Erasmus School of
History, Culture and
Communication

Examination Board ESHCC
Annual Report 2020-2021

Erasmus University Rotterdam

Contents

Preface

This annual report of the Examination Board of the Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication is related to the period 1 September 2020 up to and including 31 August 2021. The academic year 2020-2021 was another unusual year, disrupted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Most education and testing were offered 100% online during this year, just like the last three months of the academic year 2019-2020. New this year, was the introduction of online surveillance software to prevent fraud in online exams. These online proctored exams were offered as of Term 1 of 2020-2021. As of Term 2, also the second camera, to detect screen fraud, was introduced.

COVID-19 was not the only reason why the year 2020-2021 was an unusual year. The Examination Board continued with the 'Beter Borgen' project that was postponed in the previous year, in order to strengthen its position within the faculty as an independent body responsible for quality assurance. Unfortunately, there were a lot of personnel changes in both the Examination Board and the secretariat in the year under review. Four Examination Board members stepped down in November 2021, including the Chair. The official secretary accepted a new position within the School around the same time, but continued to run the secretariat until her successor started in February 2022. In April 2021, the secretariat was extended with a new employee working on quality assurance. With a new Chair, four new Examination Board members and two new hires in the secretariat, it took some time before everyone was settled in and the focus of the Examination Board could be shifted towards quality assurance again.

Nevertheless, the Examination Board continued to work on its quality assurance tasks, such as the quality assessment of courses and the thesis trajectory and the appointment of examiners.

This annual report again follows the format that was set for EUR Examination Boards. This report starts with a general paragraph that outlines the composition of the Examination Board, its tasks and responsibilities and a review of the Outlook and priorities described in the Annual Report of 2019-2020. (Paragraph 1). The next paragraph focuses on the quality assurance tasks of the Examination Board (Paragraph 2), followed by an overview of all individual student requests (Paragraph 3). The next paragraph (4) provides an overview of the other, or non-statutory activities of the Examination Board. The report ends with a conclusion and outlook to the coming academic year (Paragraph 5).

Paragraph 1 - General

1.1 – Programmes for which the Examination Board operates

The Examination Board operates for all ESHCC programmes. In the academic year 2020-2021, these concerned the following programmes:

Bachelor programmes:
- Algemene Cultuurwetenschappen (ACW) / International Bachelor in Arts and Culture Studies (IBACS)
- Geschiedenis (GS)/ International Bachelor in History (IBH)
- International Bachelor in Communication and Media (IBCoM)

Master programmes (all have premaster programmes, except SCMA):
- Arts & Culture (A&CS) with the specialisations:
  - Cultural Economics and Entrepreneurship (CEE)
  - Arts, Culture and Society (ACS)
  - Tourism, Culture and Society (TCS)[1]
- History, with the specialisations:
  - Global History and International Relations (GHIR)
  - Cultuurgeschiedenis (CG)
  - Global Markets, Local Creativities (GLOCAL)
- Media Studies (MS) with the specialisations:
  - Media & Journalistiek (M&J)
  - Media & Creative Industries (MCI)
  - Media, Culture & Society (MCS)
  - Media & Business (M&B)
- Research Master Media Studies with the specialisation:
  - Sociology of Culture, Media and the Arts (SCMA)

1.2 - Composition of the Examination Board

The seven members of the Examination Board have been appointed by the Dean of the School. The board is formed by a delegation of two staff members from each of the School's three departments, plus an external member.

Because of the new 'Faculteitsreglement', the term of office of examination board members was limited to two years, with the possibility for reappointment. The School decided[2] to abandon the time allocation system expressed in hours for management and administration tasks and now expresses the tasks in FTE. The Chair of the Board is allotted 0.1 FTE and the other members 0.04 FTE.

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[1] The TCS master programme underwent a name change in 2020-2021. The specialisation programme was previously known as Place, Culture and Tourism.

[2] 'Time allocation academic staff for management positions and administration within ESHCC, approved by the ESHCC management team on September 28, 2020.

Table 1. Composition of the Examination Board as of November 2020

Name	Department	Position	FTE	Member since	Member until
J. Kneer, PhD	Media & Communication	Chair	0.1	1-9-2015	1-11-2022
J.C. Nierstrasz, PhD	History	Vice Chair	0.04	1-9-2015	1-9-2022
L. E. Braden, PhD	Arts & Culture Studies	Member	0.04	1-11-2020	1-11-2022
J.S. Lee, PhD	Media & Communication	Member	0.04	1-11-2020	1-11-2022
T. Navarrete Hernandez, PhD	Arts & Culture Studies	Member	0.04	1-11-2020	1-11-2022
J.C. van der Vlies, PhD	History	Member	0.04	1-11-2020	1-11-2022
C.G. Luyk, MA		External member	0.01	1-9-2019	1-9-2021

1.2.1 – Composition of the fraud and plagiarism committee

The Examination Board had one subcommittee to investigate suspicions of fraud and plagiarism.

Table 2a. Composition of the Plagiarism committee 2020-2021

Name	Department	Investigated cases
L.E. Braden, PhD	Arts & Culture Studies	History and Media & Communication students
J.C. van der Vlies, PhD	History	Media & Communication & Arts & Culture students

Table 2b. Composition of the Fraud in exams committee 2020-2021

Name	Department	Investigated cases
J.S. Lee, PhD	Media and Communication	Online proctored exams
J. Kneer, PhD	Media and Communication	Online proctored exams
T. Navarrete Hernandez, PhD	Arts & Culture Studies	Online proctored exams

1.2.2 – Composition of the secretariat of the Examination Board

The Examination Board was supported by the official secretary, a secretariat assistant and as of 1 April 2022 a quality assurance assistant.

Table 3. Composition of the secretariat of the Examination Board 2020-2021

Name	Position	Starting / until	FTE	Responsibilities
A. Kersten, PhD	Official secretary	until 31-01-2021	0.8 FTE	Policy, regulations and procedures Quality assurance Representation in internal and external working groups
A. Kortekaas, MSc LL.M	Official secretary	Starting 01-02-2021	1.0 FTE	Binding study advice
Y. Markus, MSc	Quality assurance assistant	Starting 01-04-2021	0.5 FTE	Quality assurance
C.M.J. Verel LL.M	Secretariat assistant		0.6 FTE	Incoming student requests Fraud and plagiarism Facilities for students with a functional impairment

1.3 – The framework within the Examination Board operates

The Examination Board operates within the frameworks defined by
- the Higher Education and Research Act (WHW)

- the General Administrative Law Act (AWB)
- the Teaching and Examination Regulations (TERs) of the degree programmes
- the Rules and Guidelines (R&G) of the Examination Board
- the Rules of Order for Written Exams

The Examination Board is an independent body that safeguards the quality of exams and tests. The Examination Board determines 'whether a student meets the requirements defined in the TER regarding the knowledge, insights and skills necessary to obtain a grade'[3].

EUR has defined 11 key tasks for examination boards regarding quality assurance:
1. The Examination Board ascertains at regular intervals whether the total interim examinations package in its entirety examines the final qualifications required.
2. The Examination Board regularly investigates the quality of the final assignments or engages a third party to do so.
3. The Examination Board regularly investigates the quality of the interim examinations (other than final assignments) or engages a third party to do so.
4. The Examination Board provides examiners with guidelines for constructing interim exams.
5. The Examination Board provides examiners with guidelines for holding interim exams.
6. The Examination Board provides examiners with guidelines for assessing interim exams and establishing results.
7. The Examination Board ensures that the guidelines are adhered to.
8. The Examination Board appoints examiners to hold interim exams on a specific component of the programme (this might be a course or a cluster of courses).
9. A procedure has been laid down to which examiners must adhere in the event of suspected fraud.
10. The Examination Board verifies that the examiners act in accordance with the rules and guidelines relating to fraud or engages a third party to do so.
11. The Examination Board safeguards the quality of the organization and procedures relating to holding interim examinations.

Chapter 2 and Appendix 1 will reflect on these key tasks and what activities the Examination Board undertook in the year under review.

1.3.1 - Working methods of the Examination Board
The Examination Board met six times in the year under review. During the meetings, the members discuss a wide variety of topics concerning quality assurance.
- Procedure assurance of course assessment quality
- Procedure assurance of thesis assessment quality
- Appointment of examiners
- Examination in times of COVID-19
- Online proctoring
- Policy regarding internal ESHCC electives
- Alignment of the thesis trajectory among departments
- Report of the 'Beter Borgen' project
- Change in BSA for 2020-2021
- Fraud and plagiarism
- Year plan 2021-2022

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[3] Art. 7.12 part. 2 WHW

As of the year 2020-2021, the Examination Board meetings were no longer attended by the student advisors. The discussion items during the Examination Board meetings concerned more and more topics related to quality assurance, rather than individual student requests. As a result, the attendance of the student advisors during the regular EB-meetings was no longer necessary.
At the end of the year, an additional meeting was held with the student advisors regarding the issuing of the binding study advise to students with personal circumstances.

1.3.2 – Working methods of the executive committee of the Examination Board
The Examination Board's executive committee comprises the chair and the secretary. As of February 2021, after the new Chair was appointed and the new secretary was hired, the executive committee met once every week. They formulated decisions in day-to-day-affairs, and prepared appeal cases (wrote defence statements and attended sessions) that were brought before the Board of Appeals for Examinations (CBE).

The chair attended the meetings of the university board of chairs of Examination Boards (OVE). Throughout the academic year 2020-2021 the OVE-meetings took place on a weekly basis. The secretary participated in EUR's consultative body for secretaries of Examination Boards (OSE).

1.3.3 – Working methods of the secretariat
The official secretary was primarily responsible for writing policy documents, regulations (such as the TER and the Rules and Guidelines), assisting the Examination Board with its quality assurance tasks and representing the School in various internal and external working groups. The secretary worked closely with colleagues from Team Study Progress and Diploma and Education Systems Advice and Management. In addition, the secretary participated in consultations with the programmes involved in the RASL Dual Degree programme.
The administrative assistant of the secretariat was primarily responsible for all incoming mail and primary point of contact for incoming student requests, fraud and plagiarism cases, arranging facilities for students with a functional impairment and several administrative tasks of the Examination Board (keeping the Examination Board journal, sending out decisions on behalf of the Examination Board etc.).
After the 1st of April 2021 the secretariat was extended with a quality assurance assistant who took care of various tasks related to the Examination Board's quality assurance tasks, such as sending out appointment letters to examiners, sending out letters related to the course and thesis quality assurance procedures. In addition, the quality assurance assistant served as back-up of the secretary and the administrative assistant of the secretary in their absence.

1.4 – Independence of the Examination Board
The WHW defines several requirements for the Examination Board to serve as an independent body[4]. The members of the Examination Board are appointed by the Dean of the School and each internal member represents one of the three departments of the School. None of the Examination Board members holds any financial responsibility within the School, which guarantees their independent position. Since, the members are appointed by the Dean, the members can position themselves independently within their own department as Examination Board member, as they can be held accountable for their Examination Board duties by the Dean, rather than their department head. In addition, all members of the Examination Board hold a permanent position within the School.
The external member does not represent one of the ESHCC departments. As such, the external member increases the independence of the Examination Board. The external member is an experienced member of an Examination Board of the Hogeschool Utrecht with ample experience in

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[4] Art. 7.12a par.1 WHW

the quality assurance tasks of the Examination Board. She provides the Examination Board with (legal) advice, attends the meetings of the board and participated in the thesis quality assurance procedure.

1.5 – Review of last year's goals

In the Annual Report 2019-2020, the Examination Board set the following goals:
1. Continue with the implementation of Osiris Case for the workflow of the secretary of the Examination Board.
2. Continue with the 'Beter Borgen' project, with the assistance of an external consultant to make sure the Examination Board focuses more on its quality assurance tasks.
3. Implement a consistent and efficient procedure to appoint examiners.

1.5.1 – Implementation of Osiris Case

Unfortunately, this first ambition was not met. Because of the changes in the composition of the secretariat this project was on hold for quite some time. The new secretary focused on this ambition again as of May 2021 and planned to launch a new Osiris Case for plagiarism and fraud in collaboration with the Osiris key-user. A first demo of the new workflow was scheduled, but unfortunately, the new workflow could not be finished due to illness of the Osiris key-user.

1.5.2 – Continuation of the 'Beter Borgen' project

Last year, the Examination Board hired an external consultant who would write a report on how to strengthen the Examination Board and how to focus on its quality assurance tasks. This report came out in December 2020. The report shows that the Examination Board lacks the resources to fulfil all its quality assurance responsibilities. Even though the number of hours for Examination Board members and the secretariat were extended (on paper), the number of FTE still does not match the minimum required hours as determined in the 'Richtlijn facilitering examencommissies 2019'.

According to the Richtlijn, the Examination Board should span 2.8 FTE (members + secretariat). At the moment, the allocated hours for the Examination Board only span 0.31 FTE (members) + 2.1 FTE (secretariat) = 2.41 FTE. As a result, it remains difficult to further develop quality assurance procedures.

1.5.3 – Implement a consistent and efficient procedure to appoint examiners

Because the appointment of examiners did not take place in 2019-2020, the Examination Board made it a priority for the year under review. The secretary and the quality assurance assistant formulated a new procedure to appoint examiners based on different profiles for various categories of examiners. More information about the appointment of examiners procedure can be found in Chapter 2.

Paragraph 2 - Reflection of quality assurance tasks Examination Board

The Examination Board has the statutory duty to safeguard the quality of the final exam and interim exams. In the end, the Examination Board is responsible for the quality assurance of the diplomas. This paragraph starts with an overview of the issued degree certificates, followed by a reflection on the various quality assurance tasks that were carried out by the Examination Board.

2.1 – Issuing degree certificates

In the past academic year, 309 bachelor's and 384 master's degrees were awarded at ESHCC, which is a 5% decrease in awarded bachelor degree certificates and a 7% increase in master degree certificates. The decrease in awarded bachelor degree certificates is primarily caused by the smaller number of awarded degrees in the IBCoM programme. A possible explanation could be that most international exchange programmes were cancelled in the Fall of 2020 and as a result some of the IBCoM students decided to delay their graduation and to pursue their exchange in the Fall of 2021. The Examination Board therefore expects the number of awarded bachelor degrees to increase again next year. The tables below show the distribution of certificates across the various degree programmes and specialisation programmes.

Table 4. Bachelor certificates awarded between 01 September 2020 until 31 August 2021

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
ACW	22	27	21	12	14
IBACS	42	53	41	48	72
GS	49	47	36	51	48
IBH		12	19	25	21
IBCoM	162	142	149	189	154
Total	**275**	**281**	**266**	**325**	**309**

Source: student information system Osiris

Table 5. Master certificates awarded between 01 September 2020 until 31 August 2021

		2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Arts & Culture		75	88	87	95	106
	ACS	25	27	27	35	29
	CEE	50	61	54	51	56
	PCT			6	9	21
History		33	29	53	43	52
	CG				4	10
	GHIR				11	24
	GLOCAL			11	18	16
	MAGES	33	29	42	10	2
Media Studies		113	140	148	212	218
	M&C	21	20	5	1	0
	M&J	19	21	18	32	21
	M&B	53	81	66	102	100
	MCS	20	18	32	25	29
	MCI			27	52	68
Media Studies (research)		6	7	9	8	8
Total		**227**	**264**	**297**	**358**	**384**

Source: student information system Osiris

2.2 Appointment examiners

Unlike last year, the Examination Board appointed examiners for assessment in the year under review. The Examination Board followed up on the appointment criteria that were used in the year 2018-2019 and slightly adjusted those profiles. Examiners are appointed in the following categories:

- 1.1 - Tenured and tenure track professors, as well as tenured ESHCC lecturers with a UTQ will be appointed as examiner within their discipline.
- 1.2 – At the discretion of the Examination Board, and as an exception, other experienced ESHCC academic staff without a PhD may be appointed as examiner within their discipline.
- 2 – Other members of the ESHCC academic personnel (e.g. untenured lecturers ec.) and external staff may be appointed as examiner for a specific course (e.g. thesis trajectory)

The full description of the criteria can be found in Appendix 2. The Examination Board appointed in total 190 examiners divided over the different categories.

Table 6. Appointed examiners 2020-2021

	Category 1	Category 2	Total
Arts & Culture	25	35	60
History	20	24	44
Media and Communication	56	30	86
Total	**101**	**89**	**190**

2.3 Quality assurance on courses and exams

The Examination Board continued the assurance of assessment quality in individual courses. In the year under review, the Examination Board sampled at least 9 courses in each department, which means that the size of the sample was comparable to last year. The table below shows an overview of the selected courses.

Table 7. Sample of courses for quality assurance 2020-2021

Course code	Course name	Department	Level	Last sampled
CC1022	Cultural and Creative Industries	Arts & Culture	BA-1	First time
CC2015	Sociology, Culture and Modernity	Arts & Culture	BA-2/3	2016-2017
CC2052	Popular Music: Industry & Society	Arts & Culture	BA-2/3	First time
CC3124	Audience Studies: Current Perspectives	Arts & Culture	BA-2/3	First time
CC4015	Media Tourism	Arts & Culture	MA TCS	2019-2020
CC4111	Cultural Economics: Theory	Arts & Culture	MA CEE	First time
CC9008	Money and the Fine Arts	Arts & Culture	B3 Minor	First time
CC4023	Ethnographic Research into Culture Participation	Arts & Culture	MA ACS	First time
CC9009	Creative Economy and Creative Organizations	Arts & Culture	B3 Minor	First time
CH1107	Dutch History in a Globalizing World	History	BA-1	First time
CH1105	The History of Modern Societies	History	BA-1	2015-2016
CH2222	Epidemic disease, famine and development in historical perspective	History	BA-1	First time
CH2210	Representing War in Popular Historical Culture	History	B2	First time
CH2215A	Geschiedenis van het Schrift	History	B2	First time
CH3051	The public role of historians	History	B3 Minor	2016-2017

CH4010	Mapping Global Order	History	MA GHIR	2019-2020
CH4119	Rotterdamse verhalen, (post)-koloniale mondelinge geschiedenis uit de diverse stad	History	MA CG	2017-2018
CH4142	Power, Politics and Sovereignty	History	MA GHIR	First time
CM0020	Mathematics Remedial Course IBCoM	Media & Communication	B1	First time
CM1008	Media Systems in Comparative Perspective	Media & Communication	B1	First time
CM2086	Communicating (in)equality in the city	Media & Communication	BA-2/3	First time
CM2088	Digital Media and Health Communication	Media & Communication	BA-2/3	First time
CM4111	Digital Media and Consumer Culture	Media & Communication	MA M&B	First time
CM2091	Media, Games and Creative Industry	Media & Communication	BA-2/3	First time
CM4160	Diversity and Inclusion in Strategic Communication	Media & Communication	MA M&B	First time
CM4356	Production Cultures in the Streaming Industries	Media & Communication	MA MCI	First time
CM2069B	Public Relations and Transparency	Media & Communication	BA-2/3	First time
CM4210	Digital Media and Cultural Identities	Media & Communication	MA MCS	First time

The selection comprised a focused sample check of new courses, courses from new or external lecturers, and BA-1 core courses as well as various randomly selected courses. The distribution across lecturers was also taken into consideration.

The lecturers concerned were informed in advance about the purpose of the procedure and were asked to provide the relevant documentation: course manual, tests, answer models and the assessment matrix. The evaluation concerned various elements, such as the information regarding tests provided in the course guide, the relationship between the course's learning objectives and the end terms of the programme, the transparency and contents of tests, the marking and answer models.

Overall, all courses that have been evaluated have received a passing score. Some need to implement only very small changes, others need a bit more work. The most important point of attention is that the assessment matrix is often missing. Furthermore, the weight of the final assessment is sometimes not clearly described in the course manual.

Besides the assessment, we also saw some issues with the learning goals. In some cases, the learning goals are too general, far too many for one course or the link between the learning goals and the chosen form of assessment was not clear.

Lastly, we found that participation criteria that students need to fulfil are sometimes not clear enough. Our recommendation is to note down exactly what the participation requirements of the course are of in order to prevent misunderstandings.

2.4 Quality assurance of thesis

The Examination Board continued in the year under review with the assurance of the quality of the theses. In each department 10 BA/premaster and 10 MA theses were sampled, which were submitted in the academic year 2019-2020.

The sample included theses from each specialisation programme and the Board requested programme management to provide the relevant documentation: the thesis of the student, the completed thesis evaluation forms by supervisor, second reader and the combined evaluation form and the Turnitin plagiarism score. The Board only evaluated the thesis trajectory from a procedural perspective and checked the following aspects:
- whether or not all the assessment forms were present and archived,
- whether or not the grades on the assessment form correctly add up to the final grade
- whether or not a third reader was involved if applicable

- if a plagiarism check was conducted
- whether the thesis met the requirements in terms of structure and size

In general, the results of the thesis assurance check were positive. In the large majority of all the evaluation forms the grades are adequately explained, consistent and lead up to the final grade. Unfortunately, not all evaluation forms could be retrieved. For the large majority of the sampled theses, the combined assessment form was provided, but in many of them the evaluation form of the supervisor and second reader was missing. As a result, it was not always possible to evaluate the inter-assessor consistency. The Board came up with the following recommendations:
- Just like last year, the Examination Board recommends that all thesis evaluation forms (supervisor, second reader and final forms) should be archived. This is not only important for the yearly quality assurance check, performed by the Examination Board, but also for accreditation purposes.
- It was not always clear whether or not plagiarism checks were conducted. The Examination Board therefore recommends again that plagiarism reports should also be archived for each thesis.
- Some supervisors used the evaluation form to provide very extensive feedback in each section. The Examination Board recommends focussing the feedback by clarifying the grade in each subsection and use the final judgement to provide further overall praise and critical commentary.
- There should be a check in the form for the word count of the thesis.

2.5 – Summary quality assurance tasks
In Appendix 1, the checklist with the 11 key tasks of the Examination Board is presented and to what extent the Examination Board of ESHCC performed these activities in the year under review. The report of the 'Beter Borgen' project came out in December 2020 which provides a description of what quality assurance tasks the ESHCC Examination Board currently does and what other tasks the Examination Board should focus on.
- The Examination Board continued with the quality assurance of exams and theses (key tasks 2 and 3) in the year under review and is happy with the current procedure. The Examination Board reviews a sample of approximately 10 courses and 20 theses per department and writes recommendation for the programme management. One small point of improvement for next year is the timing to complete the procedures, as it would be beneficial for all involved parties when the procedures are completed at an earlier stage and the feedback can be shared with thesis coordinators and examiners.
- The Examination Board is happy that examiners were appointed again in the year under review (key task 8). One small point of improvement for next year again concerns the timing of the procedure. In the year under review, examiners were appointed quite late, towards the end of the academic year, while it is desired to appoint examiners at the beginning of the academic year, before the first assessments take place.
- Both these issues related to timing, will hopefully be resolved by working with a Year Plan for the year 2021-2022.
- The Examination Board did not look at the Assessment Policy or the Assessment Plans (key task 1), since neither of these documents were updated in the year under review.
- The Examination Board did not provide new guidelines for examiners in the year under review. Since the Assessment Protocol was last updated in 2018-2019 and several procedures have changed in the meanwhile, it will be one of the goals for the coming year.

Paragraph 3 - Decisions regarding individual student requests

The Teaching and Examination Regulations (TERs), the Rules and Guidelines and the Rules of Order for written exams stipulate the rights and obligations of students following the ESHCC's degree programmes. The Examination Board is authorized to make exceptions within these frameworks, on request of the student. Students can appeal to decisions made by the Examination Board, if they do not agree with the decision made. This paragraph discusses the individual student requests, the fraud and plagiarism suspicions and the number of appeal cases.

3.1 – Individual student requests

The majority of the incoming and outgoing mail of the Examination Board concerned a wide variety of individual student requests. The total number of requests increased again after last year's decline: there are 95 more requests compared to last year. One important reason is that the student requests in the category 'examination programme' increased significantly from 3 to 50. One important explanation for this, is that within the bachelor programme programme Geschiedenis/IB History, students were allowed to replace the Internship by two electives, as a temporary COVID measure. This concerned 37 requests in total.

Besides the increase in this specific request category, the Examination Board sees the number of incoming requests growing in all categories. In the year under review, there have been more requests in the categories exemptions, retention of exam opportunity, functional impairment and postponement (and cancellation) of active conferral of the degree.

Last year, the Examination Board expected the number of requests to participate in external minors and/or electives to increase in the following years. It seems like this number stabilized after the large increase last year: from 99 to 100 requests. Just like last year, the majority of these requests come from ACW/IBACS students: 63 of the 100 requests came from this group of students.

The category 'Miscellaneous' contains a wide variety of student requests including requests for interim enrolment, requests regarding the attendance requirements, requests for statements and the students who appealed against the decision of a negative binding study advice.

Table 8. Individual student requests to the Examination Board 2020-2021

Category	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Exemptions	42	30	33	20	12	37
Retention of exam opportunity	38	40	39	25	29	37
Extension of term of validity	47	29	32	10	4	3
Impairment	24	45	54	46	39	53
Binding study advice-PO	26	22	33	25	22	14
External course/ elective/ minor	41	49	62	69	99	100
Examination programme	23	29	10	12	3	50
Miscellaneous	40	51	46	45	41	29
Postponement active conferral of degree				24	34	17	31
- cancelled				1	0	7
Complaints		7	8	23	13	14
CBE cases	6	7	9	19	6	5
Total	**287**	**309**	**350**	**329**	**285**	**380**

Source: ESHCC Examination Board journal 2020-2021

3.2 – Fraud and plagiarism cases

The investigation of fraud and plagiarism was a big topic in the year under review and increased the workload of the Examination Board. There was a small increase in the number of registered fraud and plagiarism cases (from 56 in 2019-2020 to 57 in 2020-2021), however there were many more cases the Examination Board had to look into that did not result in a registration or an official case, all because of the introduction of online proctoring software.

3.2.1 – Online proctoring

In the year under review, the Examination Board allowed the use of online proctoring software for bachelor courses with a relatively large number of students (>100). After every exam potential fraudulent behaviour would be flagged by the software provider and reviewed by the Examination Board. Most of the flagged exams were not considered as fraudulent behaviour by the Examination Board, but were related to issues with the internet connection of the students. None of these flagged exams resulted in a penalty or sanction.

Students could also be flagged for a variety of other reasons, such as not having completed a room scan prior to the exam and the use of unauthorized software during the exam. Students had to complete a room scan prior to the exam to show that there was no unauthorized material on their desk. Students who forgot to do this were <u>informed</u> by the Examination Board about what happened and reminded of the policy to perform a room scan. The Examination Board decided not to give a formal reprimand to these students for various reasons. First of all, online proctoring and performing a room scan was new for all students, therefore the Examination Board wanted to be lenient for first time offenders. Second, students perceived a high level of stress because of COVID-19, the lockdown and the online proctored exams.

3.2.2 – Fraud and plagiarism in open book exams and assignments

The number of fraud and plagiarism cases increased again in the year under review. In total a record number of 56 suspicions of plagiarism were reported to the Examination Board, compared to 49 last year and 42 in the year 2019-2020. This increase is a direct result of the COVID-pandemic and the alternative ways of assessment, such as open book exams and assignments.

In the tables below, the various fraud cases have been subdivided in categories, study programmes and sanctions. Last year, the number of fraud cases by master students doubled from 7 to 14, whilst this number increased to 19 in the year under review. This is a worrisome trend, as a master student should be aware of the standards of academic writing. This increase in fraud cases concerning master students could be explained by the increasing number of 'external students' who are enrolled in an ESHCC master programme, without doing the bachelor programme at our School.

Table 9. Number of fraud cases divided by category

Type of violation	2019-20	2020-21
Rules of Order	7	0
Category 1	7	4
Category 2	4	11
Category 3	38	42
Total	56	57

Table 10. Fraud cases divided by programme level

Programme	2019-20	2020-21
Bachelor	35	35
Premaster	3	2
Master	14	19
Exchange	4	1
Total	56	57

Table 11. Fraud cases divided by sanction

Sanction	2019-20	2020-21
None	9	4
Reprimande (rules of order written exams	7	1
Registration - Category 2 plagiarism	4	11
Point deduction	2	0
Nullification assignment/exam with resit opportunity	26	28
Mark invalid (no resit)	8	13
Mark invalid + period of exclusion	0	0
Total	**56**	**57**

3.3 - Appeals and CBE appeals

Students submitted several appeals to the Examination Board in the year under review. Luckily, the number of CBE appeals was relatively low again, with 5 cases.

Table 12. Number of CBE cases 2019-2020

	2019-20	2020-21
Decision CBE: in favour of student	0	0
Decision CBE: in favour of ESHCC	1	1
Appeal withdrawn	2	1
Settlement	3	3
Total	**6**	**5**

Paragraph 4 – Overview of the non-statutory activities of the Examination Board

Besides its statutory duties, the Examination Board also carries out certain activities that are not required by the law but delegated to the Examination Board. These activities include the issuing of the binding study advice.

4.1 – Binding study advice

Just like last year, there was again an adjustment in the binding study advice for the year 2020-2021. Last year, BSA decisions were postponed for students affected by COVID-19. This year the Vice Dean of Education lowered the BSA standard from 60 EC to 50 EC, following the collective decision of universities in the Netherlands. On top of this lowered BSA standard, students were also able to make use of the compensation opportunities described in the TER. In principle, it was therefore possible to receive a positive binding study advice with less than 50 EC.

Appendix 3 shows an overview of all BSA decisions send on behalf of the Dean. The percentage of positive BSA decisions increased in all programmes, except for IBCoM, which was comparable to recent years.

Students who received an impending negative binding study advice were offered the opportunity to be heard by the Examination Board. Students could either submit a written response or present their point of view during a formal hearing. The table below provides an overview of the number of students that used the opportunity to be heard by the Examination Board. The number of BSA responses was 50% lower than recent years.

Table 13. Overview of BSA responses

Category	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
ACW - written	0	1	1	0
ACW - hearing	2	0	0	0
IBACS - written	2	6	4	0
IBACS - hearing	1	3	2	1
GS - written	2	1	3	1
GS - hearing	2	1	0	0
IBH - written	1	1	0	2
IBH - hearing	2	2	0	2
IBCoM - written	13	8	13	4
IBCoM - hearing	2	1	2	2
Total	27	24	25	12

Paragraph 5. Reflection and outlook

The Examination Board expects that the year 2021-2022 will again bring some challenges as the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to influence higher education and testing. Luckily, examiners, students and the Examination Board have gained experience in alternative forms of testing and the use of online tools that have proven to be effective when it comes to online assessment.

Besides COVID-19, the Examination Board hopes to continue with the project that was started in the year under review to focus more on its quality assurance tasks. As can be concluded from the checklist in Appendix 1, the Examination Board does not performall its quality assurance tasks. It remains a problem that the Examination Board is not facilitated with sufficient resources to complete its quality assurance tasks. At the moment the Examination Board is 0.4 FTE short and has to make difficult choices when it comes to quality assurance. As a result, no activities are currently undertaken with regard to quality assurance on the programme level.

Another big challenge is the increasing workload when it comes to (detecting) fraud and plagiarism. The number of plagiarism cases has increased over the years and is expected to increase again in the coming academic year. Also, the introduction of online proctoring software has increased the workload of the fraud committee, as footage of students taking exams from home had to be reviewed. Given that the Examination Board already lacks the resources to complete all its activities, it will become a challenge to keep up with all fraud and plagiarism cases.

Despite these limitations and challenges, the Examination Board has set the following ambitions for the year 2021-2022:
- Work with a year plan (Appendix 4)
- Improve the assessment of the thesis evaluation by meeting with the thesis coordinators.
- Continue with the implementation of Osiris Case for the workflow of the secretariat of the Examination Board.
- Review the ESHCC Assessment Protocol
- Review the Fraud and Plagiarism procedure

Appendix 1 – Checklist quality assurance tasks Examination Board

1 = we do not perform this activity – 5 = we perform this activity in considerable depth

Number	Key task	1	2	3	4	5
1	The Examination Board ascertains at regular intervals whether the total interim examinations package in its entirety examines the final qualifications required.	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	The EB regularly investigates the quality of the final assignments or engages a third party to do so.	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
3	The EB regularly investigates the quality of the interim exams (other than final assignments) or engages a third party to do so.	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
4	The EB provides examiners with guidelines for constructing interim exams.	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
5	The EB provides examiners with guidelines for holding interim exams.	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
6	The EB provides examiners with guidelines for assessing interim exams and establishing results.	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
7	The EB ensures that the guidelines are adhered to.	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
8	The EB appoints examiners to hold interim exams on a specific component of the programme (this might be a course or a cluster of courses).	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
9	A procedure has been laid down to which examiners must adhere in the event of suspected fraud.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
10	The EB verifies that the examiners act in accordance with the rules and guidelines relating to fraud or engages a third party to do so.	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
11	The EB safeguards the quality of the organization and procedures relating to holding interim examinations.	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐

Appendix 2 – Appointment criteria examiners

Version June 2021

The Examination Board ESHCC appoints the examiners for the duration of an Academic Year based on the following criteria:

1.1. **Tenured and tenure track** ESHCC academic staff (assistant professors, associate professors, endowed and full professors) as well as tenured ESHCC lecturers with a UTQ or similar qualifications will be appointed as examiner for the teaching and coordination within their discipline and act as the main contact person for the Examination Board (*category 1.1 examiners*)[5];

1.2. At the discretion of the Examination Board and as an exception, other experienced ESHCC academic staff without a PhD may be appointed as examiner for the teaching and coordination within their discipline and act as the main contact person for the examination board (*category 1.2 examiners*);

2. At the request of the Department, **other members of the ESHCC academic personnel** (e.g. untenured lecturers, researchers, PhD-candidates, BA and MA students) **and external staff** (e.g. tenured and untenured lecturers, researchers, PhD-candidates) may be appointed as an examiner for a specific course (e.g. thesis trajectory), or to assist in the grading of papers for a particular course (*category 2 examiners*)[6];

A. Appointed examiners have the following main tasks:
   - Selection of appropriate test forms
   - Construction of tests
   - Assessment of tests
   - Providing meaningful feedback

B. The following criteria apply to the appointment of examiners:
   - Examiners are responsible for the testing and examination process: the construction as well as the assessment and determination of the results of an examination.
   - The Examination Board has a supervisory role and can give examiners guidelines regarding the testing process. However, the Examination Board is not entitled to revise the results of an examination, which is the discretion of the examiner.
   - Examiners must comply with the ESHCC Examination Regulations, see: https://www.eur.nl/en/eshcc/examination-board/teaching-and-examination-regulations and the Assessment Protocol ESHCC 2018.
   - Upon request, examiners shall provide the Examination Board with information on their examinations.

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[5] For intended examiners who do not meet the criteria above, the EB has the discretion to draft criteria that should be met by the examiner. There could be a difference between appointment for all parts of a course, or for one or a few specific parts of a course.

[6] At the request of the Department, **a former member** of the ESHCC academic staff or a (former) **member of academic staff of another** School of the EUR or any other research university may be **temporarily** appointed as an examiner for a specific course (e.g. thesis trajectory). This person must meet the following requirements: a completed PhD, or a university master´s degree with demonstrable extensive experience in performing scientific research. Furthermore, at least a **hospitality agreement** is required

C. A **UTQ** (University Teaching Qualification, in Dutch **BKO**) or equivalent is preferable for the examiners mentioned under 1.1 and 1.2.;

D. The Department shall allocate an experienced examiner to **mentor** examiners who are appointed for the first time;

E. In addition to the above, the following rules apply to the examiners of a **thesis committee**:
- The **supervisor** must be a member of the academic ESHCC personnel associated with the department offering the MSc programme concerned: this includes tenured and tenure track staff as well as PhD candidates and untenured lecturers as long as they are appointed as an examiner. Furthermore, an exception can be made for **former** faculty members or PhD candidates who were associated with the department offering the MSc programme concerned: they may continue to act as supervisor after the termination of the employment contract for a maximum of one year. Hence, all other examiners including external faculty (from other EUR schools or other universities) may act as **second reader** only;
- At the request of a student, an **internal or external expert** may be temporarily appointed as a second reader of a thesis committee. This person must meet the following requirements: a completed PhD, or a university master´s degree with demonstrable extensive experience in performing scientific research. This examiner may act as **second reader** only;

Please note that there are more rules regarding the composition of thesis committees such as:
- At least one of the two members must be a tenured or tenure track faculty member: pairs consisting exclusively of PhD-candidates and/or untenured lecturers are not allowed;
- Supervisor and second reader may be members of the same department offering the MSc Programme, but it is not advised that (co-)promotors sit on a thesis committee with their PhD students, and job appraisers should not form a committee with job appraisees without a PhD degree. The Thesis Coordinator of the MSc programme shall submit a list of the internal thesis committees to the Examination Board for endorsement via examinationboard@eshcc.eur.nl

F. All appointed examiners will be registered in the ESHCC Examiners Register;

G. In case of special circumstances, the Examination Board may grant exceptions to the above rules;

H. The Examination Board can suspend or withdraw the appointment as examiner if the person concerned persistently fails to comply with the applicable examination regulations or to deliver examinations that meet the minimum quality standards. The Examination Board will not do so until the person concerned in all fairness has had a chance to conform to the relevant rules.

Appendix 3 – Overview binding study advice

Programme	Advice*	2017		2018		2019		2020	
ACW	P	17	65%	21	66%	16	50%	18	58%
	PO	3	12%	0	0%	2	6%	2	6%
	N	4	15%	2	6%	9	28%	2	6%
	S	2	8%	9	28%	5	16%	9	29%
Total		**26**	**100%**	**32**	**100%**	**32**	**100%**	**31**	**100%**
IBACS	P	64	77%	76	63%	57	63%	87	75%
	PO	1	1%	20	16%	13	14%	18	16%
	N	13	16%	20	17%	17	19%	6	5%
	S	5	6%	5	4%	3	3%	5	4%
Total		**83**	**100%**	**121**	**100%**	**90**	**100%**	**116**	
GS	P	56	66%	43	66%	45	67%	59	74%
	PO	2	2%	0	0%	6	9%	1	1%
	N	16	19%	12	19%	10	15%	13	16%
	S	11	13%	10	15%	6	9%	7	9%
Total		**85**	**100%**	**65**	**100%**	**67**	**100%**	**80**	**100%**
IBH	P	24	71%	27	66%	39	78%	37	82%
	PO	2	6%	3	7%	5	10%	1	2%
	N	6	18%	6	15%	1	2%	5	11%
	S	2	6%	5	12%	5	10%	2	4%
Total		**35**	**100%**	**41**	**100%**	**50**	**100%**	**45**	**100%**
IBCoM	P	193	85%	219	86%	251	87%	271	87%
	PO	6	3%	6	2%	11	4%	2	1%
	N	17	7%	15	6%	12	4%	28	9%
	S	12	5%	14	6%	13	5%	9	3%
Total		**228**	**100%**	**254**	**100%**	**287**	**100%**	**310**	**100%**

Appendix 4 – Preliminary Year plan Examination Board 2021-2022

Deadline**:**   end of September 2021 – finalize course assessment procedure Term 2-4 2020-2021

Examination Board Meeting 1: 30 September 2021

- Finalize course assessment procedure 2020-2021 and discuss findings
- Discuss profiles for appointment examiners

October 2021:   Send quality assurance of course assessment results to examiners and programme management

October 2021:   Send appointment letters to examiners

Deadline: end of November 2021 – finalize thesis assessment procedure 2020-2021

Examination Board Meeting 2: 1 December 2021

- Discuss Annual report EB (might be postponed to January 2022)
- Discuss findings thesis assessment procedure 2020-2021
- Discuss exams Term 1

Examination Board Meeting 3: 31 January 2022

- Discuss exams Term 2

February 2022:   Send appointment letters to examiners who joined the faculty after 1 October 2021

Deadline: mid-March 2022 - finalize course assessment procedure Term 1 and 2

Examination Board Meeting 4: 29 March 2022

- Discuss course evaluations Term 1 and 2
- Discuss Assessment Protocol

April 2021:   Send quality assurance of course assessment results Term 1 and 2 to examiners

Examination Board Meeting 5: 23 May 2022

- Discuss exams Term 3
- Discuss concept TER 2022-2023
- Discuss Rules & Guidelines, By-laws Examination Board

Examination Board Meeting 6: 6 July 2022

- Discuss exams Term 4 and resits
- Discuss Yearplan 2022-2023

BSA Examination Board Meeting: to be determined (August 2022)

- Responses to impending negative BSA decisions

Deadline: end of September 2022 – finalize course assessment procedure Term 3 and 4