also add this document to the file after enrolment but not later than on the date stated at <https://www.vub.be/en/preparing-your-stay/visa#visa>;
4. the diploma allowing entry to the programme; a copy of this diploma is not sufficient; those who obtained a diploma of secondary education from the Flemish Community after 31 December 2004 will not be required to produce it, unless the diploma cannot be viewed in a database;
5. for prospective medical students:

- the certificate of successful completion of the entrance examination; or,
  - the certificate of partial equivalence of qualifications as a Doctor of Medicine issued by the Flemish Inter-University Council (VLIR).
6. for prospective students for the bachelor's programme referred to in Article 33: proof of participation in a start test/ (mandatory) benchmarking test.
  7. for refugees and asylum seekers for whom an appeal or residence rights procedure is ongoing, the certificate issued by the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons, unless they are in possession of a diploma of secondary education obtained in Belgium;
  8. for scholarship students of the Flemish Community, for VLIR-UOS and Enabel and all other scholarships that are awarded for any study programme at the VUB, the scholarship status certificate;
  9. for students who cannot enrol directly without prior approval, the letter of admission signed by the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs;
  10. any certificate required to prove that the entry requirements are met;
  11. for foreign students, proof of medical insurance valid within Belgium, with the exception of students who hold a diplomatic passport, a special identity card or a valid residence permit. Prospective students who have no such medical insurance can apply for one through the International Relations Office (IRMO) of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel. The (prospective) student can add this document to the file after enrolment but not later than on the date stated at <https://www.vub.be/en/preparing-your-stay/visa#visa>;

**§ 2.** If the above documents cannot be checked in a (Flemish) Government database, verification of the diploma is required. The student must take the necessary steps himself in this regard.

**§ 3.** Students wishing to enrol for continuing education or a postgraduate programme can also request permission for remote enrolment in an explanatory letter addressed to the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs. If this enrolment is allowed, the student wishing to enrol for continuous training or a postgraduate programme must provide a certified copy of his diploma and passport/identity card to OWSA in advance.

## **Article 62 (Proof of enrolment)**

**§ 1.** The student card and certificates of enrolment are sent to the student.

**§ 2.** The Flemish Education Administration sends the enrolment details directly to the Study Grants Division of the Flemish Government and the payers of the Growth Package (Flanders) and child benefit (Brussels) in electronic format. This means that the student does not himself receive any documents in this regard.

**§ 3.** The student can obtain a certificate of enrolment from OWSA.

## **Subsection 2: Specific arrangement for enrolment based on a foreign diploma**

### **Article 63 (admission based on a foreign diploma)**

§ 1. Enrolment based on a foreign diploma is only possible if approval is granted by the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs.

§ 2. Requests for admission from prospective students can be submitted from 15 November of the academic year preceding the academic year for which they submit their applications. Applications for enrolment should be submitted to OWSA. Students should submit their applications for admission by completing the online registration form.

With the exception of postgraduates, the following deadlines apply for submitting an application for admission:

- Visa required: 31 March. Derogation from the aforementioned deadline is permitted for the categories of prospective students entered in the list to be validated annually by the Education Council; these prospective students must submit their admission application by no later than 30 April.
- Visa not required: 31 July<sup>3</sup>. Derogation from the aforementioned deadline is only possible for students who change courses within VUB during the course of the academic year, with explicit permission from the Dean, and this no later than 1 December.

Applications for admission to postgraduate programmes should be submitted before 1 September.

§ 3. The Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs will only allow the prospective student admission if he has obtained a diploma with a corresponding level to the diploma required by the University as a condition for entry to the programme.

Prospective students may submit their application during the year in which they expect to be awarded their diploma. If the file has been approved and no other conditions regarding its contents need to be met other than obtaining the diploma, the students can be given a conditional letter of admission.

§ 4. A Chinese prospective student with a Chinese diploma must also produce an APS certificate from the Academic Evaluation Centre (*Akademische Prüfstelle*), with the exception of Chinese prospective students who are exempted in accordance with the guidelines of the Flemish government, which can be found on the IRMO webpage: <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/apply-and-enrol-vub/application-and-enrolment/enrolling-with-foreign-diploma#paragraph-81726>. A Chinese student who has been awarded a diploma outside of China

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<sup>3</sup> By way of derogation from Article 160, the deadline of 31 July will come into effect from the 2025-2026 academic year. The deadline of 30 June will be applied in the 2024-2025 academic year for Masterstudents for whom visa is not required and the deadline of 31 August will be applied in the 2024-2025 academic year for Bachelorstudents for whom visa is not required.

must produce evidence of authenticity of his diploma issued by the embassy of the country where the diploma was awarded.

**§ 5.** After consideration of the file by OWSA and the faculty, the prospective student will receive a letter of admission or rejection signed by the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs.

**§ 6.** With the exception of candidate-students to whom direct access is granted on the basis of a diploma obtained in Belgium, the candidate-student will be charged an application fee of 90 euros per application.

The university will receive the payment of the application fee no later than 20 calendar days after the payment request is issued. Applications for which the university receives the payment of the application fee after this period, will not be considered. Scholarship students and students from partner institutions are exempt from this application fee.

**§ 7.** Students who have been granted a residence permit of limited or unlimited duration in Belgium on the basis of art. 49, §1, of the Aliens Act of 15 December 1980:

- can submit their application for admission up to 30 September, notwithstanding Art. 63, §2, of these regulations;
- do not have to pay the registration fee referred to in Art. 63, §6 of these regulations.

**§ 8.** Students who benefit from temporary protection in Belgium on the basis of Council Directive 2001/55/EC of 20 July 2001 and students who came to Belgium as minors and whose parents benefit from such temporary protection:

- do not have to pay the registration fee referred to in Art. 63, §6 of these regulations.
- are charged a tuition fee equivalent to the tuition fee for EEA students.

#### **Article 64 (Admission file)**

To obtain the necessary letter of admission, a prospective student must submit a completed online application form and a file, which must at least include the following documents:

- For admission to a bachelor's programme:
  - diploma (and list of results);
  - copy of identity card or passport;
  - passport photo;
  - motivation letter;
  - any document required to show that the entry requirements are met.
- For admission to a master's programme, a teacher training programme or a postgraduate programme:
  - diploma and list of results;
  - copy of identity card or passport;
  - passport photo;

- motivation letter;
- letters of recommendation;
- any document required to show that the entry requirements are met.

### **Section 3: Discontinuation of the programme without new enrolment**

#### **Article 65** (discontinuation of the programme)

**§ 1.** A student who does not wish to continue his study programme at the University must de-register by filling in the online discontinuation form and returning it to OWSA.

**§ 2.** A student requesting a discontinuation of the programme must return his student card. If he does not do so immediately, his request for discontinuation will automatically mean he can no longer use or present the student card or any other related documents.

**§ 3.** Discontinuation of the programme is not possible from 15 May until the end of the academic year.

### **Section 4: Tuition fees**

#### **Article 66** (calculation of tuition fees)

**§ 1.** Tuition fees for enrolment under a diploma, credit or examination contract in a bachelor's or initial master's programme comprise:

- a fixed amount, only due once per academic year;
- a variable amount, depending on the number of study ECTS credits for which the student enrolls.

**§ 2.** The fixed amount is only due once per academic year. For the purposes of calculating the tuition fees, the enrolment of a student for one or more programmes and for one or more course units under a diploma or credit contract is treated as a single enrolment. All ECTS credits are therefore added together.

**§ 3.** Notwithstanding the general rule, enrolments in the following programmes will be treated as individual enrolments (and not as additional enrolments) in all cases:

- enrolment for an advanced master's programme;
- enrolment for a doctorate;
- enrolment for a postgraduate programme;
- enrolment under an examination contract with a view to obtaining ECTS credits;
- enrolment under an examination contract with a view to obtaining a degree.

The provisions for scholarship and near-scholarship students do not apply to these enrolments.

§ 4. Students pay the tuition fees established by the ruling of the Academic Council on an annual basis. The tuition fees can be viewed on the VUB website.

§ 5. Students with a VLIR-UOS or Enabel scholarship pay the same fees as EEA non-scholarship students.

§ 6. Students with a bursary from the Master Mind Scholarship – Fellowship Programme for Excellent Students programme run by the Flemish government pay the same fees as EEA scholarship students.

§ 7. Detailed rules for calculating the tuition fees are included in a spreadsheet and the accompanying explanatory note, drawn up annually by the University's Academic Council. These rules form an integral part of these Teaching and Examination Regulations.

§ 8. Notwithstanding § 1, a student who is enrolled in an advanced master's programme in specialist medicine over the entire academic year without registering for any course units will not be charged any tuition fee.

#### **Article 67 (timeframe for payment)**

§ 1. Tuition fees become payable on signing the study contract or the agreement on the Student SelfService portal.

§ 2. On signing the contract or agreement on the Student SelfService portal, the student will receive a request for payment of the fees due at that moment. He must pay immediately. The tuition fees are recalculated each time there is a change in the student's curriculum. Where appropriate, the student will receive a bi-weekly request for payment via his VUB email address.

§ 3. Non-payment means that the student cannot legally attend examinations. Any student who, even after a reminder, fails to pay the full amount of the tuition fees due, including any additional administrative costs, before the due date set, will also be suspended. Proof of credits, diplomas and certificates (including any associated diploma and certificate supplements stating the knowledge and skills acquired by the holders, with respect to each academic year in which the student has been/was enrolled) will be retained for as long as the outstanding tuition fee has not been settled in full. A student who has not paid the tuition fees due by the end of the corresponding academic year is not allowed to (re-)enrol. In no case will the student be released from the obligation to pay the amount due, together with the administrative fee.

The university reserves the right to recover the amounts due through legal proceedings.

#### **Article 68 (method of payment)**

§ 1. Tuition fees may be paid by way of:

- valid training vouchers;

- bank transfer, including the structured communication reference given with the payment request;
- SME portfolio

§ 2. Paid tuition fees can be reimbursed in exchange for training vouchers. The amount paid using training vouchers cannot be reimbursed after discontinuation of the programme.

§ 3. When a scholarship-issuing body pays the tuition fees for non-EEA scholarship holders (who are not entitled to a reduced tuition fee) into a University account reserved for this scholarship project, the holder of this project account can issue a voucher.

### **Article 69 (amount to be paid for all programmes)**

§ 1. A student who enrolls must pay the tuition fees determined annually by the institution immediately on receipt of the payment request.

§ 2. A student who, in his first enrolment at the University, claims that he received an educational grant from the Flemish Community in the previous academic year and states that he has applied or intends to apply for a grant from the Flemish government for the academic year for which he is enrolling, shall pay the fees calculated for scholarship students.

If his application or renewal is not approved or if no decision is taken on the study grant before 1 May, he must pay the balance of the tuition fees. If his study grant is approved later, however, the University will then reimburse the surplus amount paid.

### **Article 70 (payment of tuition fees after changing the programme chosen)**

§ 1. Changing the study programme chosen is possible as set out in Article 56. Except in the case of changing from or to a postgraduate programme, such change results in an obligation to pay tuition fees as follows.

#### *Implications for the variable amount of the tuition fee*

§ 2. If the enrolment is changed before 1 December, the student is not required to pay any additional variable amount of the tuition fee, provided the total number of ECTS-credits for which he is enrolled does not exceed the amount of ECTS-credits he initially enrolled for.

§ 3. If the enrolment is changed before 1 March the student who enrolls in the second semester, is not required to pay any additional tuition fee, provided the total number of ECTS-credits for which he is enrolled does not exceed the amount of ECTS-credits he initially enrolled for.

§ 4. If the enrolment is changed after 1 December but before 1 March, the student will not be required to pay any additional variable amount of the tuition fee for course units in the second semester, insofar as the change does not lead to the total number of ECTS credits for second



semester course units he has enrolled for exceeding the number of credits for which he was originally enrolled.

§ 5. If the change is not requested in due time, the student will need to pay the full variable amount of the tuition fee required for the new enrolment, without offsetting this against the tuition fee that was payable for the previous enrolment.

*Implications for the fixed amount of the tuition fee*

§ 6. When changing to a programme for which the fixed amount differs from the fixed amount for the programme in which the student was originally enrolled, the difference between the two fixed amounts will be offset if the enrolment change occurs before 15 October.

§ 7. The same rule applies to students who enrol in the second semester after the end of the first semester, as long as the enrolment change occurs before 15 February.

§ 8. If the change is not requested in a timely manner, the student shall pay the full fixed amount of the tuition fee required for the new enrolment, without offsetting this against the fixed amount of the tuition fee payable for the previous enrolment.

**Article 71 (payment of tuition fees after changing course units chosen)**

§ 1. Changing course units that were chosen is possible, as set out in greater detail in Article 79, and results in an obligation to pay tuition fees as follows.

§ 2. If the change results in the total number of ECTS credits for which the student is enrolled exceeding the number for which he was originally enrolled, the tuition fees will be recalculated. The student shall then pay the additional tuition fees.

§ 3. If the student enrolls for first semester course units or for full year course units before 1 December, no additional tuition fees will be due, provided that the change does not lead to the total number of ECTS credits for which he is enrolled exceeding the number for which he was originally enrolled.

§ 4. If the student enrolls for second semester course units before 16 March, no additional tuition fees will be due, provided that the change does not lead to the total number of ECTS credits for which he is enrolled exceeding the number for which he was originally enrolled.

§ 5. If the total number of ECTS credits for the curriculum chosen by the student after the change is less than the number of ECTS credits prior to the change, the student will only be entitled to a refund if he un-enrolls from the relevant course units before 1 December (when changing first semester and full-year course units chosen) or before 16 March (when changing second semester course units chosen).

§ 6. For changes after 1 December (when changing first semester and full-year course units chosen) or after 16 March (when changing second semester course units chosen), the student must pay tuition fees for the ECTS credits relating to all the additional course units he enrolls for.

**Article 72 (reimbursement of tuition fees after discontinuing the study programme)**

§ 1. On no account shall discontinuation of the course release the student from the obligation to pay the amount due.

§ 2. If discontinuation occurs up to 30 November, the student will be reimbursed the tuition fees he has paid, excluding the fixed amount.

§ 3. If discontinuation occurs between 1 December and 15 March, the student will be reimbursed the tuition fees paid for second semester course units.

§ 4. If discontinuation occurs from 16 March on, the University shall be entitled to the total amount of the tuition fees.

**Section 5. Study account**

**Article 73 (study account and discontinuation of the study programme)**

§ 1. In the event of the study programme being discontinued before 1 December, the full amount of study points will be re-credited to the student's study account.

§ 2. In the event of the study programme being discontinued between 1 December and 15 March, the study points for the second semester course units and full-year course units will be re-credited to the student's study account.

§ 3. In the event of the study programme being discontinued after 15 March, the student will lose the full amount of study points used from his study account.

**Article 74 (study account and reorientation)**

§ 1. A student who wants to switch study programmes must discontinue his current study programme and enrol in another study programme. The study account for the discontinued study programme will be recredited in accordance with the provisions of Article 73.

§ 2. A first-time student who switches study programmes between 1 December and the last day before the start of the first set of examinations of the first examination period will have half the study points recredited to his study account for first semester course units, as well as the study points used for second semester course units and full-year course units.

**Article 75 (study account and changing the full-year programme)**

§ 1. The student will have the study points used reccredited to his study account if he un-enrols from the course units before 1 December. Un-enrolling from course units is possible from 16 October onwards in accordance with Article 79, though only with the approval of the Dean.

§ 2. If the student un-enrols from course units between 1 December and 15 March, he will lose the study points used for the first semester course units. The study points used for second semester and full-year course units will be reccredited to his study account. Un-enrolling from course units is possible only with the approval of the Dean, in accordance with Article 79.

§ 3. If the student un-enrols from course units after 15 March, he will lose the study points used.

§ 4. In the event of un-enrolling from course units under credit contract, the student loses the study points used, regardless of when this occurs.

#### **Article 76** (rectification of the study account)

§ 1. If any administrative legal action resulting in the determination, increase or reduction of the study points contained in the study account is affected by a material error, the student should submit a written request for this to be corrected within 10 calendar days of notification of the administrative procedure. To this end, the student must apply to the Dean, who will make a decision within 15 calendar days of receiving the request. The student will then be informed of the decision by registered mail.

#### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

Students must submit their request to the Dean at [facw@vub.be](mailto:facw@vub.be).

§ 2. If an administrative legal action resulting in the determination, increase or reduction of the study points contained in the study account is carried out due to an inaccuracy, the student should submit a written request for this to be corrected within 10 calendar days of notification of the administrative procedure. To this end, the student must apply to the Dean, who will make a decision within 15 calendar days of receiving the request. The student will then be informed of the decision by registered mail, stating the reasons.

### **Section 6: Nullification of enrolment**

#### **Article 77** (nullification of enrolment)

§ 1. Incorrect or invalid enrolments must be rectified with the institution and annulled in the Higher Education Database.

§ 2. Enrolment obtained on the basis of incorrect or false information, which was nevertheless essential, will be declared null and void by the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs.

## **CHAPTER V. - Determining the student's annual programme**

### **Section 1: Registration of the course units**

#### **Article 78** (determination of the annual programme)

**§ 1.** For enrolments with a diploma contract, the student must determine his annual programme each academic year. He must do this in accordance with the provisions of the teaching and examination regulations and the programme-specific provisions as set out in the study programme description or the course unit description.

**§ 2.** Course units must be registered by the student on the Student SelfService portal.

Enrolment under an examination contract or credit contract is registered by the faculty administration. The registration for course units taken by guest students is also undertaken by the faculty administration.

**§ 3.** A student who enrolls in a specific bachelor's programme at the VUB for the first time is automatically registered for the mandatory course units in the first year of the standard study path for this programme.

Contrary to the first paragraph above, the following students can apply to diverge from the first year of the standard study path on initial enrolment in a bachelor's programme:

- Students from the following groups (applications for this can be submitted up to 15 October):
  - students with a disability who are granted ReFlex status in this context;
  - top-tier sports students who are granted ReFlex status in this context;
  - student entrepreneurs who are granted ReFlex status in this context;
  - student refugees who are granted ReFlex status in this context;
  - working students with 80 hours of employment per month;
  - students entitled to a grant with employment of at least 16 hours per week;
- students who change programme during the course of the academic year, whether or not within the same institution. Students who have already obtained a bachelor's or master's degree (or an equivalent degree) (applications for this can initially be submitted up to 15 October).
- Students who submit a reasoned request for diverging from the standard study path on the basis of their exceptional situation. Among others, this concerns students enrolling at the VUB in the second semester. For students enrolling at VUB in the second semester, the faculty can determine which course units cannot be included in their annual programme, taking account of the consecutive structure of the first year of the standard learning pathway or for continuity requirement reasons.

The procedure and modalities for applying for an exemption are available on the following web page: <https://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/iedereen-welkom-aan-de-vub/eerstejaars-aan-de-vub/ho-ziet-ee-studietraject-eruit>.

Any student who provides incorrect or false information with a view to gaining consent to diverge from the standard study path on initial enrolment will remain registered for the standard study path and will also be subject to sanctions as stipulated in the Order and Disciplinary Regulations for Students at VUB.

**§ 4.** Any student who has not obtained a credit certificate or a tolerable failing grade for all course units taken must, in the case of subsequent enrolment, at least re-enrol in all course units for which he has not obtained a credit certificate or tolerable failing grade. If one of these course units is an elective course unit, the student can opt for a replacement elective course unit within the arrangements applying to the relevant programme. The obligation stated in the first paragraph may be derogated from if the student can demonstrate that there is a case of force majeure or that special individual circumstances exist.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The motivated request for deviation is made by means of the application form ‘study pathway exception’ available on vub.be via <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/study-guidance/study-path/study-path-exceptions>

**§ 5.** When compiling his individualised study path, the student can call on the assistance of the study path counsellor.

**§ 6.** The student can determine his individualised annual programme for first semester course units and full year course units up to 15 October. Second semester course units can be determined up to 28 February. Enrolment outside the proposed enrolment periods is only possible with the consent of the Dean, in accordance with article 60. Should the student fail to do this before 15 November and 31 March, respectively, in consultation with the study path counsellor, the student will be then be deemed have tacitly terminated the enrolment agreement and will be deregistered by the administration. In such a case, the person concerned shall lose all the rights of a VUB student.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The motivated request for deviation is made by means of the application form ‘study pathway exception’ available on vub.be via <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/study-guidance/study-path/study-path-exceptions>

§ 7. When compiling his individualised study path for the academic year, the student must, with regard to taking foreign language course units, limit himself to 18.33% of the ECTS credits for the bachelor's programme and 50% of the ECTS credit study load for the master's programme.

**Article 79 (changing the annual programme)**

§ 1. Changing and un-enrolling from the course units chosen within the study programme in which the student is enrolled is possible within the time frames set out below.

This change in curriculum may affect the student's study account.

§ 2. The student may enter changes on the Student SelfService portal up to 15 October without any restriction.

§ 3. From 16 October to 15 December at the latest, the student requires the permission of the Dean to enrol for or un-enrol from first semester course units. The Dean may withhold his approval if, among other things, the teaching in this course unit is already too far advanced. The Dean may refuse un-enrolment if, among other things, there is a (partial) result or electronic communication code attached to the course unit.

§ 4. From 16 October to 28 February at the latest, the student requires the permission of the Dean to enrol for full-year course units. The Dean may refuse such enrolment if, among other things, the teaching in this course unit is already too far advanced.

§ 5. From 16 October to 15 March at the latest, the student requires the permission of the Dean to un-enrol from full-year course units. The Dean may refuse such un-enrolment if, among other things, there is a (partial) result or electronic communication code attached to the course unit.

§ 6. With regard to second semester course units, the student may enter the change via the Student SelfService portal up to 28 February. From 1 March to 3 June at the latest, the student requires the Dean's permission to enrol or un-enrol. The Dean may refuse such enrolment if, among other things, the teaching in this course unit is already too far advanced. The Dean may refuse un-enrolment if, among other things, there is a (partial) result or electronic communication code attached to the course unit.

§ 7. Notwithstanding §1 to § 6, changing the annual programme is not possible for students initially enrolled in a bachelor's programme, except in those cases where consent has been given to diverge from the standard study pathway in accordance with Article 78, § 3.

§ 8. The consequences for calculation of the tuition fee, including any obligation to pay additional tuition fees, are set out in Article 71.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The motivated request for deviation is made by means of the application form 'study pathway exception' available on vub.be via <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/study-guidance/study-path/study-path-exceptions>

### **Article 80 (ECTS credits acquired)**

In the case of modifications to the programme (changes to the curriculum), the student may apply ECTS credits already acquired to the new study programme. The transitional measures taken in this regard must be submitted to the Education Council, together with the changes to the curriculum.

### **Article 81 (procedure for deviation from the continuity requirement)**

If a student wishes to deviate from the continuity requirement for the study programme, he must obtain the Dean's permission.

The student can submit a request for exemption up to 15 October. If the application only concerns second semester course units, the deadline is 15 February. Students who have been given permission to register late can submit a request for exemption no later than seven calendar days after the day on which the notification of permission to register late was issued.

### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The motivated request for deviation is made by means of the application form 'study pathway exception' available on vub.be via <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/study-guidance/study-path/study-path-exceptions>

## **Section 2: Exemptions based on previously acquired competencies or previously acquired qualifications**

### **Article 82 (application and grounds)**

**§ 1.** If a student thinks he qualifies for an exemption based on previously acquired competencies or previously acquired qualifications, he must submit a request in accordance with the specified procedure.

**§ 2.** An exemption can be granted on the following grounds:

- credit certificate or diploma issued by this or another higher education institution;
- certificate of aptitude issued by a validating body;
- previously acquired qualifications, other than a credit certificate or diploma, which meet the definition of the Higher Education Code.

### **Article 83 (transfer of examination results)**

If an exemption is granted, the examination results obtained will not be transferred, unless:

- a) a credit certificate is obtained under a credit contract for a course unit that is identical to that in a programme for which the student subsequently enrolls under a diploma contract;
- b) a credit certificate is obtained for a course unit that is common to several study programmes pursued simultaneously or consecutively.

#### **Article 84 (evaluation criteria)**

§ 1. When an exemption is granted, a check is carried out to ascertain to what extent there is sufficient correspondence in terms of objectives, contents and study outcomes between the course unit for which the exemption is requested and the course unit on the basis of which the exemption is requested.

§ 2. Decisions to grant or deny exemptions must be adequately justified. Justification based merely on the title and study load of the course unit is not sufficient for granting or denying an exemption.

#### **Article 85 (extent of the exemption)**

§ 1. The exemption may be complete or partial. If a complete exemption is not possible, it must always be examined to what extent a partial exemption is possible.

§ 2. The extent of an exemption is expressed in whole study points.

§ 3. If a partial exemption is granted, the decision must explicitly state for which parts the student has an exemption and for which parts he still needs to sit an examination. The way in which the examination marks are determined must also be stated.

#### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

If the exemption relates to part of a programme unit, the final grade for that unit will be determined entirely by the examination result obtained for that part of the unit not exempted.

#### **Article 86 (period of validity)**

A credit certificate obtained within the same study programme at VUB, as well as a certificate of aptitude issued by a validating body within the association, are valid for an indefinite period. If substantial differences can be demonstrated after a period of five years between the competencies the student has acquired according to the credit certificate and the competencies currently aimed for in a course unit, the Dean can instruct the student to take all or part of one or more course units in order to bridge these substantial differences. The aforementioned period of five years is calculated from the first day of the month of October following the academic year in which the credit certificate was obtained.



## **Article 87 (procedure)**

§ 1. Decisions on exemptions are taken by the Dean, where appropriate based on the advice of the lecturer and/or Study Programme Committee. The detailed procedure for requesting and granting exemptions must be posted on the faculty website.

The application for exemption can be submitted up to 15 October. If the application only concerns second semester course units, the deadline for application is 15 February. Students who have been given permission to register late can submit a request for exemption no later than seven calendar days after the day on which the notification of permission to register late was issued.

### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The student addresses his question to the dean via <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/student-administration/request-exemption#paragraph--id--71029>

§ 2. If it is found, based on his previously acquired qualifications and/or a certificate of aptitude, that a person has acquired the domain-specific study outcomes associated with study a programme, that person will be awarded the relevant diploma. Administrative enrolment in the study programme is required for this. An amount of €50 is payable as a contribution towards the cost of issuing the diploma.

§ 3. When a decision is taken with regard to granting exemptions based on a foreign diploma or a period of study abroad, the provisions and principles arising from the Treaty of the Council of Europe and UNESCO on the recognition of diplomas of higher education in the European Region, shall apply, provided the country of origin has also ratified the Treaty.

§ 4. Decisions on granting or denying exemptions must be kept on file. The relevant documents from the file concerned must be kept in the faculty for at least 1 academic year.

## **Section 3: Study progress monitoring**

### **Article 88 (imposition of a study progress monitoring measure)**

#### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

Exceptional circumstances may include:

<https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/study-guidance/study-path/study-progress#paragraph--id--71695>

§ 1. For a student, regardless of the university where he started his study programme, who has

not obtained a credit certificate or a tolerable failing grade for all course units opted for on initial enrolment in a specific initial bachelor's programme at the VUB, the measures for study progress monitoring apply as follows.

If a student has not obtained a credit certificate or tolerable failing grade for all course units taken following his initial enrolment, he must obtain these for his second enrolment in a subsequent academic year in the same study programme. This provision continues to apply if a student changes university or replaces an elective course unit with another elective course unit on his second enrolment. This provision does not apply if a student changes his majors.

If a student fails to meet this binding condition, he will not be able to re-enrol in the relevant programme, except in the case of force majeure or particular individual circumstances.

A student for whom enrolment in a specific study programme was refused in accordance with paragraph three above can re-enrol in the same study programme if he has gained an adult post-secondary education diploma or following a waiting period of six academic years after the academic year in which the enrolment was refused.

**§ 2.** If a student has failed to attain study progress of at least 30% in a specific initial bachelor programme at VUB following his initial enrolment, re-enrolment in the same programme as well as re-enrolment for course units in that programme under a credit or examination contract will be refused for that student, except in the case of force majeure or particular individual circumstances. The Examinations Board can deviate from this refusal for students who are only enrolled for one or two course units.

**§ 3.** A binding condition will be imposed on any student enrolled under a diploma contract who has not obtained 60% of the ECTS credits taken for the next re-enrolment in the same course. If the student re-enrols for the same programme under a diploma contract, he must obtain credits or tolerable failing grades for 75% of the ECTS credits taken and needs to pass every course unit for which he has already enrolled at least twice, but for which he did not obtain a credit certificate. Furthermore, a student in a bachelor's programme can only register for a maximum of 60 ECTS credits. The students may also be placed under mandatory study guidance. Should a student fail to comply with this binding condition, the first subsequent re-enrolment for the same programme, or any course units in that programme, under any form of contract whatsoever will be refused, except in the case of force majeure or exceptional individual circumstances.

At the start of the academic year, the student is entitled to a meeting with a Study Counselling staff member to discuss the student's study progress and possible study counselling.

**§ 4.** If a student enrolled under a diploma contract has already been enrolled twice for a course unit but did not obtain a credit certificate or tolerable failing grade for this, a binding condition will be imposed for the next subsequent re-enrolment in the same study programme. When re-

enrolling for the same study programme, the student must obtain a credit or tolerable failing grade for the course unit in question. The student can also be placed under mandatory study counselling. If the course unit was previously taken in another programme or under a different contract type, these enrolments are also taken into consideration.

If a student does not meet this binding condition, subsequent re-enrolment in the same study programme, as well as course units of that programme, will be refused under any contract type, except in the case of force majeure or special individual circumstances.

**§ 5.** If a student enrolled under a diploma contract has not obtained any credits, re-enrolment of the student in the same study programme, as well as for programme units in the same programme under a credit or examination contract, will be refused except in the case of force majeure or exceptional individual circumstances. The Examination Board can deviate from this refusal for students who are only enrolled for one or two course units.

**§ 6.** For the purposes of this article, students registered under an examination contract with a view to obtaining a degree or study course diploma follow the regulations that apply to students under a diploma contract.

**§ 7.** Barring force majeure or exceptional individual circumstances, students enrolled under a credit or examination contract for the purpose of obtaining ECTS credits will be rejected for this course unit if they have enrolled twice for a particular course unit without obtaining a credit certificate for that course unit.

**§ 8.** A student who has been refused re-enrolment for a study programme at the VUB will have a binding condition imposed on him for the next subsequent enrolment in another course within the same field of study via a diploma contract. The student must obtain credits or tolerable failing grades for 75% of the ECTS credits taken and must register for and pass each course unit for which the student has not yet obtained a credit certificate and which he has already been enrolled for twice.

If the student does not meet this binding condition, the next enrolment in the same study programme, including course units of that programme, will be refused under any contract type, except in the case of force majeure or exceptional individual circumstances.

**§ 9.** A student who has not obtained 60% of the registered ECTS credits for a study programme at another institution will have a binding condition imposed on him for the next enrolment in a study programme within the same discipline via a diploma contract: the student must obtain credits or tolerable failing grades for 75% of the ECTS credits taken for enrolment in a programme within the same discipline via a diploma contract. The student can also be placed under mandatory study counselling. If the student does not meet this binding condition, the next re-enrolment in the same study programme, including course units of that programme, under any contract type will be refused, except in the case of force majeure or exceptional

individual circumstances.

**§ 10.** If the information in the individual file suggests that subsequent enrolment in higher education will not have a positive outcome, enrolment at the VUB can be refused on justified grounds. An examination board can invoke this measure. Detailed reasons are to be given for refusing enrolment for an individual student.

**§ 11.** The decision to apply binding conditions or refuse enrolment is announced on the Student SelfService portal.

**§ 12.** If the enrolment of a student in a study programme is refused in accordance with the provisions of §§ 2-10 of this article, the student may, following a period of at least two academic years without further enrolment for the study programme(s) and course units for which the student was refused, submit a written and reasoned file indicating that the circumstances have changed. The file must be submitted to the administrative secretariat of the faculty before 1 June or 1 September respectively and will be dealt with by the relevant authorised committee. This committee can impose a binding condition on the student in accordance with § 3 of this article, as applicable at the time of the decision.

**§ 13.** To challenge the imposition of a binding condition or refusal to allow re-enrolment (also if this is the result of failure to attain the threshold package), a student can, in the case of force majeure or exceptional individual circumstances, submit a substantiated file to the Chairman of the Examinations Board containing at least a factual description of the force majeure or exceptional individual circumstances, together with relevant supporting documents. The file must be lodged with the faculty's administrative secretariat:

- no later than ten calendar days before the date of the deliberation (second examination).

#### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

Students must submit their request at [faclw@vub.be](mailto:faclw@vub.be).

**§ 14.** A decision by a partner institute to refuse enrolment for a programme organised at interuniversity level that is subject to the “Examination regulations for interuniversity master's courses that can be enrolled in at more than one university”, shall be recognised by this institute.

**§ 15.** Study progress decisions are taken subject to Article 50.

**§ 16.** The provisions of this article do not apply to advanced master's or postgraduate programmes, unless provided for otherwise in the supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations.

#### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

Teaching and examination regulations, version approved by the Academic Council 16 September 2024.

Additions from the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy, incorporated into the text in yellow text bars; version as approved by the Faculty Council on 03/06/2024 and approved by the Education Council on 12/09/2024.

The imposition of a measure of study progress applies within the Master-after-Master programme of Archivistis and Contemporary Document Management.

#### **Section 4: Timetable**

##### **Article 89 (timetable)**

The date, time and classroom where the classes (lectures, WPO, etc.) are taught are announced to the student before the start of the relevant semester via a timetable on the student portal. Any changes in the timetable will be announced to the students in the same manner.

##### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The student can find the schedules on <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/class-and-exam-schedules/class-schedules>

#### **Section 5: Taking course units at another institution and international traineeships**

##### **Article 90 (taking an elective course unit at another Flemish university)**

Under the terms of an agreement concluded between the Flemish universities, students can take programme units organised by other universities as elective course units. The agreement sets out the following conditions/modalities:

- the student is enrolled under a diploma or examination contract with a view to obtaining a diploma;
- the course unit is not organised by the home institution;
- the student does not have to pay the other institution any additional tuition fees;
- the host institution informs the home institution of the examination results;
- the credit certificate is issued by the home institution.

##### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The student completes the form online at <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/student-administration/elective-courses-and-forms#paragraph--id--86320>

##### **Article 91 (taking course units at another higher education institution and international traineeships)**

**§ 1.** For the purpose of internationalisation/student mobility, faculties of different universities may make arrangements for the exchange and lending/borrowing of course units.

##### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The student takes note of and complies with the agreements and deadlines from the Faculty Procedures Internationalisation. The document is sent to the student by the faculty administration at the start of the exchange programme.

**§ 2.** If a student wishes to take one or more course units at another institution that is not covered by Article 90 and Article 91, § 1 of these regulations, he must submit a reasoned request to the Dean. The faculty shall incorporate a procedure for this purpose into its faculty teaching and examination regulations.

#### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The student completes the form online at <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/student-administration/elective-courses-and-forms#paragraph--id--86320>

In the event of a positive decision, the faculty must clearly specify which course units can be replaced by an external course unit and how the examination results will be converted accordingly.

**§ 3.** Outgoing exchange students include in a Learning Agreement which package of VUB course units will be replaced by course units at the host university. Derogation in a negative sense is only allowed for a maximum of 2 ECTS credits.

**§ 4.** Each international student mobility measure needs to be registered by the student in SOP Mobility Oline. Students need to do this after administrative and/or academic approval of the mobility has been given by the person responsible in the faculty, at the latest one month prior to departure.

#### **Article 92 (Travel policy)**

**§ 1.** In the context of safety, public health and the common good, students may be prohibited from travelling abroad for educational activities and, if relevant, be obliged to return to Belgium. Such a decision shall be taken by the Vice Rector of International Affairs.

**§ 2.** Students who fail to comply with such a ban on travelling and/or obligation to return to Belgium shall be deemed to be not validly registered for the course units involved in the outgoing mobility concerned and/or the international traineeship and shall therefore forfeit any right to participate in the education and evaluation activities abroad. Exam results obtained shall be deemed non-existent.

#### **Section 6: Equal opportunities**

#### **Article 93 (inclusive education)**

**§ 1.** All educational activities must be open to everyone. Every student must be given equal opportunities. This can call for a reasonable degree of flexibility (in terms of compliance with the

criteria for feasibility, acceptability and justifiability) in granting derogations to individual students under specific circumstances. A reasonably flexible derogation is a one that does not involve a disproportionate burden. A reasonably flexible derogation makes the training more feasible for the student, remains acceptable to the lecturer and can be justified to fellow students and the educational institution. The student should seek advice from Counselling or the Top-tier Sports and Study Department, following which, based on a professional certificate and an interview with a Study Counselling student psychologist, a reasoned request will be made to the lecturer, under the responsibility of the Dean. A decision to refuse the adjustments requested may be justified on the basis of the institution being of the opinion that the modification requested would compromise the possibility of achieving the domain-specific study outcomes of the study programme or the possibility of achieving other objectives of the study programme in overall terms. As set out in article 154, students with disabilities may lodge an appeal against the refusal of a requested derogation.

§ 2. The aim is to come to a workable arrangement through dialogue in all cases. If problems arise during the dialogue, the faculty ombudsperson can be asked to intervene.

### **Section 7: Flemish training leave (VOV), paid educational leave (BEV) and leave of absence for training purposes**

#### **Article 94**

§ 1. Students who combine work and study may enrol as working students. The criteria for eligibility, how to enrol and the nature of the special educational activities available to working students are listed here: <https://my.vub.ac.be/en/working-and-studying> and [https://student.vub.be/en/specific-info-for-working-students#\(re-\)enrol](https://student.vub.be/en/specific-info-for-working-students#(re-)enrol).

§ 2. To be entitled to BEV (paid educational leave), students must have their attendance lists signed by their respective lecturers after each lecture they have attended. Students must submit their attendance lists to OWSA on a quarterly basis by, at the latest:

- the last Friday before the winter break (for first semester course units);
- the last Friday before the Easter holiday (for second semester course units and full year course units);
- 30 June (for second semester course units and full year course units).

A student enrolled under an examination contract with the aim of obtaining a degree and who is entitled to BEV must provide his employer with proof that he has actually sat the exams. The student should request this proof of effective participation after the second examination period by sending an email to the faculty secretariat.

§ 3. To be entitled to leave of absence for training purposes, students must have their attendance lists signed by their respective lecturers after each lecture they have attended. Students must submit their attendance lists to OWSA by 30 June at the latest.

**§ 4.** To be entitled to Flemish training leave, the student is issued with a certificate of enrolment by OWSA after his enrolment, stating the ODB number. Details concerning participation in the final evaluation or attendance (in the case of continuing education) is sent to the departments concerned automatically.

## **CHAPTER VI. Student feedback**

### **Article 95 (organisation and objectives)**

Given that students are important stakeholders in education, they are explicitly asked for their opinion on that education. One of the instruments used to do this is the student feedback survey. All bachelor's and master's programmes as well as the bridging and preparatory programmes are evaluated annually by the students using this survey.

This survey has several purposes. The results provide insight into the extent to which students are satisfied with the quality of the education. The feedback from students can help the lecturers, the Study Programme Committees and the institution to reflect on the quality of education, detect and correct any problems, and further optimise the education offered. Moreover, the quantitative feedback is used by the institution for reporting purposes and quality assurance. The qualitative feedback is considered used by the lecturers for the purpose of improving quality.

The participation of students in student feedback is necessary to enable these objectives to be achieved in the context of quality assurance and is compulsory for that reason. If any students fail to participate in the student feedback, their access to the learning platform may be temporarily suspended.

### **Article 96 (survey content)**

The survey is made up of various components:

- a survey for each course unit, in which student satisfaction is assessed concerning five aspects: objectives, substance, guidance, study material and forms of evaluation. The level of satisfaction with each teacher associated with the course unit as a lecturer or fellow lecturer is also surveyed;
- a survey on how the study time is experienced;
- a questionnaire to assesses satisfaction with the study programme, the study programme facilities and the generic competences acquired during the study programme;
- a questionnaire concerning general satisfaction with VUB and the central services provided.

### **Article 97 (frequency and scope)**



The student feedback survey is organised twice a year, at the end of the first and second semester respectively, for the course units taken by the students in the relevant semester. All course units are evaluated, including work placement, bachelor's thesis or master's thesis. The questionnaire concerning the study programme is given to bachelor's degree and master's degree students completing their study programme at the end of the second semester. The general satisfaction survey is conducted among all students at the end of the first semester.

#### **Article 98 (coordination)**

The survey is organised, coordinated and managed by Educational and Student Affairs, under the supervision of the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs. The application is developed and maintained by IT.

The survey takes place electronically via a secure website. The students have access via their individual VUB account. Educational and Student Affairs take the necessary measures to safeguard the anonymity of the students.

#### **Article 99 (results and reporting)**

The results of the survey are reported after each survey via the official results site for academic staff and students. This secure website is accessible to students and lecturers via their VUB account.

The students have access to the aggregated results of the survey per course unit and to the results (excluding comments) of the other components of the survey.

#### **Article 100 (follow-up of signals as a result of the survey per course unit)**

A follow-up signal is indicated if at macro level (aggregated by study guide number) for one of the aspects at least 34% of the participating students answered with less than 5 on a scale of 0-10. In addition, the following participation criteria must have been met (the percentages concern the proportion of students enrolled in the course unit taking part in the survey for the same course unit):

- at least 50% with a group size of [1-15]
- at least 40% with a group size of [15-50]
- at least 30% with a group size of [50-150]
- at least 20% with a group size of 150 and larger

A signal will only be generated if at least three students participate. Follow-up signals that occur two or three times within a period of five years for the same aspect in the same course unit are referred to as second or third follow-up signals. These follow-up signals must be followed up in a formal manner.

## TITLE III. – EXAMINATION REGULATIONS

### **CHAPTER I. - Organisation of examinations**

#### **Article 101** (preliminary examinations)

§ 1. Preliminary examinations may be held for full year course units in the bachelor's programmes or in the bridging and preparatory programmes during the first set of examinations of the first examination period.

§ 2. The faculties shall determine the necessary procedural guidelines in their supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations.

#### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The preliminary examinations are included in the overview of examination timetables for the first examination period of the first term.

§ 3. The manner in which the results are incorporated into the end results for the course unit in question is to be set out in the course unit description.

#### **Article 102** (number of examination opportunities)

§ 1. Students are entitled to two examination opportunities during the academic year to obtain a credit certificate for each course unit for which they are enrolled. Depending on the nature of a course unit, the number of examination opportunities (also at the level of any component part of an examination) may be limited to one. This must be indicated in the course unit description.

§ 2. Under no circumstances may students present themselves more than twice within the same academic year for the same examinations or component parts of an examination.

#### **Article 103** (partial or continuous assessment)

§ 1. With regard to course units consisting of several study activities, each faculty may opt to assess the competencies associated with these activities separately.

The information provided to students shall relate, at the very least, to the following aspects:

- description of the various study activities;
- percentage share of the various study activities in the final examination grade;
- types of assessment and when assessment takes place, i.e. assessment (at least partially) outside actual examination periods;
- the possibility that individual assessment results may be announced to students;
- the possibility that individual assessment results may also be included in the second examination period grades.

§ 2. The procedures under § 1 shall be announced before the start of the academic year as part of the course descriptions.

**Article 104 (retaking examinations)**

§ 1. Course unit examinations taken in the first set of examinations of the first examination period may not be retaken until the second examination period.

§ 2. For students who take part in international exchange programmes, the procedures for re-taking examinations are outlined in the agreement with the partner institution. Only in exceptional circumstances may the Dean give permission to students who have not obtained a credit certificate for a course unit, taken at another foreign higher education institution, to take an examination in the second examination period of the same academic year at VUB for the equivalent VUB course unit.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The student takes note of and complies with the agreements and deadlines from the Faculty Procedures Internationalisation. The document is sent to the student by the faculty administration at the start of the exchange programme.

**Article 105 (scheduling of examinations)**

§ 1. Examinations may not be scheduled on Sundays or on public or academic holidays.

§ 2. Except for top tier sports students, no preliminary or other examinations may be held outside the periods specified in Article 8 § 1. If a public holiday occurs during an examination period, the relevant examination period shall then start on the Saturday of the preceding pre-examinations study week.

§ 3. For international students, students participating in international exchange programmes, as well as for students enrolled in study programmes of an interuniversity nature, any decision to make an exception shall be taken by the competent faculty authorities and set out in the Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations document.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The student takes note of and complies with the agreements and deadlines from the Faculty Procedures Internationalisation. The document is sent to the student by the faculty administration at the start of the exchange programme.

Students of the interuniversity MA in gender and diversity follow UGent's examination regulations.

Students of the interuniversity Research MA in Philosophy follow the examination regulations (OER) of the VUB.

Students of the interuniversity MNM in archivistics: heritage and contemporary document management follow VUB's examination regulations (OER).

**§ 4.** In exceptional circumstances, such as those referred to in § 3, teaching activities shall not be suspended.

#### **Article 106 (examination schedule)**

**§ 1.** For the first and second set of exams of the first examination period, the provisional examination schedule shall be announced at least fourteen weeks in advance ad valvas and/or personally via the VUB email address. With regard to the second examination periods, this deadline period will be reduced to at least four weeks.

For the first and second sets of examinations in the first examination period, the examination schedule will be finalised four weeks before the start of the relevant examination period. The examination schedule for the second examination period will be finalised two weeks before the start of the exams.

#### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

Students may consult the faculty exam scheduled at <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/class-and-exam-schedules/exam-schedules>

**§ 2.** In determining the examination schedule, the standard study path is taken as a basis. Students who have multiple examinations at the same time, either by diverging from the standard study path, or through combined enrolment or due to optional course units, will sit the examination that comes first in the standard study path or the examination for the mandatory course unit (rather than elective course units). Regarding the examinations for other course units, the student can ask whether a new examination time can be arranged within the relevant examination period. The new examination schedule may be coupled with a change to the examination format, as decided by the Dean. The procedure for requesting the rescheduling of an examination is outlined in the faculty education and examination regulations. This procedure stipulates that students have a period of at least 3 calendar days to give notification of an overlap in their examination schedule.

#### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

Students must fill in the <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/exams-and-deliberations/absences#paragraph-132538> accurately and fully and send it to [facw@vub.be](mailto:facw@vub.be) with the lecturer in copy.

When determining the examination schedule based on the standard study path, attention is paid to spreading the load for students. Faculties should, as far as possible in organisational terms, spread out the examinations to ensure that they are not held on consecutive days, unless they concern several assessments associated with one and the same course unit.

§ 3. For students participating in international exchange programmes who are abroad at the time of the examination, the dean, in consultation with the lecturer and, if necessary, with a change of examination format, shall decide whether a digital examination can be held on the same day or another day. The procedure for this is laid down in the supplementary faculty education and examination regulations.

#### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

Students must submit their request to the Dean at [fac1w@vub.be](mailto:fac1w@vub.be).

§ 4. The faculty ombudsperson may, at his request or following a complaint, be involved in drawing up the definitive examination schedule.

§ 5. Any change to the examination schedule made by the institution after it was announced must be communicated personally to the students affected and without delay via their VUB e-mail addresses. Any changes may not result in examinations taking place earlier than previously announced.

§ 6. Implementation of this article is the responsibility of the Dean.

### **CHAPTER II. - Equal opportunities**

#### **Article 107 (inclusiveness)**

§ 1. All educational activities must be open to everyone. Every student must be given equal opportunities. A number of examination measures are provided to ensure openness to all (for every student and in every course unit). A list of these inclusive examination measures is published annually via the website. This can call for a reasonable degree of flexibility (in terms of feasibility, acceptability and justifiability criteria) in granting derogations for individual students under specific circumstances. A reasonably flexible derogation is a one that does not involve a disproportionate burden. A reasonably flexible derogation makes examinations more feasible for the student, remains acceptable to the lecturer and can be justified to fellow students and the educational institution. The student should seek advice from Counselling or the Top-tier Sports and Study Department, following which, based on a professional certificate and an interview with a Study Counselling student psychologist, a reasoned request will be made to the lecturer, under the responsibility of the Dean. A decision to refuse the adjustments requested may be justified on the basis of the institution being of the opinion that the modification requested would compromise the possibility of achieving the domain-specific study outcomes of the study programme or the possibility of achieving other objectives of the study programme in overall

terms. As set out in article 154, students with disabilities may lodge an appeal against the refusal of a requested derogation.

**§ 2.** Students who wish to apply for ReFlex status or wish to make changes to a ReFlex status obtained previously must do this at the latest between:

- 1 September and 30 October if they want to request educational measures for the first semester and/or examination measures for the first set of exams in the first examination period,
- 1 February and 1 March if they wish to request examination measures for the first examination period – April,
- 1 February and 30 March if they wish to request educational measures for the second semester and/or request examination measures for the second set of exams in the first examination period.
- Between 15 June and 30 June if they wish to request examination measures for the second examination period.

After submitting his request, the student receives a proposal of measures to which he is entitled or an invitation to a meeting to discuss the measures possible for him. Only students who have completed the entire procedure for a status request and the granting of measures within the deadline can apply for the educational and examination measures assigned to them (within the scheduled deadlines). If the status is recognised, ReFlex students must submit their request for reasonable flexible adjustments to Study Counselling no later than at the following times:

- for mid-term evaluations: at the latest 10 working days before the mid-term evaluation;
- for educational measures for the first semester or exam measures for the first set of exams in the first examination period: before 1 December;
- for the April set of exams in the first examination period: before 15 March;
- for educational measures for the second semester or exam measures for the second set of exams in the first examination period: before 1 May;
- For the second examination period : before 15 July.
- for evaluations outside the exam times, at the latest 10 working days prior to the evaluation.

The procedure and form for applying for ReFlex status are announced via the website.

**§ 3.** The aim is to come to a workable arrangement through dialogue in every case. If problems arise during the dialogue, the faculty ombudsperson may be asked to intervene.

### **CHAPTER III. - Taking examinations**

#### **Article 108 (taking examinations)**

§ 1. A student will only be allowed to sit examinations if the student has been correctly enrolled for the relevant academic year and if the student has been enrolled in the relevant course unit via the Student SelfService portal. The students enrolled in the course unit in question are entered in the exam list.

§ 2. If the student is not included in the exam list and is of the opinion that he should be admitted to the examination, the student should contact the faculty secretariat before the start of the examination at the latest. In exceptional circumstances, the examiner may decide that the student can be admitted to the examination on a conditional basis. If it becomes evident that the student has not been enrolled correctly, the examination will not be valid.

§ 3. Proper enrolment for examinations is entirely dependent upon submission of the required certificates at the time of enrolment.

§ 4. If there is an outstanding balance concerning the tuition fees, the student cannot legitimately participate in examinations.

§ 5. A student who is suspended under Article 67, § 3 or Article 107, § 5 is not entitled to benefit from teaching activities or evaluation activities; participation in examinations which that already been taken is not legitimate and the student will be deemed not to have obtained any examination grades.

§ 6. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 108, the faculties determine the conditions under which students are admitted to or excluded from taking examinations. These rules shall be made known to students from the start of the academic year. These rules are included in the supplementary faculty education and examination regulations.

#### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

To be allowed to sit the next examination session, the student must also

- if applicable, have submitted his learning agreement to his exchange co-ordinator and have complied with the obligations of the Faculty Procedures for Internationalisation. The document is sent to the student by the faculty administration at the start of the exchange programme.
- he must be registered for the Bachelor's paper in studentselfservice
- he must be registered for the Master's thesis in studentselfservice

#### **Article 109 (termination of traineeship agreement)**

The Traineeship Organisation or the university may terminate the traineeship agreement in the event of misconduct, bad faith, unauthorised absence or deliberate breach of the regulations of the traineeship agreement. In this case, the student will be awarded a zero mark for the (part of) course unit. In this case, the student is not entitled to a replacement assignment.

**Article 110 (sitting examinations in the second examination period)**

§ 1. Notwithstanding the provisions of article 108 and article 109, students are automatically registered for the second examination period for all the course units for which they did not obtain credits during the first examination period, except in the case of tolerable failing grades.

§ 2. If students need to retake a course unit in the second examination period in accordance with the provisions of § 1 of this article, the exam result from the first examination period shall automatically and irrevocably become null and void, and be replaced by a new examination decision.

**CHAPTER IV. - Examination proceedings**

**Article 111 (force majeure)**

§ 1. The student must adhere strictly to the set timetable and place of the examination.

In the event of force majeure, the student may ask for the examination to be rescheduled, on condition that he provides the necessary supporting evidence. The student must inform the faculty secretariat in writing of any case of force majeure, as well as any request to reschedule the exam as a result of this, on the day of the exam at the latest. The student must fill in the form provided correctly and completely. The faculties shall set out where the form can be found and what procedure the student has to follow for its submission in their faculty education and examination regulations.

The original documents proving force majeure shall be submitted to the secretariat of the faculty within three calendar days following the day of the examination and, if applicable, no later than on the day of the examination in the new examination schedule.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The student e-mails the form correctly and fully completed to [faclw@vub.be](mailto:faclw@vub.be).

The form is downloadable from <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/exams-and-deliberations/absences#paragraph-132538>

§ 2. If the student cannot come to the campus for reasons of force majeure but can participate in the exams in digital form, he shall indicate this on the application form as referred to in §1 of this article.

§ 3. If force majeure is demonstrated, the Dean can, after consulting with the examiner and, if necessary, with a change of the examination format, decide whether a digital examination is possible on the same or another day within the examination period, or whether a new examination date can be organised on campus within the same examination period.



In the case of a positive decision, the Dean shall specify the new examination schedule, which may include a change in the examination format and/or examination arrangements.

**§ 4.** In exceptional circumstances, the dean, based on the file submitted, may decide to extend the examination session/period or arrange, in the case of examinations from the first set of exams in the first examination period, for the new examination to take place during the other sets of exams in the first examination period. The student shall be informed of the decision within three calendar days of the request to reschedule the examination being received.

**§ 5.** Force majeure is defined as: an event that is beyond the control of the student and that could not be foreseen, prevented or overcome.

### **Article 112 (medical certificates)**

**§ 1.** The following types of medical certificate are not accepted as proof of force majeure:

- an incomplete certificate or one that contains inconsistencies;
- a certificate based solely on the patient's statement;
- a certificate issued after the day on which the examination takes place.

**§ 2.** If a student takes part in an evaluation during the period for which he is declared unfit as stipulated in the medical certificate, the medical certificate shall cease to be valid from that day on.

### **Article 112bis (force majeure in the event of death of a loved one)**

If the student provides proof of the death of a blood or very close relative (parents or children) or other close relative (grandparents, grandchildren, brother, sister) or of a person who officially lives with the student, this will be deemed to constitute force majeure.

### **Article 113 (examiner's absence)**

**§ 1.** The exam is administered by the teacher responsible for the course unit or by the person who taught the course unit that year as a substitute. The examiner shall keep an accurate attendance list of all students who have taken examinations under his supervision. The examiner shall strictly adhere to the set timetable and place of the examination.

**§ 2.** In the event of the examiner being absent due to force majeure or any other legitimate cause, the Dean will decide on a new examination schedule for each of the students involved.

The new examination schedule may include a change of examination modalities from an on-campus examination to a digital examination, and/or a change of the exam format and/or a move to another day within the same set of exam period and/or replacement of the examiner by

nominating a substitute examiner (member of the independent academic staff or a PhD assistant).

If possible, the examiner shall submit a reasoned request to the Dean for him to be relieved of all or part of his examination assignment and/or to change the exam format and/or the examination modalities (on campus/digital).

In exceptional circumstances, the Dean may also decide, in the case of examinations from the first set of exams in the first examination period, to arrange for the new examination to take place during the other sets of exams in the first examination period.

**§ 3.** In the case of affinity or consanguinity up to and including the fourth degree, or in the case of personal involvement between a student and an examiner, the Dean shall, after consulting with the Chairperson of the Examination Committee, appoint a substitute examiner. In this case, the examiner shall submit such replacement request to the Dean before the beginning of the relevant set of examination sessions.

#### **Article 114 (public nature of examinations, right of access and feedback)**

**§ 1.** The physical preliminary and other examinations are held by the lecturers responsible for the course units in a room belonging to the university. In exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Dean, a different examination location may be agreed.

**§ 2.** The public nature of oral examinations is assured by allowing students to request the presence of an observer. A reasoned request to this end must be submitted in writing to the Chairman of the Examination Board two weeks before the date of the oral examination at the latest (expiry date). The role of observer may not be filled by a student who is due to be examined by the examiner concerned in the same academic year, nor by a relative up to the fourth degree of kinship or any person with whom the student in question has a personal relationship. The observer may only take notes.

The examiner can request the Chairman of the Examination Board to appoint a member of the academic staff (ZAP) as an observer during the oral examination of one or more students.

**§ 3.** The public nature of written preliminary and other examinations is guaranteed by allowing students to inspect copies of the examination papers after each examination period within a period of five days following the announcement of the results in accordance with Article 145 of these regulations. The request for an appointment should be submitted within three calendar days following the announcement of the results in accordance with Article 145 of these regulations.

Each faculty determines in its Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examinations Regulations document how this right of access is provided for.

#### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

Teaching and examination regulations, version approved by the Academic Council 16 September 2024.

Additions from the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy, incorporated into the text in yellow text bars; version as approved by the Faculty Council on 03/06/2024 and approved by the Education Council on 12/09/2024.

Students wishing to take part must send an e-mail to the lecturer(s) directly, with a copy to [fac1w@vub.be](mailto:fac1w@vub.be). Except in exceptional circumstances, if students do not do so, they can no longer invoke their rights.

The examiner shall retain the copies of the examination, regardless of the format in which the examination took place, for up to three months after the end of the academic year in which the examination took place.

**§ 4.** With a view to obtaining sound pedagogical guidance, the student may ask for clarification of the results of mid-term and final examinations within the period of five calendar days after the announcement of the results in accordance with Article 145 of these regulations (expiry date).

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

Students wishing to take part must send an e-mail to the lecturer(s) directly, with a copy to [fac1w@vub.be](mailto:fac1w@vub.be). Except in exceptional circumstances, if students do not do so, they can no longer invoke their rights.

The comment must be supplied within seven calendar days after publication of the results.

**§ 5.** After receiving such feedback, the student may request a copy of the examination taken in the case of written examinations, in accordance with the procedure provided for in the supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations. This copy must be treated as personal and confidential and may only be used in the context of the student's further education.

A student who copies, duplicates and/or distributes such material risks disciplinary sanctions as set out in the Order and Disciplinary Rules for Students of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The student e-mails the form correctly and fully completed to the lecturer with [fac1w@vub.be](mailto:fac1w@vub.be) in cc.

The form is downloadable from <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/exams-and-deliberations/exam-regulations>

**Article 115 (examination format)**

**§ 1.** The course unit description explains in what format the examinations are conducted.

**§ 2.** When taking online examinations, supervision is to be carried out with the help of the webcam. The student will be asked to sit in such a way that he is clearly in sight and must hold up his student card to the camera at the beginning of the exam. This form of monitoring is necessary for identification of the student and to ensure that the examinations are conducted in an honest manner. This is essential for correct implementation of the study contract.

Students unwilling to take the online exam with webcam monitoring should send an email to [begeleiding@vub.be](mailto:begeleiding@vub.be) stating the reasons for their refusal within the same deadlines as those stated in Article 116. This gives VUB the chance to provide alternative monitoring in person. If the request is granted, the student will be notified of the place and room in which they are to take the online exam.

Webcam monitoring involves the processing of personal data. This processing takes place on the basis of implementation of the study contract (Art. 6.1b AVG) with the student involved and with the aim of ensuring that the examinations are conducted in an honest manner. Images may also be recorded as part of checks and fraud prevention and, in that event, will be stored until the examination board meets. Any suspicious movements will be signalled during the webcam monitoring. Although this automatic detection has no negative effect on the student or his results as such, the images will be analysed afterwards to establish whether there has been any instance of fraud or deception.

The VUB privacy statement can be found at <https://www.vub.be/privacy>.

**§ 3.** Written online examinations may be organised in such a way that they can only be taken through a specific browser. The student should take the necessary steps regarding the use of this browser prior to the examination since, without the browser, the student will be unable to take the examination and will consequently be recorded as absent.

**§ 4.** If a student experiences technical problems while taking an online examination, he should immediately contact the lecturer (or a supervisor or member of the teaching team indicated by the lecturer). If the student fails to contact the lecturer within the 15 minutes allowed in a written online examination or immediately in the case of an oral online examination, the student will be deemed to have terminated the examination. The examination result will be determined based on the answers the student had already given, where appropriate.

**§ 5.** Refusal to allow webcam monitoring, including recordings as part of checks and fraud prevention as indicated above, without sending an email to [begeleiding@vub.be](mailto:begeleiding@vub.be) stating the reasons, in accordance with § 2 of this article, renders the continuation of an online examination impossible. The examination result will be determined based on the answers the student had already given, where appropriate.

### **Article 116 (divergence from the examination format)**

**§ 1.** Provided there are serious grounds for doing so, a student may ask the Chairman of the Examination Board to allow divergence from the examination format proposed for one or more course units. This must be done by the deadline dated set out below (expiry dates):

- first set of examinations in the first examination period: 1 December
- second set of examinations in first examination period: 1 May
- second examination period: 15 July.

The applicable deadline and/or the types of grounds permissible may be changed in exceptional circumstances.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

Exceptional circumstances may include:

<https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/study-guidance/study-path/study-progress#paragraph--id--71695>

The student should submit the requests to the Chairman of the Examinations Board through [facw@vub.be](mailto:facw@vub.be).

**§ 2.** The Chairman of the Examination Board shall inform the Dean and the lecturer(s) responsible for the course units concerned if a derogation is granted.

**Article 117 (filling in details)**

**§ 1.** The student is responsible for entering their personal and administrative details relating to the examination correctly and completely. If it is not possible to identify the student, the course unit lecturer may decide to record the student as being absent.

**§ 2.** In an online examination, identification of the student takes place via the webcam; the student will be asked to sit in such a way that he is clearly in sight and hold up his student card to the camera at the beginning of the exam. The provisions set out in Art. 115, § 2 apply.

If a student experiences technical problems while taking an online examination, he should get immediately contact the lecturer (or a supervisor or member of the teaching team indicated by the lecturer). If the student fails to contact the lecturer within the 15 minutes allowed in a written online examination or immediately in the case of an oral online examination, this will lead to the student being recorded as absent.

Refusal to allow identification via the webcam, without sending an email to [begeleiding@vub.be](mailto:begeleiding@vub.be) stating reasons as defined in Art. 115, § 2 of the OER, renders identification of the student in online examinations impossible and will also lead to the student being recorded as absent by the lecturer of the course unit concerned.

**Article 118 (irregularities)**

**§ 1.** If an academic staff member suspects a student of having committed an irregularity during a preliminary or other examination or different form of assessment, he shall report this to the Dean in writing without delay. If an examiner, or other individual with supervisory authority, notices that a student is involved in irregular activities during an exam, they shall inform the student accordingly and may end the ongoing examination of the student in question, and where applicable, confiscate the contested material and any previously produced copy.

**§ 2.** An irregularity is defined as any behaviour by a student in relation to a course unit which renders or attempts to render a proper assessment of the student's own knowledge, understanding and/or skills concerning himself or other students partially or wholly impossible.

Any form of fraud that constitutes an infringement of scientific integrity, including the use of statements or texts produced by generative AI applications without stating original sources<sup>4</sup>, or simulating or falsifying research results, are also deemed to constitute irregularities in the context of this article.

Holding a mobile phone or a smartphone or any other tool, the use of which is not explicitly allowed during the examination, is also deemed an irregularity in the context of this article.

Plagiarism is also deemed an irregularity in the context of this article. Plagiarism means the use of other people's work, adapted or otherwise, without careful acknowledgement of sources. Plagiarism may relate to various forms of works including text, images, music, databases, structure, lines of thought, ideas. More particularly, the following situations are deemed to constitute plagiarism:

- The student copies works from other authors, with source references but without using quotation marks where it concerns a literal copy (or translation);
- The student copies (translated) fragments from other authors, whether or not literally, without source references;
- The student refers to primary source material but, whether literally or not, copies (or translates) the work and source references from secondary sources that have not been listed;
- The student copies (translates) fragments from other authors, with or without source references, with minor and/or misleading changes.

Under these regulations, incorporating one's own works without properly quoting the source is also considered an irregularity.

The VUB reserves the right to check for plagiarism using any means it deems appropriate for this purpose.

**§ 3.** If the suspicion is substantiated, the Dean will decide, possibly after consultation with the Chairman of the Examination Board, whether disciplinary action is to be taken against the student. This decision shall be sent to the student by registered mail or presented by hand, with receipt of the same confirmed by the student's signature. The student may continue to take examinations pending the Dean's decision.

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<sup>4</sup> Students may not present work that is generated through AI as their own. References to primary source material where the work and the statements of sources are generated by generative AI applications and these applications are not mentioned is not acceptable under any circumstances. Every source that the student refers to must be consulted by the student, assessed and processed to underpin the student's work. Supplementary provisions with regard to the use of AI can be included in the faculty regulations.

**§ 4.** The student involved has a right to be heard. The faculty Ombudsperson will be invited to attend, as well as the lecturer (or members of the education team). The student has the right to consult his file and may be assisted by legal counsel during the hearing.

**§ 5.** (A combination of) the following disciplinary sanctions may be imposed by the Dean:

- awarding zero points for the examination or paper relating to the relevant course unit or part thereof in one or more examination periods of the current academic year;
- exclusion from one or more examination periods: no marks awarded for any examinations in one or more examination periods of the current year;
- exclusion from the institution: termination of the student's enrolment for the current academic year with immediate effect. This sanction leads to the immediate loss of the status of student;
- prohibition from (re-)enrolling for one or more academic years.

On a case-by-case basis, taking into account the gravity of the offence, the sanctions 'exclusion from one or more examination periods' and 'exclusion from the academic year' can also be imposed on other study programmes the student may have enrolled for in the same faculty.

**§ 6.** In determining the gravity of the offence and the punishment imposed, the following aspects, among others, are taken into account:

- the nature and scale of the irregularity/plagiarism committed;
- the student's experience;
- whether or not the deception was intentional.

**§ 7.** The student may submit an internal appeal to the Chairman of the appeal body concerned within seven calendar days (deadline starting from the day after notification of the decision) in accordance with the conditions and procedure set out in Article 153.

**§ 8.** In the event of an appeal, the Dean's decision, as specified in § 5 of this article, shall be deferred until the appeal body has reached its decision on the irregularity ascertained.

**§ 9.** In the event of severe irregularities, a sanction may be imposed even after the examination mark has been given, with such examination mark then deemed non-existent and with the possibility, irrespective of when exactly the irregularity is established, of credit certificates, postgraduate certificates and diplomas already issued being declared null and void and reclaimed.

### **Article 118 bis (minor irregularities)**

Notwithstanding Article 118, the Dean may, in the case of minor irregularities and as long as there is no question of a recurrence or irregularities committed in relation to a master's thesis, inform the student of the irregularities detected via e-mail and inform the student that he is considering

imposing a 0/20 mark as a sanction for that course unit or the related examination component. If the student does not agree with the sanction under consideration, he must inform the Dean of his decision within seven days after being notified via e-mail. The Dean will then start the procedure provided for under Article 118, § 4 and, if he deems the irregularities proven, impose a sanction as provided for under Article 118, § 5. In the absence of a response from the student or in the event of agreement, the sanction considered will be imposed.

**Article 119 (discontinuation of work placement or other practical course unit)**

**§ 1.** If a student has demonstrated through his conduct that he is ill-suited to exercise the profession to which the training undertaken by him is directed, the work placement may be terminated prematurely.

**§ 2.** If this is confirmed by the facts, the Dean shall decide, following consultation with the Chairman of the Examination Board where appropriate, whether or not to discontinue work placement(s) or practical course units. The grounds for the decision must be set out in detail and this decision shall be communicated to the student by registered mail or presented by hand, with receipt of the same confirmed by the student's signature against a receipt. Pending a decision by the Dean, the student may pursue the work placement, notwithstanding potential order and disciplinary sanctions as provided for in the Order and disciplinary Rules for Students of Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

The Dean can impose (a combination of) the following measures:

- Imposing specific conditions with which the student must comply to be allowed to continue his work placement(s) or other practical course units during the current academic year;
- Discontinuation of the work placement(s) or other practical course unit(s) if the student's behaviour demonstrates incapacity to exercise the profession; the student has no right to a second examination opportunity.  
Subsequent enrolment for the work placement(s) or practical course units may be refused.

**§ 3.** The student is entitled to a hearing before the decision is taken. The faculty Ombudsperson will be invited to attend. The student has the right to consult his file and may be assisted by legal counsel during the hearing.

**§ 4.** The student may submit an appeal to the Chairman of the appeal board concerned within seven calendar days (deadline starting from the day after notification of the decision) in accordance with the conditions and procedure set out in Article 153.

**§ 5.** If the work placement commences before the start of the academic year for which the student has enrolled for the same, it shall only commence under the condition precedent of the student qualifying for (re-)enrolment for the course, and the units thereof, at the start of the academic year.



A work placement that is inconsistent with the study progress monitoring measures taken for the student concerned will be stopped immediately.

§ 6. If the student's enrolment is suspended during the period of the work placement, the that work placement shall be discontinued immediately. If the suspension is lifted, the student may ask to resume the work placement.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

Students must submit their request to the Dean at [facw@vub.be](mailto:facw@vub.be).

**CHAPTER V. – Master's thesis**

**Article 120 (subject, supervisor, assessors)**

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The dates and methods of submission can be found at <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/student-administration/bachelors-thesis-and-masters-thesis#paragraph-81978>

§ 1. A master's thesis is a compulsory part of any master's programme. Regarding master's theses, individual faculties shall determine, in their supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations document, when students are to provide the Dean with the following:

- the subject of their master's thesis;
- approval of the supervisor of the master's thesis;
- an outline of the objective and method, as appropriate.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The student will communicate the above information by 10 November 2024 via MaThis.

§ 2. A list of master's theses giving the subjects and supervisors must be submitted for approval before the start of the winter break. The competent body in this regard must be designated in the supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations. Apart from the thesis supervisor, at least one assessor will be appointed by the faculty; the due date for such appointments are to be set out in the supplementary faculty teaching and examinations regulations document.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The list of master's theses with the mention of the subject and the promoter will be approved before the 30<sup>th</sup> of April together with the names of the auditor(s) by the faculty.

§ 3. A thesis supervisor must be an independent academic member of staff ("ZAP"), a postdoctoral research assistant or a visiting professor or another member of the academic staff who is the holder of a doctorate. As a general rule, assessors are members of academic staff from

within VUB. The faculty may decide to appoint one external expert as an assessor. Additional faculty provisions may also state that multiple supervisors can be appointed. Only one of these supervisors shall bear the relevant academic responsibility.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

More than one promoter is possible.

**Article 121 (changes)**

§ 1. Changes of subject, a change in supervisor on the student's initiative or dereliction of duty on the part of the supervisor must be reported to the Dean in writing, together with the associated reasons.

§ 2. A new subject shall be chosen and/or another supervisor appointed in accordance with the provisions of article 120, subject to any deadlines set.

**Article 122 (supervisor guidance)**

The supervisor of the thesis shall provide regular guidance to the student and the student must regularly inform the supervisor of progress regarding his research. In the event of non-observance, a student or a supervisor may report this to the Dean in writing.

**Article 123 (submission date)**

Each year, preferably before 15 August of the calendar year in which the academic year starts, the faculty shall determine the dates for submission of master's theses; these dates are included in the supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations or in the procedure explained on the faculty student portal.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The dates and method of submission are on the faculty student portal:

<https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/student-administration/bachelors-thesis-and-masters-thesis#paragraph-81978>

**Article 124 (submission format)**

§ 1. The master's thesis must be submitted to the faculty in digital form. It is determined in the supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations whether one or more hard copies of the master's thesis are to be submitted. The supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations should also stipulate whether a master's thesis is to be accompanied by a summary, in publishable form, as well as an abstract for inclusion in the standard listings of theses published in Belgian specialist journals.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

Teaching and examination regulations, version approved by the Academic Council 16 September 2024.

Additions from the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy, incorporated into the text in yellow text bars; version as approved by the Faculty Council on 03/06/2024 and approved by the Education Council on 12/09/2024.

No paper version and mandatory appendices of the master's thesis should be submitted.

**§ 2.** The digital version of the master's thesis for which the student has attained a credit will be kept in the university library.

The master's thesis will only be published with the explicit consent of the student concerned.

The procedure and modalities for publication are specified in the supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations.

#### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The faculty secretariat delivers the master's thesis to the central library. The student decides whether the master's thesis may be made publicly available and fills in the permission form for this purpose and has it signed by the supervisor(s). If the permission form is missing, the thesis cannot be made publicly available.

**§ 3.** Responsibility for demonstrating the authenticity of the relevant research material lies with the student.

#### **Article 125 (assessment)**

**§ 1.** Notwithstanding the provisions of § 2, masters' theses are to be assessed by the supervisor and the assessors.

**§ 2.** If the regulations do not call for a public oral defence of the thesis, students can request access to the reasoned report drawn up by the supervisor and assessors as well as the proposed exam mark. On the basis of this report, students may decide to request a public oral defence of their thesis before the supervisor and assessors concerned.

**§ 3.** On the basis of a reasoned report, a public oral defence of the thesis may be imposed on the student concerned.

**§ 4.** If all students are required to conduct a public oral defence of their thesis, the supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations shall specify whether the student is to receive a qualitative assessment prior to such defence.

**§ 5.** The supplementary faculty regulations may set out a procedure to deviate from the public nature of the oral defence. The decision to abolish the public nature of the defence must at all times be justified by extraordinary circumstances.

**§ 6.** The supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations may establish a procedure for replacing a supervisor or assessor who cannot attend the oral defence due to circumstances beyond his control or for reason of legal impediment.

#### **Article 126 (reports)**

Teaching and examination regulations, version approved by the Academic Council 16 September 2024.

Additions from the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy, incorporated into the text in yellow text bars; version as approved by the Faculty Council on 03/06/2024 and approved by the Education Council on 12/09/2024.

The reports drawn up by the supervisor and assessors shall be made available to the members of the Examination Board with the possibility of these being consulted during the meeting.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The supervisor or panel members complete their reports on MaThis, before the set deadline. External panel members submit their reports to the faculty by that deadline via e-mail.

**Article 127 (supervision by more than one institution)**

If a master's thesis is supervised jointly by two or more institutions, the procedures governing the joint supervision shall be specified in their co-operation agreement.

**CHAPTER VI. - Examination board**

**Article 128 (examination board)**

For all bachelor's and master's courses, bridging and preparatory programmes and postgraduate programmes, an Examination Board shall be set up for the entire programme.

**Article 129 (composition)**

§ 1. The authorised faculty body shall determine the composition of the examination boards *ad nominatim* prior to the start of the academic year. It shall also determine whether substitutes are to be nominated.

§ 2. The composition of an examination board shall be representative and comprise at least six independent academic members of staff ("ZAP") who are qualified to vote, unless the total number of examiners is lower. For a valid decision to be reached concerning a student, a minimum of half of the board members must take part in the deliberations.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

Refer to '[Examination Regulations](#)' for the nominative composition by committee.

§ 3. Faculty ombudspersons cannot be a member of an examination board with a right to vote. If an ombudsperson would like to participate in the examination board as a voting member, he will have to be replaced by the faculty replacement during the deliberation process. The faculties shall incorporate appropriate rules into their supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations to this end.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The Deputy Faculty Ombudsman shall replace wearevub/student at the latter's request.

**Article 130 (chairperson and secretary)**

§ 1. Prior to the start of the academic year, the authorised faculty body shall appoint a chairperson and a secretary for each examination board, as well as substitutes for both positions. The Dean shall announce their names to the faculty ombudsperson.

§ 2. The name of the Chairman of the Examination Board shall be made known to the students during the academic year.

### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

Refer to '[Examination Regulations](#)' for the nominative composition by committee.

### **Article 131 (attendance in an advisory capacity)**

The following persons may attend Examination Board meetings in an advisory capacity:

- the Dean, who may attend and chair all examination board meetings in his faculty;
- a master's thesis supervisor;
- the faculty ombudsperson;
- the faculty secretary;
- an administrative staff member, appointed by the Dean, to prepare for the deliberation;
- the study path counsellor.

## **CHAPTER VII. deliberation and study progress based on examinations**

### **Section 1: Powers of the Examination Board**

#### **Article 132 (powers of the Examination Board)**

§ 1. The Examination Board has the following powers:

1. to change an examination mark in the event of a substantive error, serious irregularity or apparent irrationality;
2. to implement a study progress monitoring measure in accordance with Article 88.
3. to declare in a substantiated manner that a student has passed the entire programme. To this end, the Examination Board shall deliberate its ultimate judgement bearing in mind the objectives of the study programme and possible specialisation undertaken by the student through adopting specific options to broaden and deepen the subject matter of his studies. The application of this article does at the very least expect the student to have demonstrated that there are exceptional personal or family circumstances and that the aforementioned objectives have been achieved.

The fact that a student is declared to have achieved a successfully pass in overall terms does not mean that he is eligible for a credit certificate for those course units he has not passed.

If the student is declared not to have passed, he must retake all examinations for which he was awarded unsatisfactory marks.

4. In exceptional circumstances and notwithstanding Article 144, the Examination Board can determine the academic level of distinction awarded for the diploma.

§ 2. The Examination Board responsible for master's courses in medicine has the additional power to decide whether a student is allowed to continue clinical internships.

## **Section 2 Course of deliberation**

### **Article 133 (deliberation)**

Each examination board shall meet at least twice during the academic year. The first meeting will discuss the examination results from the first and second set of examinations of the first examination period. The second meeting will discuss the second examination period. Only for students in their final year may a deliberation may be held at the end of the first set of examinations in the first examination period, in accordance with the procedures set out in the supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations document. Students who wish to graduate at the end of the first set of exams in the first examination periods must submit a request to this end via the Student SelfService portal.

#### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

Students in their graduation year may request a deliberation at the end of the first examination period of the first term.

The student requests this via his SelfService student no later than the 1<sup>st</sup> of November.

The student whose request was approved but who does not pass can participate again in the second examination period at the earliest.

The dates and methods of submission can be found at <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/student-administration/graduating-in-january>

Students who wish to withdraw a request that has been approved must indicate this at least on the 30<sup>th</sup> of November 2024 via [facw@vub.be](mailto:facw@vub.be). If they do not do so, they will be marked as "Absent" for their Bachelor paper or Master's thesis in the first session.

### **Article 134 (deliberation and voting procedure)**

§ 1. The Secretary of the Examination Board shall carefully record the proceedings of the Examination Board during the deliberation in the minutes of the meeting. The minutes, signed by the Chairman and Secretary of the Examination Board, shall be available to the Rector and the faculty Ombudsperson.

§ 2. The Examination Board is a sovereign entity and operates as a collegial body. A decision regarding a given student must be reached by majority vote. In the event of a tied vote, the

decision taken shall be in the student's favour. Each member has one vote only, irrespective of the number of course units examined under his aegis. Members of the Examination Board must refrain from participating in a deliberation if relatives up to the fourth degree of kinship are under discussion.

Each Examination Board member entitled to vote may ask for a secret ballot to be held.

#### **Article 135 (attendance)**

Presence at the deliberation is obligatory for all voting members of the Examination Board. Legitimate absence must be reported in advance to the Chairman of the Examination Board or the Dean.

The deliberation may be held by electronic means.

#### **Article 136 (confidentiality)**

The members of the Examination Board and all those present at a deliberation by virtue of their office are obliged to safeguard the confidential nature of the discussions.

### **Section 3: Study progress based on examinations**

#### **Article 137 (examination results)**

**§ 1.** One examination grade is awarded for each course programme unit. The examination result is expressed as a whole number between 0 and 20 or in the form of a non-numerical grade. The examination result is calculated using the method set out in the course unit description.

**§ 2.** Examination results calculated as set out in § 1 will be rounded down if the decimal is < (less than) 0.5 and rounded up if the decimal is ≥ (more than or equal to) 0.5. Partial grades are never rounded, only the final grade.

**§ 3.** Failure to attend a compulsory part of the evaluation will lead to "absent" being recorded as the result code, unless specified otherwise in the course unit description.

#### **Article 138 (passing a course unit)**

**§ 1.** Students shall be awarded credit certificates for each course unit passed. The pass mark for a course unit is 10 out of 20. A credit certificate is issued only once, at the request of a student. Students may not relinquish a credit certificate once acquired.

**§ 2.** A credit certificate has unlimited validity for the study programme and at the institution in which it was acquired.

#### **Article 139 (passing the first year of the full-time standard study path of the bachelor's programme)**

**§ 1.** A student who has followed the first year of a full-time standard study path for a bachelor's programme is automatically declared to have successfully passed if he sits the examinations for all the course units of that first year and:

1. all the examinations have resulted in a credit certificate, or,
2. the following cumulative conditions have been met:
  - the student achieves a weighted average of at least 55%
  - the student is not awarded any examination result below 8/20;
  - the weighted credit deficit does not exceed 18;
  - the student obtains a maximum of 3 points under 10/20, spread over a maximum of 2 course units;
  - the student has passed the course units with a compulsory traineeship component, for which a deficit is not tolerated. Tolerable failing grades are accepted for all other first year-course units.

In case of exemptions having been granted, the maximum allowed weighted credit deficit is determined proportionally.

**§ 2.** During the course of the academic year, the student may take advantage of a second examination opportunity to retake any examination awarded a tolerable failing grade.

If the tolerable failing grade refers to two course units, the student needs to retake both of them. For this, the student must submit a written request to the Faculty Secretariat within seven calendar days of the day after the results are declared electronically in accordance with Article 145 of these regulations.

If the student declares he wants to take advantage of the second examination opportunity to rectify a tolerable failing grade, the original result then becomes irrevocably null and void and the new result obtained will become final. The earlier result awarded in a deliberation is then adjusted accordingly.

#### **Article 140 (average percentage result of a study programme)**

**§ 1.** In order to determine the percentage for the study programme in its entirety, all examination results obtained for a course unit under a diploma or examination contract for the purpose of obtaining a diploma are taken into account.

**§ 2.** The weighting of course units is based on the number of ECTS credits available for the course unit concerned.

**§ 3.** The percentage calculated in accordance with §1 and §2 is rounded down if the decimal is < (less than) 0.5 and rounded up if the decimal is  $\geq$  (more than or equal to) 0.5.

#### **Article 141 (transferring different parts of the examination)**



**§ 1.** If the final result for a course unit is made up of several partial results, the results of the separate assessments/units that cannot be retaken during the second examination period will then be retained unless the course unit description specifies an alternative examination method or an alternative method of calculating the results for the next set of exams.

**§ 2.** Partial results of separate assessments/units that can be retaken during the second examination period will not be transferred to the second examination period, unless specified otherwise in the course unit description.

Partial results will not be transferred to the following academic year, unless specified otherwise in the course unit description.

In the event of the course unit description allowing a transfer of partial results of at least 10/20 or passed with satisfaction, the requirements for such transfer will be included in the course unit description, where it will also be stated whether the student may forgo the partial result.

#### **Article 142 (conversion of examination results)**

If a student pursues course units at another institution, in accordance with Articles 90-92 of these regulations, the examinations for these course units will be taken at the time and place and in accordance with the procedures determined by the other institution. The examination results awarded by the other institution may be converted accordingly.

### **CHAPTER VIII. – Awarding a degree or diploma**

#### **Article 143 (passing a study programme)**

**§ 1.** A student is awarded a degree or diploma for a study programme if he is declared to have successfully passed the study programme as a whole.

**§ 2.** At the end of a study programme, a student will automatically be declared to have passed if he has taken all the examinations for the programme in question and all those examinations have resulted in credit certificates.

**§ 3.** At the end of a bachelor's programme, a bridging or preparatory programme, or a master's programme (including advanced master's programmes), a student will automatically be declared to have passed if he has taken the examinations for all the course units in that study programme and the following cumulative conditions have been met:

- the student achieves a weighted average of at least 55% over the entire study programme
- the student does not obtain any examination results below 8/20 over the entire study programme;
- the weighted credit deficit does not exceed the following maximum limits:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the full-time standard path of the bachelor's programme: max. 18 GPT
- master's programme of 60 ECTS credits: max. 12 GPT
- master's programme of 90 ECTS credits: max. 13.5 GPT
- master's programme of 120 or more ECTS credits: max. 18 GPT
- bridging programme (s ECTS credits): max. 18 x s/90 GPT
- preparatory programme (s ECTS credits): max. 18 x s/90 GPT, with a max. of 18 GPT, also where s is > 90 ECTS credits;

- either within the entire 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the full-time standard study path of the bachelor's programme and provided that the student has obtained a credit certificate or deliberation mark as stipulated in Art. 139 for all course units of the first year of the full-time standard study path or, at the end of the other programmes referred to in paragraph §3 above, the student obtains a maximum of three points under 10/20, spread over a maximum of two course units;

- the student has passed the bachelor's thesis, the master's thesis and/or the mandatory traineeship, insofar as these course units form part of the study programme. Furthermore, the supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations determine for which course units a deficit (tolerable failing grade) may not be tolerated.

#### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

For the following courses in the first year of the full-time model track, no shortage (permitted fail) will be tolerated:

#### **Art History and Archaeology:**

- Werkcollege Kunstwetenschappen
- Werkcollege Archeologie

#### **Linguistics and Literary Studies (Dutch programme):**

- Onderzoeksmethodologie: Taal- en Letterkunde (BA)
- Onderzoeksmethodologie: Letterkunde (MA)
- Onderzoeksmethodologie: Taalkunde (MA)

#### **Linguistics and Literary Studies (English programme):**

- Research methodology: Linguistics and Literary Studies (BA)
- Research Methodology: Literary Studies (MA)
- Research Methodology: Linguistics (MA)
- Translation Studies and Research Methodology (MA)
- Interpreting Studies and Research Methodology (MA)

#### **Opleiding Applied Linguistics:**

- Vertaalatelier Frans (MA Vertalen)
- Vertaalatelier Duits (MA Vertalen)
- Vertaalatelier Engels (MA Vertalen)
- Vertaalatelier Spaans (MA Vertalen)
- Taalatelier Nederlands (MA Vertalen)

If, due to a shortened study path, the study load of the programme or of the entire 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years of the full-time standard study path of the bachelor's programme for is less a student than that generally provided for in this regard, and/or in the case of exemptions having been granted, the maximum allowable weighted credit deficit is determined proportionally.

**§ 4.** A student who has been automatically declared to have passed successfully in accordance with §3 of this article may, during the course of the academic year, take advantage of a second examination opportunity in accordance with this article to retake any examination awarded a tolerable failing grade. If the tolerable failing grade refers to two course units, the student needs to retake both of them. For this, the student must submit a written request to the Faculty Secretariat within seven calendar days of the day after the results are declared electronically. If the student declares he wants to take advantage of the second examination opportunity to rectify a tolerable failing grade, the original result will become irrevocably null and void and the new result obtained will then become final. The earlier result awarded in a deliberation is then adjusted accordingly.

#### **Article 144 (distinction grades)**

**§ 1.** The following levels of distinction are awarded for bachelor's, master's and teacher training degrees:

- passed with merit if the average final result is less than 68%;
- passed with distinction (*cum laude*) if the average final result is 68% or higher;
- passed with great distinction (*magna cum laude*) if the average final result is 77% or higher;
- with the highest distinction (*summa cum laude*) if the average final result is 85% or higher;

**§ 2.** Levels of distinction may only be awarded if a set minimum number of ECTS credits have been obtained as part of the programme within the VUB. The minimum number of ECTS credits in this respect is:

- for a bachelor's programme: 60 ECTS credits,
- for a master's programme: at least half of the total study load.

## **CHAPTER IX. - Announcement of results**

### **Article 145**

§ 1. After each set of exams, the results of the examinations are communicated to the students via the Student SelfService portal.

§ 2. The results of the examination and preliminary examinations taken during the first set of exams of the first examination period are announced to the students no later than on the first day of the first week of lectures in the second semester.

§ 3. The results of the exams taken in the second set of exams of the first examination period and the results of those taken in the second examination period are announced to the students after deliberation by the Examination Committee in accordance with the provisions in Article 146. The same applies to the results of the students who, in accordance with their request under the provisions of Article 133, were the subject of deliberation by the Examination Committee at the end of the first set of exams in the first examination period.

### **Article 146**

Following the deliberation, the Chairman of the Examination Board, the Dean or a member of the Examination Board appointed by them shall announce the Examination Board's decision via the Student SelfService portal.

#### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

Students will receive the decisions of the Examinations Board and their final examination results through their Student Self-Service platform.

Students may contact their Learning Path Counsellor for more information.

### **Article 147**

An individual points list or an individual points sheet stating the examination results per course unit as discussed by the Examination Board, including an announcement code, will be made available to each student via the Student SelfService portal.

## **TITLE IV. OMBUDSPERSONS AND APPEAL OPTIONS**

### **CHAPTER I. - Ombudspersons**

#### **Article 148 (appointment and task description)**

§ 1. Prior to the start of the academic year and following consultation with the Education Council, the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs shall appoint at least one independent

academic member of staff (“ZAP”) for each faculty as an ombudsperson to deal with complaints relating to the organisation of teaching and examination-related matters. Each faculty may use the same procedure to appoint a faculty substitute, who may only replace the faculty ombudsperson in deliberations in which the ombudsperson acts as a voting member in accordance with Article 129. At the same time, a central ombudsperson and a deputy shall be appointed by way of the same procedure. Among others, the names of the faculty ombudspersons, the central ombudsperson and his deputy shall be posted on the VUB website throughout the academic year, along with their contact details and office hours.

**§ 2.** The powers of a faculty ombudsperson extend to receiving students’ complaints and comments related to how teaching is organised, the examination schedule, examination proceedings, assessment of master’s theses, outcome of Examination Board meetings, announcement of results, monitoring of study progress based on examinations and the awarding of credit certificates. He is likewise authorised to intervene regarding any appeals lodged in accordance with Articles 153 and 154 of this regulation.

**§ 3.** The powers of the central ombudsperson extend to receiving and dealing with students’ complaints and comments relating to how teaching is organised, the examination schedule, examination proceedings, assessment of master’s theses, outcome of Examination Board meetings, announcement of results, monitoring of study progress based on examinations and the awarding of credit certificates where the faculty ombudsperson is an involved party, thus compromising independence and impartiality, or in the event of the faculty ombudsperson being absent, in which case he can perform that party’s function.

**§ 4.** At a student’s request, the ombudsperson concerned (central or faculty-appointed) shall mediate between the students and the Dean, the Chairman of the Examination Board, members of academic staff and the faculty secretary with a view to achieving an amicable settlement of the complaint as quickly as possible.

#### **Article 149 (reporting)**

Both the central and faculty ombudspersons shall report to the Vice-Rector for Educational and Students Affairs once a year, before 15 November, with details of their activities in the preceding academic year.

### **CHAPTER II. - Appeal options**

#### **Article 150 (substantive errors)**

In the event of a substantive error being ascertained in relation to a decision being made with regard to study progress, this shall be reported formally to the Dean within ten calendar days after the day on which the decision was taken.

#### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The student reports this to the dean via [faclw@vub.be](mailto:faclw@vub.be).

After this period, a substantive error can only be corrected in the following cases:

- if the correction is to the student's benefit,
- if the substantive error implies a breach of legal requirements,
- if the substantive error is demonstrably due to the gross negligence or serious misconduct on the part of the student.

An error not resulting in a decision that is detrimental to the student shall be rectified by the Dean. The correction shall be communicated to the student involved and adequately documented in the faculty.

In the event of the decision taken being detrimental to the student, the error must be rectified by the body that took the original decision. If necessary, the latter is to be convened by the Dean as soon as possible. The correction shall be communicated to the student involved and adequately documented in the faculty.

#### **Article 151 (decisions that can be appealed)**

Internal - and subsequently external - appeals can be made against the following study progress decisions pursuant to article 153:

- a) examination decision, i.e. any decision, whether or not resulting from an Examination Board meeting, entailing a final qualifying assessment for a course unit, several course units or a programme as a whole, in accordance with Articles 132 and 144 of these regulations;
- b) disciplinary examination-related decision, i.e. a sanction imposed following an examination incident, as set out in Article 118 of these regulations;
- c) granting of an exemption, i.e. relieving a student of the obligation to take an examination in a particular course unit or part thereof, in accordance with Article 87 of these regulations;
- d) decision imposing a bridging and/or preparatory programme and at the same time setting out the study load of that programme;
- e) imposing a study progress monitoring measure, in accordance with Article 88 of these regulations;
- f) refusing to include in the study contract a particular course unit for which the student following an individualised study path has not previously enrolled;
- g) decision with regard to the refusal of enrolment based on an insufficient study account or a study account lower than or equal to 0, if not resulting from a general regulatory requirement;
- h) a decision regarding substantial differences in competencies if a credit certificate was obtained more than five years ago.

Students with disabilities may lodge an internal appeal against the refusal of the adjustments requested, in accordance with article 154.

**Article 152 (composition of the internal appeals committee)**

A central appeals committee is established which is authorised to examine all internal appeals lodged against the study progress decisions listed in Article 151.

The central appeals committee is composed of a chairman and at least two assessors. The Academic Council appoints from among the members of the academic staff (including emeriti) the persons who can take up the role of chair and assessor within the central appeals committee.

When an internal appeal is heard, the following persons, acting in an advisory capacity, shall also be invited:

- the faculty ombudsperson,
- the study path counsellor for the faculty in which the student is studying
- the faculty secretary or the faculty staff member responsible for teaching policy,
- representative of the Rector who has expert knowledge of the teaching regulations and who also acts as the secretariat.
- if the appeals committee deems it useful, it may be assisted by the chairperson of the relevant Examination Board when dealing with an appeal directed against a decision taken by the Examination Board.

In case of an internal appeal pursuant to Article 151, paragraph 2, the members of the appeals committee who were directly involved in the decision to refuse the requested changes shall be replaced by their substitutes.

**Article 153 (internal appeals procedure, excluding decisions on reasonable changes)**

**§ 1.** In the event of a student or the person to whom the decision relates being of the opinion that his rights have been infringed by a particular study progress decision, such person may lodge an appeal. The appeal must be lodged within a deadline period of seven calendar days. For appeals against examination decisions, this deadline period starts on the day after the electronic communication of examination results in accordance with Article 145. For other appeals, the limitation period commences on the day after announcement of the decision.

If the inspection of the manuscript is planned for later than the five calendar days provided for in Article 114 § 3, the appeal must then likewise be lodged within the deadline period. The student shall expressly mention this in the written request and should factually substantiate his complaint within seven calendar days after the deadline period. If the student fails to do this, his appeal will automatically be considered inadmissible insofar as that there are no other grievances and to the extent that no factual description of the invoked complaints was included.

Appeals must, on pain of otherwise being declared inadmissible, be filed in the form of a signed and dated application submitted by registered mail to the appeals committee, for the attention of the Chairman, Education and Student Affairs - C2, with his address at Pleinlaan 2, 1050 Brussels.

The application must include, at the very least, the identity of the student concerned, the disputed decision(s) and a factual description of and reasons for the complaints invoked. Insofar as the student believes he can invoke exceptional circumstances as referred to in Article 132, § 2, he must demonstrate in his petition that there are exceptional circumstances and that he has achieved the objectives of the study programme in overall terms.

At the same time, the student must send an identical electronic version of the application to interneberoepen\_OS@vub.be by e-mail for information purposes. The date of the appeal is the date of the postmark of the registered mail.

**§ 2.** The appeal will result in:

- a reasoned dismissal of the appeal on the grounds that it is inadmissible or unauthorised; this decision can be made both by the appeals committee and by the Chairman of the appeals committee;
- a decision by the appeals committee either confirming or revising the original decision.

The consideration of the admissibility of the appeal and consideration of jurisdiction are handled on file in every case, without the student being heard.

In principle, the appeals committee body also examines the merits of the appeal by way of a documentary procedure, except where as the appeal is directed against a decision as referred to in Article 151, paragraph 1, a), b) or e), in which case the student is invited to the appeals committee hearing.

The appeals committee body may at any time invite any person whose presence it deems useful for the examination of the case to be dealt with at the hearing.

**§ 3.** The decision taken pursuant to §2 will be communicated to the student or the person to whom the decision relates within twenty calendar days starting from the date on which the appeal was filed. Decisions are made available to the central ombudsperson on request.

**§ 4.** An appeal against the decision taken pursuant to §2 may be brought before the council for disputes concerning decisions on study progress, as set out in Article 155.

**§ 5.** The documents that the student becomes aware in the context of the appeal procedure cannot be used for anything other than personal purposes. The student is therefore not allowed to reproduce and/or distribute these documents, under penalty of disciplinary measures as



provided for in the Order and Disciplinary Regulations for Students of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

**Article 154 (internal appeal procedure for reasonable changes)**

§ 1. A student is entitled to lodge an internal appeal with the Dean against a decision refusing reasonable adjustments for students with a disability, as a result of which the student is of the view that his rights have been violated; the appeal must be filed within seven calendar days of the day following notification of the decision. The following persons, acting in an advisory capacity, shall also be invited: the faculty ombudsperson, the faculty secretary and a Study Counselling student psychologist.

**Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

The appeal will be lodged with the dean at [faclw@vub.be](mailto:faclw@vub.be).

§ 2. The internal appeal procedure will result in a reasoned decision that is binding for everyone within the institution. The student has the right to be heard regarding the grounds for the case.

§ 3. The student will be informed of the decision in accordance with § 2 within twenty calendar days of the day following the date on which the appeal was filed.

§ 4. The documents that the student becomes aware of in the context of the appeal procedure cannot be used for anything other than personal purposes. The student is therefore not allowed to reproduce and/or distribute these documents, under penalty of disciplinary measures as provided for in the Order and Disciplinary Regulations for Students of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

**Article 154bis**

**(procedure for appeals regarding start tests (mandatory benchmarking tests and non-mandatory benchmarking tests))**

A student can appeal to the cross-institutional appeals body in accordance with the procedure set out in Article 32-36 of the cross-institutional regulations concerning start tests (<https://www.ijkingstoets.be/storage/general/IJkingstoetsreglement-2023-2024.pdf>) to contest the following decisions:

- a) His results in the test, including the situation in which the test result is modified or participation is deemed invalid due to an irregularity;
- b) Failure to receive support measures for participation in a test or the nature of these measures;

- c) Failure to receive exemption from participation in a test:
  - on the basis of standard exemptions;
  - on the basis of particular individual skills;
- d) Failure to receive an exemption from mandatory remediation for the students as defined in article 22 of the cross-institutional regulations concerning start tests;
  - on the basis of standard exemptions;
  - on the basis of particular individual skills.

### **Article 155 (external appeals procedure)**

**§ 1.** A student may lodge an appeal with the Council for Disputes about Decisions on Study Progress (Address: Raad voor Betwistingen van Studievoortgangsbepalingen (DBRC) , Koning Albert II-laan 15 bus 130, 1210 Brussels) within seven calendar days after the date of notification of the decision pursuant to Article 153. If the seventh day is a Saturday, Sunday or national holiday, the deadline shall be extended to the first working day on which postal services are resumed.

In the absence of a timely decision within the deadline set in Article 153, the appeal must be lodged with the Council within seven calendar days of the expiry of this deadline, unless the internal appeals committee notifies the student before the expiry of the deadline by which the appeal body must decide of a later date on which it will issue a decision.

Persons not yet registered can lodge an appeal with the Council against a decision concerning a request to obtain an exemption on the basis of previously acquired qualifications or a certificate of aptitude on one occasion only, if they have submitted a request of a similar nature to other institutions within a 4 year period. A second appeal of this nature shall be inadmissible.

**§ 2.** The Council, as the administrative court, shall rule on the applications submitted to it directly by students to have their study account adjusted because they have been the subject of a force majeure event.

**§ 3.** Appeals must be lodged in the form of an application presenting, at the very least, a factual description and substantiation of the objections or complaints stated.

The application must be dated and be signed by the petitioner or his adviser, or will otherwise be declared inadmissible.

**§ 4.** The application shall include:

- 1° the petitioner's name and address. If the address given is that of the petitioner's adviser, this must be stated in the application;
- 2° the name and registered office of the governing body;
- 3° the subject of the appeal;

4° a factual description and substantiation of the objections or complaints stated.

§ 5. The application is to be sent to the Council for Disputes concerning Decisions on Study Progress by registered mail. At the same time, a copy of the application must be sent to the governing body (for the attention of the Chairman of the Appeals Committee, Educational and Student Affairs - C2, with his address at Pleinlaan 2, 1050 Brussels) by registered mail. The date of the appeal is the date of the postmark of the registered mail.

§ 6. The petitioner may include in his application any pieces of evidence he considers necessary. Subsequently, the petitioner may only add additional items of evidence to the case file if these were unknown to him when the application was drawn up. If this is the case, the petitioner shall provide the governing body with a copy of the additional items of evidence without delay. The items of evidence shall be bound together by the petitioner and listed in an inventory.

The student may not invoke new objections in the course of the appeals procedure with the Council for Disputes about Decisions on Study Progress, unless the basis for these was not known until during or after finalisation of the internal appeal procedure, unless the objection relates to the manner in which the internal appeal has been handled, or unless the objection is of public interest.

§ 7. An application declared inadmissible may be replaced by a new petition during the appeal deadline, provided it states explicitly that the previous application has been withdrawn.

§ 8. The decision taken by the Council for Disputes about Decisions on Study Progress shall be announced within a deadline period of 20 calendar days from the date on which the appeal was entered in the register of incoming appeals. For appeals against a decision on the equivalence of diplomas, the decision shall be issued within a period of thirty calendar days.

§ 9. The documents that the student becomes aware in the context of the appeal procedure cannot be used for anything other than personal purposes. The student is therefore not allowed to reproduce and/or distribute these documents, under penalty of disciplinary measures as provided for in the Order and Disciplinary Regulations for Students of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

#### **Article 156 (Liability of staff members and board members)**

To the fullest extent permitted by law, extra-contractual claims by students against (direct and indirect) auxiliary persons of the VUB (including staff and board members) are excluded for damage caused by the non-performance of an obligation or duty following the student's contractual relations with the VUB.

### **TITLE V. - TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS**

### **Article 157 (faculty additions to and divergences from the central regulations)**

§ 1. The authorised faculty body may suggest special provisions and criteria as stipulated in these regulations and other supplementary faculty provisions to these education and examination regulations. Faculty supplementary regulations are subject to approval by the Education Council.

#### **Supplementary Faculty Regulation:**

They form an integral part of these supplementary faculty education and examination regulations and are downloadable:

-Procedures internationalisation' will be on the portal later but the document will be sent in person at the start of the exchange programme.

-'[Examination regulations](#)' on the faculty student portal

§ 2. Derogations from the central regulations are possible with regard to Article 8 and Article 120

§ 3 of the education and examination regulations, on the proposal of the authorised faculty body. The faculty derogations are approved by the Education Council, and included in the supplementary faculty education and examination regulations. For postgraduate programmes, it may be decided to diverge from the provisions included in these regulations in view of the inherent specific nature of the study programme.

§ 3. The Engineering Faculty may request a departure from Article 129, Article 143 § 1 and Article 144 § 1 of the teaching and examination regulations for the BRUFACE master's via the procedure set out in §1.

§ 4. Derogation from the provisions of these regulations may be granted for students taking part in international mobility programmes. The cooperation agreements are to be submitted to the Education Council for approval.

### **Article 158 (changes)**

Any changes to these regulations can only be made following a decision of the Academic Council following consultation with the Education Council.

### **Article 159 (powers of the MILO)**

With respect to the teacher training programme, the powers assigned to the Dean under these regulations shall be exercised by the MILO.

The powers assigned to the faculty secretary in these regulations shall, as far as the teacher training programme is concerned, be exercised by the general coordinator of the MILO.

### **Article 160 (integration of academic higher education courses)**

These regulations apply in full to academic higher education course students who transfer to the university in the 2013-2014 academic year.

**Article 161** (entry into force)

These regulations shall come into force as of the 2024-2025 academic year.