

Academic and Examination Regulations (OER)

Master's degree programme
Law and Politics of International Security

Academic year 2012-2013

VU University Amsterdam
Faculty of Law

Section 1 - General provisions

- Article 1. Scope of application of these regulations
- Article 2. Definitions
- Article 3. Aim of the degree programme
- Article 4. Degree programme types
- Article 5. Language
- Article 6. English language requirements

Section 2 - Admission to the programme

- Article 7. Previous education
- Article 8. Admissions Board

Section 3 - Composition of the degree programme

- Article 9. Composition of the degree programme
- Article 10. Study load

Section 4 - Interim and final examinations

- Article 11a. Participation on parts
- Article 11b. Examinations
- Article 12. Assessment
- Article 13. Nature of the examination
- Article 14. Oral examinations
- Article 15. Determining and publishing interim examination results
- Article 16. Period of validity of interim examinations
- Article 17. Right to inspection
- Article 18. Reflective discussion of interim examinations
- Article 19. Exemption
- Article 20. Final examination
- Article 21. Access to subsequent programmes of professional study leading to qualification as a lawyer or a member of the judiciary

Section 5 - Study advice

- Article 22. Records of study progress
- Article 23. Study advice
- Article 24. Adaptations for students with disabilities

Section 6 – Transitional and final provisions

- Article 25. Conflicting regulations
- Article 26. Amendments to the regulations
- Article 27. Transitional Regulations
- Article 28. Publication
- Article 29. Requests to the Examination Board
- Article 30. Date of commencement

Appendices

- I. Degree programme objectives
- II. Curriculum
- III. Transition regulations
- IV. Registration periods for courses and exams
- V. Late registration

Section 1 - General provisions

Article 1. Regulations' scope of application

1. These regulations apply to the educational activities associated with and examinations of the Master's degree programme in Law and Politics of International Security, hereinafter referred to as: 'the degree programme'.
2. The degree programme is offered by the Faculty of Law of VU University Amsterdam, hereinafter referred to as: 'the faculty'.
3. These regulations apply to anyone following the degree programme in this academic year, irrespective of when he or she started the degree programme. Where necessary, transitional regulations will also apply. These are appended to these regulations.

Article 2. Definitions

If the terms used in these regulations also occur in the Higher Education and Research Act (Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek, WHW), the meaning given in this Act will prevail. These regulations use the following definitions:

- a. The Higher Education and Research Act, abbreviated as WHW.
- b. Subject This concept is referred to as an 'educational unit' in Article 7.3 paragraph 2 of the WHW. A subject can consist of several components, each of which is concluded with an examination.
- c. Study guide The guide for the degree programme containing specific information relating to it.
- d. Institution VU University Amsterdam
- e. Blackboard Electronic system intended for the sharing of educational information.
- f. SIS Student Information System, also: VUnet
- g. Disability A disorder of a temporary or permanent nature which affects the student's ability to follow the programme or to complete examinations or practicals.
- h. Follow-up Master's The degree programme to which access is legally granted on the basis of a designated Bachelor's degree programme at VU University Amsterdam.
- i. Selective Master's The Master's degree programme not designated as a follow-up Master's.
- j. Period One semester is made up of three periods, which are 8, 8 and 4 weeks long, respectively.
- k. Semester One academic year is made up of two semesters.
- l. EC European Credit
- m. Examination An investigation of the knowledge, insight and skills of the student relating to a particular part of the degree programme, as well as the evaluation of the results of that investigation. An examination can take on different forms and have different names: written or oral examination, assignment, thesis etc.

Article 3. Aim of the degree programme

1. The degree programme aims to achieve the following:
 - to prepare the student to practice professionally in the field of Law and Politics of International Security
 - to teach the student specialized knowledge, skills and understanding in the field of Law and Politics of International Security
 - to prepare the student for academic work in the field of Law and Politics of International Security
2. The degree programme also promotes the academic education of the student, in particular with reference to:
 - independent, academic thought processes and performance;
 - communicating at an academic level
 - applying specialist academic knowledge in a wider and/or philosophical and social context.

3. The degree programme focuses attention on the student's personal development, promotes his or her awareness of social responsibility and develops skills of expression.

Article 4. Degree programme types

The degree programme is offered on a full-time basis.

Article 5. Language

The degree programme will be taught in the English language and examinations will be taken in English.

Article 6. English language requirements

1. For admission to an English-language Master's degree programme, the applicant must complete a certified English-language test before commencement of the programme.
2. The following minimum scores apply for the relevant tests:
 - IELTS 6.5
 - TOEFL paper-based test: 580
 - TOEFL computer-based test: 237
 - TOEFL internet-based test: 92-93
 - Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE) or the Cambridge Certificate of Advanced English (CAE): score of A or B.
3. The following are exempt from the English-language test requirement:
 - those who have passed one of the English-language tests with the minimum scores mentioned in paragraph 2 above within the past two years,
 - those who have met the requirements of the VU University Amsterdam English-language proficiency test: TOEFL ITP;
 - those who have completed a course in the English language in an English-speaking country as mentioned on the relevant website of VU University Amsterdam: ;
 - those who hold a Bachelor's degree for which this Master's degree programme has been designated as an official follow-up Master's. [This student may be required to sit a language test during the degree programme].

Section 2 - Admission to the degree programme

Article 7. Previous education

Applicants must have a Bachelor's or equivalent degree in Law, Social Sciences or Liberal Arts, and a basic knowledge of international law or international relations theory (the Admissions Board will also take into account the average grades of the applicants).

Article 8. Admissions Board

Responsibility for admitting students to the degree programme is delegated by the Faculty Board to the Examination Board of the degree programme.

Section 3 - Composition of the degree programme

Article 9. Composition of the degree programme

The degree programme will comprise the components listed in the appendix to these Academic and Examination Regulations.

Article 10. Study load

The degree programme has a study load of 60 EC. One EC is equivalent to 28 hours of study.

Section 4 - Interim and final examinations

Article 11a. Participation on parts

For all mandatory and optional courses of the program, students need to enrol. The registration periods for courses and exams and the procedure for registrations after the above mentioned periods is governed in Appendices IV and V to this OER.

Article 11b. Examinations

1. There are a maximum of two opportunities in each academic year to take examinations in the degree programme.
 - a. the first time immediately following the teaching period in which the subject is offered;
 - b. the second time during the resit period.
2. An annual timetable is issued detailing when written interim examinations may be taken and is published before the start of the academic year.
3. In case of a last-minute change in the examination schedule, students will be notified no later than 4 weeks before the examination. After 4 weeks, a change can be made only with explicit reasons and using the hardship with the consent of the Examination Board and Faculty Board.
4. If no indication is provided with regard to the number of times an interim examination may be taken in each academic year, because this concerns a subject not provided by the degree programme itself, that what is stipulated in the Academic and Examination Regulations for the relevant degree programme will apply.
5. As an exception to paragraph 11.1, if a subject is not taught in a given academic year, at least one opportunity to sit an interim examination in that subject will be offered during the course of that year.
6. In exceptional cases, the Examination Board may differ from the rules regarding the number of times in which interim examinations may be taken.

Article 12. Assessment

1. An examination is assessed as a pass or a fail (expressed as a grade): 6 or higher (pass) and 5 or lower (fail).
2. If an examination is made up of several components, no assessment will be made of the examination until all components have been tested.
3. The assessment of a student placement or a research assignment will be issued by the examiners after consultation with the relevant supervisor on site.

Article 13. Nature of the examination

1. The interim examinations will be taken in the manner described in the study guide of the degree programme.
2. If no indication is provided with regard to the manner in which an interim examination may be taken, because this concerns a subject not provided by the degree programme itself, that what is stipulated in the study guide of the relevant degree programme will apply.
3. The Examination Board may deviate from that stipulated in paragraph 1. A request to do so may be submitted by the student or by the examiner.

Article 14. Oral examinations

1. Unless specified otherwise by the Examination Board, no more than one student at a time will sit an oral examination.
2. Unless otherwise specified by the Examination Board, a second examiner will be present during an oral examination.
3. A request for the presence of an auditor may be submitted to the Examination Board by the student or the assigned examiner until 5 days before the examination, unless this opposes the granting period for the oral examination.
4. Before the commencement of an oral examination, the examiner will ask the student for valid proof of registration.

Article 15. Determining and publishing examination results

1. The examiner will determine the results of the written examination as soon as possible, but at the latest within 10 working days. The examiner will provide the Faculty's Education Affairs Office with the relevant information. The Faculty's Education Affairs Office will ensure that the results are recorded and published, with due regard for the student's privacy.

2. If, as a result of exceptional circumstances, the examiner is likely to exceed the deadline, he or she must inform the Examination Board, stating reasons. If the Examination Board approves the delay, then the Examination Board will then ensure that the students are informed of the new deadline.
3. The examiner will determine the result of an oral examination immediately after the examination in question and will give the student a written explanation of this decision.
4. With regard to examinations that are neither written nor oral, the Examination Board will decide in advance how the student will be informed of the results and how long this will take.
5. When notified of the result of an examination, the student will also be informed of the right of inspection as referred to in Article 17, as well as the option of appealing to the Examination Board.
6. In the event that the Examination Board ascertains that a student has committed fraud, it is entitled to take measures against the student.

Article 16. Period of validity of interim examinations

1. A successful result for the completion of an examination component is valid for a period of two years.
2. If it has been over two years since the student successfully completed the interim examination in a given component, the Examination Board may decide that he or she is required to sit an additional or replacement interim examination in that component before being permitted to sit the final examination.

Article 17. Right to inspection

1. For a period of at least four weeks following publication of the results for a written interim examination, the student will upon request be given the opportunity to inspect his or her assessed work. If a student intends to appeal against the way in which his or her work has been assessed, he or she will be issued with a copy of the assessed work at cost price.
2. During the period specified in the first paragraph, students who have taken part in the examination will be informed of the questions and assignments in the examination in question, as well as the standards against which the assessment was conducted.
3. The Examination Board has the right to determine that the inspection referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 takes place at a given location and at a fixed time.
4. If the student can demonstrate that he or she is or was unable to attend at the place and time indicated, he or she will be granted another opportunity to do so.
5. The locations and times indicated in the paragraph 3 will be announced well in advance and at least one week before the specified time.

Article 18. Reflective discussion on interim examinations

1. As soon as possible after the results of an oral interim examination have been announced, a reflective discussion will be held between the examiner and the student at the request of the student or on the initiative of the examiner. If requested, a justification of the assessment will be given.
2. For a period of four weeks after the publication of the results of a written interim examination, the student may request a reflective discussion with the relevant examiner. The reflective discussion will take place within a reasonable period at a time and location determined by the examiner.
3. If a collective reflective discussion is being organised, students may only submit a request as stipulated in the previous paragraph if they have been unable to attend the collective discussion for reasons beyond their control or if they have attended the discussion and can justify their request.
4. That stipulated in paragraph 3 applies *mutatis mutandis* if the Examination Board or the examiner offers the student the opportunity to compare his or her answers with model answers.
5. The Examination Board may decide to permit exceptions to the provisions in paragraphs 2 and 3.

Article 19. Exemption

1. After soliciting the advice of the relevant examiner, the Examination Board may grant exemption from an interim examination based on:
 - a. an examination successfully completed in the past within higher education in the Netherlands or elsewhere, the content and study load of which correspond to the component for which exemption has been requested, or
 - b. knowledge and/or skills acquired outside higher education.
2. If a compulsory or optional component of the programme has already been part of the Bachelor's degree programme of the student as referred at Article 7. The Examination Board will grant an exemption for this specific programme component.
3. If an exemption is granted as mentioned in paragraph 1 or 2 the Examination Board will decide on the rules for substitution of the original programme component for which the exemption has been granted.
4. If a student wishes to meet the requirements of specific interim examinations by studying at a different faculty or university (Dutch or foreign), prior approval is required from the Examination Board.
5. There will be no exemptions from the master thesis.

Article 20. Final examination

1. If the examinations for the programme components relating to the degree programme have been completed successfully, the final examination has been completed.
2. As an exception to paragraph 1, prior to assessing the result of the examination, the Examination Board can undertake an assessment of the student's knowledge with regard to one or more degree programme components, if and in so far as the results of the relevant examinations in question warrant it.
3. Students who have successfully completed the final examination will be conferred the title 'Master of Law (LL.M.) by the Executive Board VU University Amsterdam.
4. Details of the degree awarded will be recorded on the degree certificate in question. In relevant cases, details of the degree can be recorded in the diploma supplement.
5. On the certificate, the classification 'cum laude' can be mentioned. In the Examination Regulations, the Examination Board sets rules concerning the requirements that must be met to obtain the classification 'cum laude'.

Article 21. Access to subsequent programmes of professional study leading to qualification as a lawyer or a member of the judiciary

1. If the combination of a Bachelor's degree and a Master's degree in Law entitles the graduate to enter the subsequent programmes of professional study leading to qualification as a lawyer or a member of the judiciary the Examination Board will mention this on the Master's degree diploma supplement.
2. To enable the Examination Board to assess a graduate's qualification for an annotation as mentioned in paragraph 1, students who didn't obtained their Bachelor's degree in Law at VU University Amsterdam, have to hand in a certified written statement of the Examination Board of the Bachelor's degree programme stating the requirements which still need to be fulfilled to qualify for the annotation in principle. The requirements mentioned in the statement need to be met by taking components at the VU University Amsterdam. The Examination Board defines which components (Bachelor's or Master's components of VU University Amsterdam degree programmes) are required to qualify for the annotation. The certified written statement of the Examination Board of the Bachelor's degree programme need to be handed in at the admission's application to the Master's degree programme.

Section 5 - Study advice

Article 22. Records of study progress

The Faculty Board will ensure records are kept of study results in order to enable students to consult VUnet at any time for details of the results they have achieved for the various programme components in the degree programme.

Article 23. Study advice

The Faculty Board will ensure that students enrolled for the degree programme are provided with study advice.

Article 24. Adaptations for students with disabilities

1. Students with a disability will qualify for special adaptations to the teaching provided, examinations and practicals, based on a written request submitted for that purpose to the study advisor. These adaptations will be tailored as far as possible to the individual disability of the student, but are not permitted to affect the quality or level of difficulty of the subject or final examination programme. The facilities available for this purpose may consist of examinations and/or practicals whose nature and duration is attuned to the situation of the individual concerned, or providing practical aids.
2. The request referred to in paragraph 1 must be submitted to the study advisor. This recommendation is based on a statement from a doctor or psychologist. In the case of dyslexia, no recommendation from a student counsellor is required and a statement from a BIG, NIP or NVO accredited testing centre will suffice. Where possible, the statement should include an estimation of the extent to which progress of study will be hindered.
3. If the student's disability constitutes grounds for an extension of examination time, the study advisor provides a statement which demonstrates the need for extended time for examinations. If the student's disability constitutes grounds for other additional facilities, the study advisor can assign a VIB pass. The pass will show clearly which facilities the holder is entitled to.
4. A statement as referred to in paragraph 2, or a VIB pass, is valid for a maximum of one year. In the case of a chronic disorder, this period of validity may be extended at the recommendation of a student counselor or study advisor.
5. The Faculty Board will decide on any requests for adaptations relating to the educational facilities. The Examination Board will decide on any requests for adaptations relating to the process of examining.
6. A request for adaptation can be declined if granting it would constitute a disproportionately large use of the organizational resources of the university.

Section 6 - Transitional and final provisions

Article 25. Conflicting regulations

If a study guide or other regulations relating to the degree programme or the examination programme are in conflict with these regulations, that what is stipulated in these regulations will take precedence.

Article 26. Amendments to the regulations

1. Amendments to these regulations take place following a recommendation by the programme committee relating to the regulations in their entirety, and with the endorsement of a joint meeting of those sections which do not relate to the subject of Article 7.13 paragraphs 2 a to g, and paragraph 3 (follow-up Master's) of the WHW and the admission requirements for Master's degree programmes.
2. An amendment to this regulation will not take effect during the current academic year, unless this does not unreasonably affect the interests of the students.

Article 27. Transitional Regulations

1. In the event that substantive changes are made to the composition of the degree programme or to the contents of these regulations, the Faculty Board will draft transitional regulations which will be appended to these regulations.
2. These transitional regulations will always include:
 - a. a regulation relating to exemptions that may be awarded on the basis of examinations already secured;

- b. the period of validity of the transitional regulations.
3. If a subject in the compulsory study programme is discontinued, a further opportunity will be offered after the final teaching in the subject to sit the interim examination in the subject. Resits will take place in the academic year subsequent to the final academic year in which teaching in the subject was offered.

Article 28. Publication

1. The Faculty Board will ensure that these regulations are published in an appropriate manner. This also applies to the rules and guidelines drawn up by the Examination Board, and to any amendments to these documents.
2. The Academic and Examination Regulations will be published on the website of the degree programme.

Article 29. Requests to the Examination Board

1. For a decision based on the Academic and Examination Regulations a student needs to file a request to the Examination Board at least three weeks before the (interim) examination will take place.
2. The Examination Board is able to differ from the regulations stipulated at the Academic and Examination Regulations in favour of the student's well being if the regulation constitutes to a disproportionate disadvantage or a gross injustice.

Article 30. Date of commencement

These regulations come into force on 1 September 2012

Programme Committee Recommendation, 30 March 2012

Endorsement by Joint Meeting, dated 5 June 2012

Adopted by the Faculty Board on 5 June 2012

Appendices

1 Degree programme objectives

A. Objective of the programme

The general objective of the Master programme is to impart to the student the knowledge, skills, insight and attitude required to operate as an independent professional within the field of international security, to cooperate with others and to conduct academic research.

The overall aim of the programme is to train students to acquire a high academic and intellectual level and to take an interdisciplinary approach to matters of international security. Students should have a thorough understanding of the core concepts of the disciplines of international law and international relations, which are relevant to studying problems of international security. They are expected to have an in-depth understanding of the interplay between international conflict and security law and international politics. Students should be able to reach an academic level of intellectual analysis and have the skills to autonomously conduct research. They should be able to use their intellectual and analytical skills in a professional environment.

B. Final Attainment Levels

The student graduating with a Master's degree will have the following knowledge and understanding:

1. International conflict and security law, including jus ad bellum, jus in bello and jus post bellum;
2. Contemporary theories of international security, as developed in political science (especially IR theory);
3. The nature and development of contemporary armed conflicts;
4. The overlaps and differences between the legal and political science approaches to international security;
5. The interrelationship between international law and international politics in the area of international security;
6. The difficulties involved in the application of 'traditional' legal and political science concepts to contemporary armed conflicts.

C. Being capable of:

The student graduating with a Master's degree will have a capability to:

1. Identify and apply theoretical approaches from international law and political science;
2. Identify the differences and overlaps between the various methodologies used in law and political science;
3. Independently set up a legal argument in the area of international conflict and security law;
4. Independently apply research methods and interpret results;
5. Independently set up, carry out and report the result of research projects;
6. Critically reflect on research results and relating those results to theoretical debates within the selected domains.

D. Show evidence of:

The student graduating with a Master's degree will have a critical, creative and innovative attitude with regard to:

1. The way in which problems in the area of international conflict and security are framed in academic, legal and policy debates;
2. The existing legal framework in the field of international conflict and security;
3. Existing policy solutions in the field of international conflict and security;
4. Existing scientific theories in the area of international security;
5. Academic research as well as research results.

II. Curriculum

Composition of degree programme

The curriculum consists of the compulsory and optional components.

Article 1. Compulsory components

The programme consists of the following compulsory components with a study load of 48 EC.

Programme Components	EC
<i>Compulsory Components</i>	<i>48</i>
International Humanitarian Law	6
Master's thesis	18
Security Studies	6
The Changing Nature of War	12
The Politics of International Criminal Justice	6

Article 2. Optional components

1. In addition to the compulsory components in the degree programme, students can choose one or more optional components with a minimum study load of 12 EC.
2. The optional components which can be selected are listed below.
3. If a student wishes to meet the requirements of the optional components by taking (an) other component(s) relevant to the overall degree programme at the faculty of law or a different faculty or university (Dutch or foreign), prior approval is required from the Programme Board and Examination Board.

Programme Components	EC
<i>Optional Components</i>	<i>12</i>
Corporations and International Crimes	6
Expert Course	3
Governance of Security and Policing	6
Human Rights Protection in Europe	6
International Criminal Courts and Tribunals	6
International Law Clinic	6
Perpetrators and Bystanders	6
Philosophy of International Law	6
Political Science Research	6
Politics of International Law	6
Public International Law	6
Public International Law (selected topics)	6
Selected issues in: International Security	6
Selected issues in: Transnational Political Economy	6
Theoretical Orientation on Human Security	6

/// Transition regulations

1. Students who have started the programme in 2011-2012 or earlier can complete the old programme for one more year. The deadline of the old programmes is the 31st of August, 2013.
2. If the student has not completed the programme before that time, the student will have to complete the master with the new components. The old components can be put on the degree as extracurricular components. If the old components return in the new programme the student can use them there.
3. In this scheme you will find the correspondent courses for finishing the old programme next year.

Course programme 2012-2013	Courses old programmes
Security studies	International security
Research Paper of Human Security (until 1 January 2013)	Human security

IV Registration periods for courses and exams

Period 1/semester 1: Registration closes three weeks after the start of the academic year;
Other periods/semester 2: Registration closes four weeks before the start of the period/semester;

The registration process starts once the timetables for that semester have been published (June/December).

In all cases, the registration deadline for educational activities is 23:59 on a Monday evening. For example: registration for a course in period 4 (starting date: Monday 29/10/12) closes at 23:59 on Monday 01/10/12.

Registration period for exams (or exam resits)

Students registering for educational activities will automatically be registered for the first exam opportunity, provided that the exam in question has already been scheduled; Registration for an exam (or exam resit) closes two weeks before the date of the exam (or exam resit). The registration deadline for an exam (or exam resit) depends on the day on which the exam is to be held. For example: registration for an exam that is to be held on Thursday 20/12/2012 will close at 00:00 on Friday 06/12/2012.

Registration period for internships, theses, and fieldwork

For details, see the Study Guide.

Cancellation period for courses and exams for which you have registered

The period allowed for deregistration is the same as for registration;

If a student does not take the exam and has not deregistered, a result of "ns" (no show) will be recorded.

V Late registration

Students can still register for exams and educational activities after the registration deadline has passed (provided that this can be processed in the time available), by paying administration costs via the Educational Office. The regulation for late registration is:

After the registration deadline has passed but before the education period itself begins, students can register via the Educational Office, (provided that this can be processed in the time available). In some cases, registration is possible during the first week of the education period. Please contact the Educational Office for further information. To be sure of participation, please register at VUnet in time.

Once the registration deadline at VUnet for exams or re-sits has passed, it is also not permitted to register via the Educational Office.

Students who did not register for exams or re-sits, can still sit for the exam provided the faculty gives permission (dependent on various factors). The obtained result can only be registered by the Educational Office after payment of the administration costs. This is possible from the moment the results of the exams have been published till two months after the exam. To be sure of participation, please register at VUnet in time.

Administration costs

The administration costs is a flat rate fee per course (i.e. 25 euros for all of the activities in that course). The faculty's Education Office or student services desk may not accept fees of more than 50 euros at any given time. For example: you want to register for two courses and one exam, but their registration periods have closed. The fee is 50 euros;

Whatever the case, this fee must be paid before registration can proceed. Even if students feel that there were justifiable reasons for their failure to register for specific activities in good time. Students may submit written requests for exemption to the Faculty Board by the form Refund Administration costs. In such cases, the Faculty Board's decision is binding. The form is available at desk of the education offices.