



Universiteit Leiden

Course and Examination Regulations

valid as of 1 September 2024

Programme-specific section:

Master's Programme: African Studies (research)

These Course and Examination Regulations (henceforth OER) have been drawn up in accordance with the Higher Education and Research Act [*Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek*; WHW] (henceforth the Act) and the following Leiden University regulations:

- the Leiden Register of Study Programmes Framework Document;
- the Academic Calendar;
- the Regulations for Student Registration, Tuition Fees and Examination Fees;
- the Regulations for Admission to Master's Programmes;
- the Online Proctoring Protocol Leiden University.

The model OER are laid down in Dutch and then translated into English. In the event that there are differences between the two versions, the Dutch version will prevail.

Pursuant to Article 7.14 of the Act, the Faculty Board regularly evaluates the OER and considers, for the purpose of monitoring and adjusting the study load, how much time it takes students to comply. In accordance with Article 9.18 of the Act, the departmental committee is assigned the task of annually assessing the implementation of the OER.

These Course and Examination Regulations consist of two sections:

- a faculty section that is the same for all master's programmes and
- a section that contains information that is specific to a particular programme, what is known as the programme-specific section of the Course and Examination Regulations.

In the text below the relevant articles will refer to this programme specific section. Other articles are included in the faculty section.

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Chapter 2 Description of the Programme

Article 2.1 Objectives of the programme

The programme has the following objectives:

1. to broaden and deepen the students' knowledge, understanding and skills, and train them in the use of scientific methods in the field of African Studies;
2. to enable students to develop the following academic and professional skills:
 - the ability to solve academic problems independently, critically and creatively;
 - the ability to analyse complex problems;
 - the ability to clearly report academic results in writing, oral, and/or audio-visual;
3. to prepare students for an academic career at a university for postgraduate programmes;
4. to prepare students for a non-academic career in the public or private sector for which advanced research skills and practical research experience are a prerequisite.

Article 2.2 Specialisations

Not applicable.

Article 2.3 Learning outcomes

Graduates of the programme have attained the following learning outcomes, listed according to the Dublin descriptors:

I. Knowledge and understanding

Graduates have:

- A profound awareness of the current issues, core concepts and research questions in the relevant disciplines and regional fields of the programme;
- A thorough understanding of various theories and methodological approaches and techniques that are commonly used in research in African Studies as well as in different related disciplines;
- The ability to develop a conceptual framework suitable for addressing relevant problems and issues;
- Advanced, up-to-date knowledge of the quantitative and qualitative research methodology appropriate to particular projects and locations;
- Sensitivity to the relationship between theory, method and actual research context;
- A thorough knowledge of and insight into the interdisciplinary position of the study subject;

- A thorough understanding of the societal relevance of the study subject.

II. Applying knowledge and understanding

Graduates have:

- The capacity to critically apply theoretical and descriptive approaches when conducting basic independent research in African Studies;
- The capacity to (innovatively) deploy theoretical and methodological tool-sets derived from the humanities and social sciences for the analysis and interpretation of the object of inquiry;
- The ability to critically select, study and analyse literature;
- The skills of proposing, organising, and executing long-term fieldwork research in Africa or an Africa-related setting independently;
- The ability to independently formulate, perform and assess scientific research at a level suitable for preparing scientific publications;

III. Making judgments

Graduates have:

- The ability to select, compile, compare and analyse discipline-related literature and sources independently, with the aid of traditional and modern techniques (heuristic skills);
- The ability to independently study discipline-related literature and sources and to assess these as to their quality and reliability;
- Profound knowledge of the philosophy and ethics of African Studies research and the limitations of individual research projects;
- Awareness of the role of comparison;
- Sophisticated understanding of the stakes in the politics of knowledge and their relationship with the ethics of fairness and objectivity;
- The fundamentals of research project management, such as framing the research, gathering data, data storage, articulating a thesis, ordering and presenting findings in oral and written form and reflection on the ethics of scientific inquiry.

IV. Communication

Graduates have:

- The capacity to report independently on relevant research that has been carried out according to current academic standards for the field of research;
- The ability to write scientific reports in English;
- The ability to give persuasive oral presentations;
- The ability to engage in the international academic debate and in policy and societal discussions.

V. Learning skills

Graduates have:

- The capacity to apply learning skills that allow them to initiate and conduct a research project with a great degree of independence and autonomy, under expert national or international supervision. This includes:
- The ability to formulate a clear and well-argued problem ; and the ability to break these problems down into clear and manageable sub-problems;
- The ability to set up and carry out a research project ;
- The capacity to take into account ideas, instructions and constructive criticism of supervisors and peers and in turn offer feedback to the work of others;
- The ability to set up a realistic work schedule and keep to the agreed time guidelines.

Article 2.5 **Study load**

The programme has a study load of 120 credits.

Article 2.8 **Language of Instruction**

2.8.1. Subject to the Code of Conduct on the Language of Instruction and Examination¹ the language in which the instruction and in which the examinations and final examinations are held is English. Students are expected to have an adequate command of the language(s) of instruction and examination in the programme, in accordance with the requirements stated in Article 5.2.3. As appropriate, the Faculty publishes the OER in English for English-taught programmes.

2.8.2. Contrary to Article 2.8.1, in individual cases the Board of Examiners can permit the student to write the final thesis in another language, in accordance with the Guideline on Language Policy.²

Chapter 3 **Curriculum**

Article 3.1 **Compulsory components**

3.1.1 The programme includes compulsory components worth a total study load of 120 credits. This includes the electives offered by the recognised national research schools³, from which students must choose electives or the course *Theoretical Foundations and the Interdisciplinary Nature of African Studies* offered by the Graduate Programme of African Studies (GPAS), totalling 10 EC.

¹ [Code of Conduct on Language of Instruction](#)

² [Guideline on Language Policy](#)

³ <https://www.staff.universiteitleiden.nl/vr/humanities/graduate-school/during-your-phd/research-schools?cf=humanities>

Chapter 4 Examinations, Final Examination and Further Education

Article 4.2 Obligatory sequence

4.2.1 Students may only sit examinations and, if indicated, participate in class of the following components once they have passed the examination of the preceding components specified below:

<i>Component:</i>	<i>Participation in class and examination after passing:</i>	<i>Participation in examination after passing:</i>
Seminar Writing Research Proposal		New Frontiers in Africanist Research
Research Project Fieldwork	Seminar: Writing Research Proposal	

Article 4.3 Form of examination

4.3.6 Not applicable.

Chapter 5 Admission to the programme as of September 2025

Article 5.1 Confirmation of admission

See the faculty section.

Article 5.2 Admission to the programme

5.2.1a. Not applicable.

5.2.1b. Holders of one of the following degrees may be admitted to the programme (Article 7.30b (1) of the Act), if they can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Faculty Board that they meet the following admission requirements, without prejudice to the requirements specified in 5.2.4.

- a bachelor's degree from a research university, equivalent to the level of a Dutch academic Bachelor's degree, including the General Academic Skills listed in Appendix B of the Faculty section of these regulations, and
- The bachelor's degree is in the field of African Languages and Cultures, Linguistics, History, Cultural Anthropology, Literature, Sociology, Political Sciences, Public Administration, International Studies, or other studies related to the Humanities or Social Sciences.

5.2.1c. Not applicable.

5.2.2 Any person who fails to meet the degree requirements referred to in 5.2.1 may submit a request to the Board of Admissions. The Board of Admissions assesses whether the applicant may be granted admission to the programme.

To this end, the Board of Admissions assesses whether the applicant possesses sufficient knowledge, understanding and skills at the same level as a bachelor's degree or related bachelor's degree as referred to in 5.2.1, (a) and (b) or whether they meet these conditions after additional requirements have been met. The Board of Admissions assesses, where relevant, whether the applicant meets the qualitative selection requirements referred to in 5.2.4.

Article 5.2.3 **Dutch and English languages**

5.2.3.1 As further clarification of Article 2.8 concerning command of the language of instruction, a student who wishes to be admitted to an English-taught master's programme must have one of the following diplomas, or must meet the criteria of:

- an [International Baccalaureate](#) from a programme taught in English (or an IB diploma with English A);
- a diploma of secondary or higher education completed in Australia, Canada (with the exception of French-language programmes in Canada), Ireland, Malta, New Zealand, Singapore, the United Kingdom, the United States or South-Africa;
- a diploma of an English-taught university degree programme completed at a Dutch research university;
- a diploma of an English-taught higher professional education (hbo) programme at a Dutch university of applied sciences;
- a Dutch pre-university education (vwo) diploma.

5.2.3.2 If a student who wishes to be admitted does not meet the requirements in 5.2.3.1, the language level can be demonstrated with one of the following tests:

- English IELTS 7.0; where each separate component score must be at least 6.0;
- Toefl (internet-based) 100; where each separate component score must be at least 20;
- Cambridge English C2 Proficiency, or C1 Advanced with overall score 180, where each separate component score must be at least 169.

At the time when the student applies for the programme, the test must have been taken no more than two calendar years previously.

5.2.3.3 Not applicable.

5.2.3.4 The language level in 5.2.3.1, with the exception of the 2nd and 3rd bullet, and 5.2.3.2 do not apply when a higher command of the language is required and included as a qualitative admission requirement (selection requirement) in Article 5.2.4. If a higher language requirement is included in Article 5.2.4, all students are required to fulfil this requirement.

For more information on language tests and diplomas which are sufficient with regard to the required command of English please see <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/education/admission-and-application/masters/admission-requirements#language-requirements>.

Article 5.2.4 **Qualitative admission requirements**

5.2.4.1 In addition to the requirements specified in 5.2.1 or 5.2.2 the following qualitative admission requirements apply for the programme pursuant to Article 7.30b (2) of the Act:

- A. Good grades comparable with an average mark of at least 7.5 (Dutch grading system) for their entire bachelor's programme, and
- B. A grade for the bachelor's thesis of an 8 or higher, and
- C. Affinity with and suitability for scholarly research in the specific field of the programme/specialisation and the ability to clearly report on research, and
- D. Demonstrable motivation to study the particular Research MA programme/specialisation, and

E. An English language requirement of at least IELTS 7.0/Toefl (internet based) 100⁴.

5.2.4.2 Where Article 5.2.4.1 applies, the admission requirements will be implemented as follows:

- A and B: as evidenced by a transcript of records of the relevant obtained academic degree.
- C: to be demonstrated by two letters of recommendation and a “Writing Sample”. All applicants are required to submit a writing sample (a relevant research paper, Bachelor’s Thesis, or a Research Proposal of approximately 1000 words).

In case applicants submit a Research Proposal the proposal should be accompanied by an annotated bibliography of at least five (5) items, outlining the topic or field of research that the applicant wishes to pursue at Leiden University.

- D: to be demonstrated by a well-argued and structured motivation letter in which the applicant indicates why he/she wants to follow the research programme and convincingly discusses what makes the applicant a good candidate for the research MA programme. The statement should be between 700 and 1,500 words.
- E: as evidenced by a sufficient score for a language test taken no more than two calendar years previously.

In addition, to assess the admission requirements stated in 5.2.1, 5.2.2, and 5.2.3, the Board of Admissions will use the following documents:

- copies of diploma(s) and transcript(s);
- curriculum vitae (resume);
- proof of language proficiency (if applicable, see 5.2.3).

The admission process may include an interview with the Board of Admissions, should this be necessary to clarify whether the applicant has the same level of knowledge, understanding and skills as holders of a degree specified in 5.2.1.b. and meets the qualitative requirements specified in 5.2.4.1.

5.2.4.3 Where Article 5.2.4.1 applies, the deadline for the admission requirements is as follows:

Start in September

- In case a visa or residence permit is required, the deadline for application in the online application portal (uSis) is 1 April.
- In case a visa or residence permit is not required, the deadline for application in the online application portal (uSis) is 15 May.

For further information on the admission procedure and required application documents please see <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/education/admission-and-application/masters>.

Article 5.2.5 Maximum capacity

5.2.5.1 Not applicable.

Article 5.3 Deficiencies

See the faculty section.

Article 5.4 Pre-master's programmes and educational modules

5.4.1 Not applicable.

Chapter 7 Evaluation of the Programme

Article 7.1 Evaluation of the Programme

The programme is evaluated as follows:

- Course Evaluations
- Programme Evaluation

The Programme Committee advises the Programme Board based on the outcomes of the evaluation.