

Examination Board ESHCC

Annual Report 2018-2019

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Preface

This annual report of the Examination Board of the Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication (ESHCC) relates to the period 1 September 2018 up to and including 31 August 2019. During this year, a number of issues have been taken on. Implementation of the assessment matrix in BA1 has been established. The appointment of examiners has been formalized by sending out differentiated appointment letters to specific categories of examiners. The assurance of assessment quality was carried out again and our conclusions were generally positive. It was decided to add a similar procedure for BA and MA theses as well. Throughout the year, our procedure and concomitant flowchart regarding plagiarism has been finetuned and the assessment protocol was updated.

This academic year featured several accreditation procedures. Two NVAO accreditation procedures took place in 2019 (IBCoM and ACS), with positive results. Later that year we also had the accreditation of the MA media and MA Arts and Culture programmes, which led to some critical comments about the administration of thesis evaluation forms in the Media programme. Board members were involved in writing the self-reflection documents and attended preparatory meetings for the visitations.

The Board's secretary went on maternity leave during October 2018- April 2019 and was replaced temporarily by Martine Schey, who was an Examination Board secretary at RSM. The transition of responsibilities went smoothly given the relevant experience of Martine Schey. Otherwise, no changes in the composition of the Board occurred.

Paragraph 1. The Examination Board

1.1 Programmes for which the Examination Board operates

The Examination Board operates for all ESHCC programmes. In academic year 2018-2019, 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 and Culture Studies (ACS) with the specialisations:
 - Cultural Economics and Entrepreneurship (CEE)
 - Arts, Culture and Society (ACS)
 - Place, Culture and Tourism (PCT)
- History of Society (MG), with the specialisations:
 - Global History and International Relations (GHIR)
 - Geschiedenis van Nederland in een Mondiale Context (GNMC)
- Media Studies (MS) with the specialisations:
 - Media & Cultuur (M&C)
 - 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 faculty. The board is formed by a delegation of two staff members from each of the faculty's three departments, plus an external member. The term of office of members is three years and can be extended. The chair and the members are allotted respectively 200 or 40 working hours for the tasks they perform as committee members.

Table 1. Composition of the Examination Board 2018-2019

	Member	Portfolio
History	Prof. H.A.M. Klemann	Fraud and plagiarism
	J.C. Nierstrasz, PhD	
Arts & Culture Studies	N. van Poecke, PhD	Chair, Executive Committee
	Prof. C.J.M. van Eijck	
Media & Communication	J. Kneer, PhD	Vice-chair, Fraud and plagiarism
	M.N.M. Verboord, PhD	
External Member	B. van Balen, PhD	Quality of assessment

The Examination Board was supported by the official secretary and the secretariat, comprising one employee. The Examination Board's executive committee comprises the chair Professor C.J.M. van Eijck and the secretary A. Kersten, PhD. The secretary was on leave and replaced by M. Schey, MSc for the period 22 October 2018 – 1 April 2019.

Table 2. Support for the Examination Board 2018-2019

	Member	Position
Official secretary	A. Kersten, PhD	0.8 FTE
	M. Schey, MSc	0.6 FTE (replacement October – April)
Secretariat	Mr. C.M.J. Verel	0.6 FTE

1.3 The framework within which the Examination Board operates

The Examination Board operates within the frameworks defined by the General Administrative Law Act, the Higher Education and Research Act (WHW), including the accreditation system, the quality assurance system of the faculty and the university, the university's frame of reference for testing and examination boards, the faculty regulations and faculty test policy, the Teaching and Examination Regulations of the various programmes and the Examination Board's Rules and Regulations.

1.4 Range of duties

The Examination Board's activities focus on interim and final examinations and are based on the Higher Education and Research Act. Its range of duties include the following:

1. A general supervisory responsibility for the administration of examinations.

This supervisory duty manifests itself in, among other things, the following statutory powers:

- issuing degree certificates;
- appointing examiners;
- ensuring the quality of interim and final examinations;
- taking measures in the event of fraud;
- supervising the correct application of the examination regulations with due observance of principles such as equality before the law, legal certainty and lawfulness in the implementation of the rules, and reasonableness and fairness in individual cases;
- acting as intermediary and defending party in disputes brought before the Examinations Appeals Board.

2. An administrative, regulatory duty with respect to the organisation and coordination of the examinations in accordance with the Examination Board's Rules and Regulations.

The Rules and Regulations are modified annually in accordance with any changes in legislation and/or university policy. The Examination Board then enforces the policy regulations included in this.

3. Tasks that are further defined in the Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER) and that are established by the dean.

This aspect concerns the granting of exemptions from the Teaching and Examination Regulations in individual cases on account of personal circumstances or on the ground of hardship.

4. *An advisory duty with respect to the adoption and amendment of the Teaching and Examination Regulations in accordance with faculty regulations.*

The secretary formulates the draft versions of the TER based on university-wide guidelines, advises the departments regarding the legal grounds and facilitates and monitors the process of alteration and adoption.

5. *Issuing statements that confirm admission to master programmes and pre-master programmes (by mandate of the dean).*

The Examination Board mandated admission committees for the various study programmes.

1.5 Department for Student Administration

When undertaking its tasks, the Examination Board works closely with the Erasmus University Rotterdam central department for Student Administration, which is responsible for the following tasks:

- Organising written examinations (examination forms and examination halls, including provisions for students who have an impairment, and invigilators, including reporting cases of fraud)
- Registration in OSIRIS of results achieved elsewhere
- Active conferral of degrees
- Issuing bachelor and master certificates (together with list of marks and supplements)
- Issuing transcripts or records
- Registering certificates in the EUR Exam Register
- Organising entrance examination tests

1.6 Consultative structures

The Examination Board met five times in the year under review. The topics covered were:

- Updating the assessment protocol
- Limitation renewal validity of study results for students from old cohorts
- Resit examinations without student registrations
- Study level (external) electives and minors
- Assurance of thesis assessment quality
- Evaluation plagiarism procedure
- Appointment of examiners
- Postponement of degree conferral
- Adjustments of curriculum because of (extra) minors/GPA
- Procedure assurance quality of assessment 2018-19
- NVAO accreditation processes
- Entrance requirements for HBO-P students
- Training lecturers in assessment construction

The Examination Board meetings were attended by the study advisors, who have an advisory vote in decision-making.

The executive committee met once every two weeks and held additional meetings when necessary.

They formulated decisions in day-to-day-affairs, and prepared appeal cases (wrote defence statements and attended sessions) that were brought before the Examinations Appeals Board (CBE). At the end of the year, a meeting was held with the study advisors regarding the binding study advice issued to students with Personal Circumstances.

The chair attended the meetings of the university board of chairs Examination Board (OVE). The secretary participated in EUR's consultative body for the secretaries of Examination Boards. Within the faculty, the secretary attended meetings on education and policy support. She also worked closely with the Department for Student Administration and the Education Systems Advice and Management service. In addition, she participated in consultations with the programmes involved in the RASL Double Degree programme.

Paragraph 2. Performance of tasks during the 2018-2019 academic year

2.1 Supervisory tasks

Issuing degree certificates

In the past academic year, 266 bachelor and 297 master diplomas were awarded at ESHCC. The tables below show the distribution of certificates across the various programmes. The strong increase in the number of diplomas for the master History of Society is due to the rise of students taking part in the specialization Global History and International Relations as part of the Erasmus Mundus programme Global Markets, Local Creativities. A new specialization, Place, Culture & Tourism started with up with 6 diplomas awarded at the end of the year. The Dutch-language specialization Media & Cultuur was terminated after the last degrees having been awarded this year. In its place, the specialization Media & Creative Industries started with 27 graduates.

Table 3. Bachelor's diplomas awarded

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
ACW	32	22	27	21
IBACS		42	53	41
GS	42	49	47	36
IBH			12	19
IBCoM	129	162	142	149
Total	213	203	275	266

Sources: 2018 data: ESS Portal, Number of diploma's awarded (reference date: 19-02-2020)
Earlier years: Education Figures 2016-2017

Table 4. Master's diplomas awarded

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/2019
ACS	63	75	88	87
ACS	22	25	27	27
CEE	41	50	61	54
PCT				6
MG	39	33	29	53
Media Studies	108	113	140	148
M&C	19	21	20	5
M&J	18	19	21	18
MCS	18	20	18	32
M&B	53	53	81	66
MCI				27
SCMA	10	6	7	9
Total	222	228	264	297

Sources: 2018 data: ESS Portal, Number of diploma's awarded (reference date: 19-02-2020)
Earlier years: Education Figures 2016-2017

Appointing examiners

In the year under review, examiners were appointed in accordance with criteria adopted for this purpose by the Examination Board and recorded in the faculty Assessment Protocol. The temporary secretary M. Schey developed various categories of authority which were assigned to the lecturers in the three department specifically. The Examination Board also appointed second readers of bachelor and master theses. And for de department Media and Communication the EB appoints members of the second reader panel for bachelor and master theses.

Ensuring the quality of interim and final examinations

The 'assurance assessment quality' procedure was implemented for the fifth time this year. For this academic year, sample checks were made on 17 courses. The EB selected 11 courses from the ESHCC bachelor programmes and 6 from the master programmes. 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 (in relation to previous years). 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 manual, 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.

In general, assessment quality was evaluated as high. There was, however, some room for improvement as well. The Board found some learning goals to be overly general and assessment matrices were not used in a few cases. Also, the Board advised a few lecturers to create clearer answering models and communicate assessment criteria more clearly to their students. In two cases, assessment quality was considered insufficient due to unclear learning goals or assessment criteria and the Chair has contacted the lecturers involved to make sure measures were implemented to remediate the issues.

Measures against fraud

The number of reports of fraud has once again increased compared with the past years, by almost 10%. **52** cases of fraud were reported in the year under review. Ten of these cases concerned a breach of a rule of order for a written examination (telephone within reach). The majority of cases concerned plagiarism in written assignments to a greater or lesser degree. These often concerned minor forms of plagiarism, committed by first-year students who had not mastered the skills of referencing.

The plagiarism cases were handled by members M.N.N Verboord and H.A.M. Klemann. All students who were suspected of committing plagiarism were invited for a meeting. Students who had a telephone within reach during an examination (for the first time) were reprimanded by e-mail.

Table 5. Overview of discovered fraud	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Total				
- First time	12	34	45	49
- Repeated offence	2	1	1	3
Programme				
Bachelor or premaster degree	10	30	36	36
Master degree	3	4	10	7
Exchange	1	1		9
Sanction				
None/reprimand	5	18	11	27
Reprimand and full or module test resit	5	16	28	11
Mark invalid	3	1	7	11
Mark invalid + period of exclusion				

Source: ESHCC Examination Board, 2018-2019 record of incoming and outgoing documents

Supervising the correct application of the examination regulations

The Examination Board ensured that the examination regulations were adhered to correctly and, where necessary, granted exemptions from the regulations on the grounds of hardship.

Dispute resolution

The Examination Board made a decision on 23 occasions in relation to a dispute between a lecturer and a student or in relation to an objection to a certain rule lodged by a student.

Students who do not agree with a decision of the Examination Board may lodge an appeal with the Examinations Appeals Board. This occurred nineteen times in the past academic year. In thirteen cases the Examination Board settled the matter (these mostly concerned appeals from prospective students after having been denied admission to various study programs), and in the other six cases the EB wrote a letter of defence of its decision. In one case the student withdrew the appeal, in two of them the Examinations Appeals Board deemed the appeal unfounded and in three cases the board judged the appeal founded and the EB was forced to formulate a new decision.

2.2 Regulations: advice regarding the Teaching and Examination Regulations and drawing up the Rules and Regulations

The Examination Board advises the dean and coordinates the process regarding the adoption of the Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER). The TER did not see major changes this past year but rather elaborations and slight reformulation of existing articles.

The Examination Board draws up rules of order and provides guidelines and instructions to examiners in the Rules and Regulations. A few changes were implemented in the regulations for this academic year.

2.3 Resolutions regarding individual requests

In the past academic year, there were 465 incoming and outgoing documents for the Examination Board. The correspondence mainly concerned a variety of individual requests from students.

The number of requests for postponement of active degree granting grew considerably, since ESHCC switched to the active conferral of degrees last year. This is reason for concern and policy requires reevaluation. Declines

in numbers of requests are observed with regard to exemptions, retentions of examination opportunities, extensions of term validity, and the binding study advice.

Under the category 'Miscellaneous' we mainly find requests for interim enrolment (after 1 September) from so-called 'higher-year students' and requests for written explanations of issues such as the Binding Study Advice, (almost) graduating and enrolment in the study programme (which were referred to the Department for Exam Administration where possible).

Table 6. Individual requests to the Examination Board 2014-2018

Category	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Exemptions	31	42	30	33	20
Retention of interim examination opportunity	30	38	40	39	25
Extension of term of validity	14	47	29	32	10
Impairment	18	24	45	54	46
Binding study advice-PO	30	26	22	33	25
PO after B1				15	19
External course/elective/minor	51	41	49	62	69
Examination programme	20	23	29	10	12
Attendance	17	8	18	2	3
Miscellaneous	36	38	47	38	42
Postponement active conferral of degree				24	34
Complaints				8	23
Total	247	290	309	350	328

2.4 Admission decisions

The chair of the EB has been authorised by the dean to issue statements that confirm admission to the master programmes, pre-master programmes and the IBCoM, IBACS and IB History bachelor programmes (where this concerns international students). The chair has delegated the decision to issue a statement that confirms admission to a student to the various admission boards (per course or programme). The annual figures are shown in Tables 7, 8 and 9.

Table 7. Registration of first-year students for international bachelor programmes as from 1 September 2013-2018

Registration	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
IBCoM	172	181	185	178	225	254
IBACS		87	77	83	83	121
IB History			29	35	34	41
Total	172	268	291	296	342	416

Source: Student population overview 2018-2019 ESHCC:

Please note that the admission of the 65 students of Geschiedenis and the 31 of ACW is done by the central University Support Centre

Table 8. Registration of first-year students for pre-master programmes as from 1 September 2013-2018 (full-time/part-time)

Registration	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
ACS	10	10	20	14	16	9
CEE	23	14	24	31	16	22
PCT						4
MG	4	6	3	3	5	6
M&J	15	9	9	2	5	10
M&C/MCI	12	9	8	11	10	12
MC&S			10	5	8	10
M&B				25	17	29
Total	64	48	74	91	77	102

Source: Student population overview 2018-2019 ESHCC:

Table 9. Registration of first-year students for master programmes as from 1 September 2013-2018 (full-time/part-time)

Registration	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
ACS	59	75	74	86	99	97
CEE	45	51	50	57	60	57
Arts Culture and Society	14	24	24	29	39	30
PCT						10
MG	50	43	40	38	46	29
GLOCAL						13
MS	123	118	123	124	154	172
M&J	32	26	21	22	22	23
M&C/MCI	28	29	21	21	19	40
MC&S	18	18	18	24	25	26
M&B	45	45	63	57	88	83
SCMA		13	7	8	12	10
Total		249	244	256	311	311

Paragraph 3: Outlook

The Examination Board has various developments in the pipeline for academic year 2019-2020:

- Develop policy on how to deal with request for deferment of certification
- Implementation Osiris case for workflow of the Examination Board
- Arrange for Risbo workshops enhancing lecturers' knowledge and skills regarding assessment design
- Work with an external expert to improve the assurance of the core tasks of the Examination Board in terms of delineating the Board's responsibilities more clearly and streamlining work processes

Appendices

Binding Study Advice

The 2018-2019 academic year was the seventh year in which first-year bachelor students had to obtain the full number of credits (60). All advice (interim and final) was issued in digital form.

Table 10 Summary of BSA results per year

Programme	Advice*	2015		2016		2017		2018	
ACW	P	18	62%	26	84%	17	65%	21	66%
	PO	1	3%		0%	3	12%		0%
	PO/A		0%		0%		0%		0%
	N	7	24%	3	10%	4	15%	2	6%
	S	3	10%	2	6%	2	8%	9	28%
	Total	29	100%	31	100%	26	100%	32	100%
IBACS	P	58	74%	61	70%	64	77%	76	63%
	PO	2	3%		0%	1	1%	20	16%
	PO/A	2	3%		0%		0%		
	N	9	12%	16	18%	13	16%	20	17%
	S	7	9%	10	11%	5	6%	5	4%
	Total	78	100%	87	100%	83	100%	121	100%
GS	P	38	67%	50	77%	56	66%	43	66%
	PO	3	5%	4	6%	2	2%		0%
	PO/A	1	2%		0%		0%		0%
	N	6	11%	4	6%	16	19%	12	19%
	S	9	16%	7	11%	11	13%	10	15%
	Total	57	100%	65	100%	85	100%	65	100%
IBH	P	17	59%	31	86%	24	71%	27	66%
	PO	2	7%	1	3%	2	6%	3	7%
	PO/A	2	7%		0%		0%		0%
	N	4	14%	4	11%	6	18%	6	15%
	S	4	14%		0%	2	6%	5	12%
	Total	29	100%	36	100%	35	100%	41	100%
IBCoM	P	149	80%	153	85%	193	85%	219	86%
	PO	4	2%	2	1%	6	3%	6	2%
	PO/A	15	8%		0%		0%		0%
	N	13	7%	12	7%	17	7%	15	6%
	S	6	3%	12	7%	12	5%	14	6%
	Total	187	100%	179	100%	228	100%	254	100%

Sources:

2018 data: ESS Portal, First year BSA students (reference date: 19-02-2020)

Earlier years: Education Figures 2016-2017

*P= positive advice, PO= students who are allowed to continue the study because of personal circumstances, A=students who are allowed to continue to study because of the hardship clause, PO/A= until 2014 PO and A where administrated in 1 category, as from 2016 A is not used anymore, N=Negative advice, S=students who quit their study before February 1st after enrolment in September.

Student population

Table 11. Total registration students ESHCC

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
ESHCC	1235	1361	1453	1589	1708	1869

Source: Student population overview 2018-2019 ESHCC