

# **TEACHING AND EXAMINATION REGULATIONS 2026-2027**

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To make the text easier to read, only the neutral gender form is used. The provisions on (prospective) students do, of course, apply without any gender distinction.

The faculty additions of the faculty of Social Sciences & Solvay Business School are indicated in blue.

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## **PART I. – Scope, abbreviations and definitions, and general provisions**

### **CHAPTER I. Scope**

#### **Article 1 (scope)**

The Teaching and Examination Regulations apply to all bachelor's programmes, master's programmes (initial master's programmes and advanced master's programmes), preparatory programmes, bridging programmes, postgraduate programmes and micro-credentials type 1 and type 2.

For guest students whose principal enrolment is at another educational institution, these regulations apply insofar as they are applicable to their situation or have explicitly been declared applicable in whole or in part.

The doctoral programme and obtaining a PhD degree are subject to specific regulations approved by the Academic Council.

Study programmes organised at inter-university level may derogate from the provisions set out in these regulations.

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

#### **Article 2 (abbreviations)**

For the purposes of these regulations, the following abbreviations apply:

**ACTO:** Academic Centre for Language Education;

**BEV:** Paid educational leave;

**DHO:** Higher Education Database;

**EEA:** European Economic Area;

**EVC:** Previously acquired competencies;

**EVK:** Previously acquired qualifications;

**IES:** Institute for European Studies;

**IRMO:** International Relations Office;

**MILO:** Multidisciplinary Institute for Teacher Education;

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

**OWSA:** Education and Student Administration;

**VLIR:** Flemish Interuniversity Council;

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

**VUB:** Vrije Universiteit Brussel;

**VOV:** Flemish Training Leave;

**WPO:** Seminars, practicals and exercises.

### **Article 3 (definition)**

For the purposes of these regulations, the following definitions apply:

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

**Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations:** regulations drawn up by the relevant faculty containing the provisions supplementary to the Central Teaching and Examination Regulations. For programmes organised by MILO, this concerns the MILO Supplementary Teaching and Examination Regulations; for programmes organised by the IES, this concerns the IES Supplementary Teaching and Examination Regulations;

**Academic year:** a period of one year that begins on 1 September at the earliest and on 1 October at the latest and ends on the day before the start of the next academic year; in exceptional circumstances, the fixed duration of one year may be derogated from if the University Board of Governors decides to either bring forward or postpone the start of the academic year;

**Proficiency test:** the examination of a person's competencies, prior to issuing a certificate of proficiency;

**Scholarship students:** Students who are entitled to a study grant from the Flemish Government; Students who wish to obtain a recognised status that has to be assessed and certified by VUB as part of an application for a Flemish study grant can consult the conditions and procedure applicable to the granting of this status on the VUB website (<https://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/praktische-info-voor-studenten/hoeveel-kost-studeren/financiele-steun/studietoelage-van-de-vlaamse-overheid>). This concerns the following categories:

- Elite sports;
- Professional arts practice;
- Functional impairment;
- Working students;
- Caregivers;
- Students without a secondary education diploma obtained in Dutch;
- Students with exceptional circumstances, with special permission;
- Students for whom the continuity requirement, curriculum structure or organisation of the academic year has an impact on study planning;

- Students for whom it is impossible to take at least 27 credits at the start of the second semester;
- Students in a preparatory or bridging programme with a standard study path of fewer than 54 credits.

#### **Scholarship students:**

- Students who are not entitled to a study grant from the Flemish Government because of the study conditions, but who do meet the financial and nationality conditions referred to in Article I.3 (14) (b) or (c) of the Higher Education Code. However, this does not apply to advanced academic programmes (advanced master's programme and postgraduate programme) or to students who are enrolled on the basis of an examination contract;
- Scholarships within the framework of a Master Mind Scholarship - Fellowship Programme for Excellent Students initiated by the Flemish Government.

**Certificate of Proficiency:** proof or registration indicating that a student has acquired certain competencies on the basis of EVCs or EVKs;

#### **Quasi-scholarship students:**

- Students who satisfy the nationality conditions referred to in Article I.3, point 16 of the Higher Education Code, and who are not entitled to a study grant from the Flemish Government, but whose reference income is no more than €3,984.00 (amount for the 2025-2026 academic year) above the maximum limit for entitlement to a study grant;
- Students who satisfy the nationality conditions referred to in Article I.3, point 16 of the Higher Education Code, and who are not entitled to a study grant from the Flemish Government because the cadastral income forms too large a share of the joint taxable income.

**Pre-exam study week:** period, prior to the examination period, in which - subject to the exception provided for in Article 8, § 4 - no examinations or other forms of evaluation take place and no lectures are given. It is the period in which students are given time to prepare for exams;

#### **BRUFACE master's programmes:** Brussels Faculty of Engineering masters

The English-language master's programmes jointly organised by Vrije Universiteit Brussel and the Université Libre de Bruxelles and the Dutch-language variants of these master's programmes organised by Vrije Universiteit Brussel:

- Master of Science in Architectural Engineering;
- Master of Science in de ingenieurswetenschappen: architectuur;
- Master of Science in Civil Engineering;
- Master of Science in de ingenieurswetenschappen: bouwkunde;
- Master of Science in Electromechanical Engineering;
- Master of Science in de ingenieurswetenschappen: werktuigkunde-elektrotechniek;
- Master of Science in Chemical and Materials Engineering;

- Master of Science in de ingenieurswetenschappen: chemie en materialen;
- Master of Science in Electrical Engineering;
- Master of Science in de Ingenieurswetenschappen: elektronica en informatietechnologie.

**Cali:** Campus Lifecycle, the student information system;

**Credit certificate:** recognition of the fact that a student has acquired the competencies associated with a course unit, as evidenced by an examination. This recognition is recorded in a document or registry. The acquired ECTS credits, associated with the relevant course unit, are referred to as “credits”;

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

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

**Threshold package:** the course units that a student takes when they first enrol in a bachelor's programme. This package of course units must be completed in threshold year 2;

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

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

**ECTS credit:** an international unit accepted within the Flemish Community that corresponds to at least 25 and at most 30 hours of prescribed teaching, learning and evaluation activities and which expresses the study load of each programme or course unit;

**First examination session:** comprises a first examination period (weeks 17 to 20) and a second examination period (weeks 38 to 42) in which the student avails themselves of their first or, where applicable, only exam opportunity. The first examination session concludes with a deliberation and electronic announcement of the results;

**Enabel:** Belgian development agency for the implementation and coordination of international development policy for Belgium;

**EVC:** a previously acquired competence, i.e. the totality of knowledge, insight, skills and attitudes acquired through learning processes but not attested by a study certificate;

**EVK:** a previously acquired qualification, i.e. any domestic or foreign study certificate, insofar as it does not concern a credit certificate obtained within the institution and study programme in which the student wishes the attested qualification to be recognised;

**Exam:** any evaluation of the extent to which a student has acquired the competencies related to the course unit.

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

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

**Examination period:** the period in which examinations are taken;

**Examination schedule:** determination of the time and place of examinations in a particular examination period for each student;

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

**Weighted point deficit (GPT):** the weighted points deficit is calculated per course unit by multiplying the deficit of an exam mark (= number of points lower than 10/20) by the number of ECTS credits for that course unit.

For a student who obtains one or more deficits, the total weighted points deficit obtained is calculated as the sum of the weighted points deficits of the course units taken.

**Degree:** designation of bachelor, master or doctor granted at the end of a study programme or after obtaining a doctorate with the award of a diploma;

**Individual Study Path:** a study path for a particular student defining specific conditions in relation to study load, deliberation and study progress monitoring;

**Full-year course unit:** course unit organised over two semesters. For full-year course units, the examination is organised in the examination period following the second semester, with the exception of preliminary examinations;

**Prospective student:** any person who applies for enrolment at VUB;

**Prospective refugee:** any person whose application for international protection in Belgium is still under consideration and who is in possession of a valid certificate of matriculation and the accompanying annex 26;

**Qualification:** a certificate or diploma awarded after successfully completing a formal education or training programme;

**Qualification of a degree:** addendum referring to the completed study programme or, in the case of a doctorate, to a field of study;

**Learning account:** the total package of ECTS credits that a student can use throughout their studies to enrol in an initial bachelor's or master's programme under a diploma contract or for a course unit under a credit contract and that can evolve according to the number of ECTS credits for which the student enrolls and which they acquire;

**Learning outcomes:** learning outcomes specify what a student is expected to know, understand, and be able to do when a course module is completed, and how that knowledge can be demonstrated;

**Lecture-free week:** period in which no examinations, lectures or other teaching activities take place, subject to the faculties being able to organise catch-up examinations during this week as part of a request for rescheduling;

**Master's thesis:** the final dissertation completing a master's programme. With this, the student displays their analytical and synthesis skills, or independent problem-solving ability at an academic level, or the capacity for artistic creation. The thesis reflects the student's general critical-reflective attitude or research-oriented mindset.

**Micro-credential:** a type of training in a lifelong learning programme resulting in proof of learning outcomes achieved through a learning experience of limited scope. The learning outcomes are evaluated on the basis of transparent standards. The verification of this is set out in a certified document stating the name of the holder, the learning outcomes achieved, the assessment method, the awarding authority and, where applicable, the level within the qualification framework and the ECTS credits earned. Micro-credentials are owned by the learner, are shareable and portable, and can be combined to form wider credentials or qualifications. They are supported by quality assurance according to agreed standards in the sector. There are four types of micro-credentials, though these can, of course, also be combined:

1. Micro-credentials composed of one or more existing course units from the bachelor's and/or master's programmes.
2. Micro-credentials composed of one or more existing course units from the bachelor's and/or master's programmes, supplemented by additional lifelong learning programmes.
3. Micro-credentials composed of new components with content from the bachelor's and/or master's programmes.
4. Micro-credentials composed of new content or content from existing lifelong learning initiatives.

The Teaching and Examination Regulations apply to the first two types of micro-credentials;

**Standard study path:** a study path in a specific study programme approved by the Education Council, setting out general terms and conditions regarding study load, deliberation and study progress monitoring;

**Education and Student Administration** (hereinafter referred to as OWSA): central service unit under the responsibility of the Vice-Rector for Education and Student Affairs, which manages the entire administration of all students throughout their studies;

**Welcome week:** period in which no regular exams, lectures or other educational activities take place, but in which (mandatory) reception and preparation activities and pre-tests are held;

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

**Programme description:** a description of a study programme specifying the formal and substantive details as set out in article 16 of these regulations, established prior to the start of the enrolment period;

**Course unit:** a defined set of education, learning and evaluation activities aimed at acquiring well-defined competencies in terms of knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes;

**Course unit description:** a description of a course unit specifying the formal and substantive details as set out in article 17 of these regulations, established prior to the start of the enrolment period. The course unit description is submitted to the competent faculty authority for approval;

**Continuing education:** a programme organised by the university itself or collectively agreed upon, in the framework of supplementary education.

**Postgraduate programme:** a programme with a study load of at least 20 ECTS credits in the context of further professional education, aimed at broadening or consolidating the competencies acquired on completion of a bachelor's or master's programme;

**Reflex students:** students who are eligible for reasonable flexibility measures, in accordance with Article 93 and Article 108 of these regulations;

**Bridging programme:** a programme that can be imposed on a student who wishes to enrol in a master's programme on the basis of a bachelor's degree awarded in professional higher education. This programme is intended to provide the general scientific competencies and basic scientific-disciplinary knowledge referred to in Article II.141, 3° of the Higher Education Code;

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

**Semester course unit:** course unit organised within one semester. For semester course units, the exam is organised in the examination period following the semester in which the course unit was taught;

**SIMON:** SIMON stands for Study skills and InterestMONitor and has two main applications. On the one hand, SIMON serves as a study choice tool. Via [www.vraaghet aansimon.be](http://www.vraaghet aansimon.be), prospective students can find out which academic and professional programmes match their interests and capabilities. On the other hand, 'SIMON zegt' at VUB is used as a follow-up instrument for students in the first year of a bachelor's programme to receive targeted and repeated study advice at fixed times;

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

**Positioning test:** an institution-neutral test set up by the Flemish Government to gauge basic knowledge (and skills) in mathematics and/or sciences in relation to the starting level of the relevant bachelor's programme. For specific courses, taking a positioning test is a prerequisite for enrolment;

**Students with disabilities:** students with long-term physical, mental or sensory impairments that can prevent them from participating fully, effectively and on an equal footing with other students in higher education when interacting with various barriers;

**Study Guidance:** central service unit under the responsibility of the Vice-Rector for Education and Student Affairs that provides student counselling for all students throughout their entire study programme; the staff (study advisors and student psychologists), in cooperation with study programmes and faculties, strive to ensure the most comprehensive range of student counselling possible, with the aim of enhancing students' well-being and success in their studies, taking the individual needs of each student into account;

**Proof of study:** document indicating that a formal learning path, whether or not within education, has been successfully completed;

**Study contract:** contract concluded between the university and the student, opting for a specific objective (diploma, credit or examination contract) and a specific study programme (standard or individual study path);

**Tuition fee:** the amount to be paid by the student for taking part in the educational activities and/or examinations;

**Study load:** the number of ECTS credits assigned to a course unit or study programme;

**Study path:** the way in which the student can follow the study programme;

**Preliminary examination:** a written evaluation of part of the material of a full-year course unit of the bachelor's programme, or a bridging or preparatory programme, taking place in the first examination period of the first exam session;

**Tolerated fail grade:** a result obtained after the examination for a course unit in which a student does not obtain a credit certificate, but on the basis of which the cumulative conditions for passing the first year of the full-time standard path of the bachelor's programme (Article 139), or for the entirety of the study programme (Article 143), are met;

**Admission agreement:** agreement between the university's governing body and the student, whereby the latter indicates that they accept the general terms and conditions as set out in the Teaching and Examination Regulations, among other things;

**Second exam session:** comprises one examination period (weeks 49 to 52) during which students avail themselves of their second exam opportunity if this is provided for. The second exam session concludes with a deliberation and electronic announcement of the results;

**Continuity requirement:** the rules determined by the university governing body with regard to pursuing or passing a course unit or study programme before a student can take an exam for another course unit or study programme;

**Full-time study programme:** study programme that enables the student to complete a study programme of at least 54 ECTS credits per academic year;

**Preparatory programme:** a programme that can be imposed on a prospective student with an academic background who does not have a diploma that directly grants admission to the study programme for which they wish to enrol. The programme is aimed at imparting the missing competencies associated with the diploma that would enable admission to be granted directly. If more than one diploma would enable admission to be granted directly, this then concerns jointly lacking competencies;

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

### **CHAPTER III. – General provisions**

#### **Article 4 (due dates and indicative periods)**

For the purposes of these regulations, the following rules concerning time limits shall apply. The periods within which a student must take appropriate action shall be regarded as definitive deadlines, unless specified otherwise.

#### **Article 5 (requests addressed to the Dean)**

Except for cases where these regulations stipulate that the electronic application form must be used, all requests that have to be addressed to the Dean in accordance with these regulations must be submitted via the email address stated in the supplementary faculty provisions to this article.

#### **Additional faculty regulations to Article 5**

Requests addressed to the dean should be submitted via [faces@vub.be](mailto:faces@vub.be).

#### **Article 6 (modalities for educational activities and communication)**

**§ 1.** Audiovisual recording of educational activities (including non-periodic evaluation) and projected teaching materials is not permitted and is deemed to constitute a disruption to educational teaching activities, unless a specific agreement has been made with the lecturer concerned in this regard. The students must clearly state in this respect what, how, when and for what purpose such recording is to be carried out. The recorded material may not be used for purposes other than those for which the lecturer concerned has given permission. If a student records educational activities without taking these agreements into account, the recording must be destroyed on demand.

**§ 2.** VUB reserves the right to include lectures in the form of distance learning, among other things, and to later make these available to the students and teaching staff concerned via the electronic learning platform and/or the electronic video platform for educational purposes. When students attend these lectures, they automatically give their consent to appear as portrayed in the recordings for distribution within the electronic learning platform. At the start of the lectures, students are aware of the fact that the lecture will be recorded. Under no circumstances may students distribute or edit these recordings, under penalty of disciplinary sanctions as stipulated in the 'Order and Disciplinary Regulations for students of Vrije Universiteit Brussel'.

**§ 3.** Under no circumstances may students reproduce or distribute learning or examination materials (exercises, slides, exam questions, etc.) for profit, without the consent of the lecturer in charge. A student who proceeds to do so despite the above, either in person or via third parties, will be liable to sanctions as set out in the 'Order and Disciplinary Regulations for Students of Vrije Universiteit Brussel'.

**§ 4.** All communication with the student in accordance with these regulations will take place exclusively via the VUB email address, unless specified otherwise.

**Article 7        (student card)**

**§ 1.** The student card is only valid if it contains a recent photo of the card holder.

**§ 2.** The use of the student card is on a strictly personal basis. Passing on the student card to other students or third parties is not permitted; any student who does this will be liable to disciplinary sanctions as set out in the 'Order and Disciplinary Regulations for students of Vrije Universiteit Brussel'.

## PART II. – Teaching regulations

### CHAPTER I. – Structure of the academic year

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

**§ 1.** An academic year shall be divided into two semesters, followed by the summer holiday and the second exam session:

- Week 1: welcome week
- Weeks 2 – 14: lecture weeks
- Weeks 15 – 16: winter holiday
- Weeks 17 – 20: first examination period - first examination session
- Week 21: lecture-free week and deliberation period for students in a graduation year who, in accordance with Article 133 of these regulations, have applied to graduate at the end of the first examination period of the first examination session
- Weeks 22 – 36: lecture weeks including 2 weeks' spring break
- Week 37: Pre-examen study week
- Weeks 38 – 42: second examination period - first examination session and deliberation period  
(at least three weeks are provided for exams)  
closure of first examination session for all faculties
- Weeks 43 – 48: summer holiday
- Weeks 49 – 52: examination period and deliberation period - second examination session  
(at least three weeks are provided for exams)

**§ 2.** The academic calendar is determined annually by the Academic Council before the start of the academic year and no later than 1 November.

**§ 3.** For course units taken at other institutions, examinations may be organised in accordance with the academic calendar of those institutions.

**§ 4.** Deviations from the academic calendar can be provided for in the supplementary faculty provisions.

#### Additional faculty regulations to Article 8, §4

For organizational reasons, both oral and written examinations can be scheduled in the second half of the week prior to the second examination period.

For course units of the second semester of the Master's programme in Bedrijfskunde and the Master's programme in Management, an additional examination session in the first examination period is scheduled to take place in the two weeks following spring break.

## **CHAPTER II. – Rules concerning the structure of study programmes**

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

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

The range of study programmes offered by VUB comprises:

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

#### **Article 10 (publication of the range of study programmes offered)**

With the exception of continuing education, the range of study programmes offered is defined and published before the start of the enrolment period.

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

An academic bachelor's programme has a study load of at least 180 ECTS credits. The study load is in principle a multiple of 60 ECTS credits.

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

A master's programme and an advanced master's programme have a study load of at least 60 ECTS credits. The study load is in principle a multiple of 30 ECTS credits.

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

A postgraduate programme has a minimum study load of at least 20 ECTS credits. If a student passes the postgraduate programme, they will receive a postgraduate certificate.

There is no set minimum study load for continuing education. Consequently, there is no obligation to express the study load of continuing education in terms of ECTS credits. Depending on the nature of the continuing education, this programme leads to an attestation, a certificate, or documentary proof of participation.

A micro-credential has a minimum study load of 3 ECTS credits and a maximum of 19 ECTS credits. If a student passes a micro-credential, they will receive a credit certificate.

#### **Article 14 (bridging programme)**

Holders of a professional bachelor's degree can move on to a master's programme provided that they pursue a bridging programme.

A bridging programme has a minimum study load of 45 ECTS credits and a maximum of 90 ECTS credits. On the basis of the course(s) previously attended by the student, a reduction in the study load is possible.

#### **Article 15 (preparatory programme)**

Holders of an academic bachelor's degree who do not have direct access to a particular master's programme may still be admitted provided that they follow and pass a preparatory programme. On the basis of the course(s) previously attended by the student, a reduction in the study load is possible.

### **Section 2: Study programme and course unit**

#### **Article 16 (programme description)**

**§ 1.** A programme description is drawn up for each study programme, containing at least the following elements:

1. Degree, qualification and specification of the study programme;
2. Study load expressed in ECTS credits;
3. Any majors, profiles and minors;
4. Language of instruction of the study programme;
5. Content and objectives of the study programme, the educational training programme, breakdown into course units;
6. Standard study path;
7. The continuity requirement for the course units and descriptions of study progress;
8. Entry requirements and learning outcomes;
9. Organisation in the form of a standard study path and/or individual study path;
10. Whether or not to set up a specific training path for working students;
11. Affiliations and follow-up study programmes.

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

**§ 3.** With regard to study programmes leading to the profession of doctor, general practitioner, pharmacist or architect, the study programme meets the requirements set out in European Directive 2005/36/EC when defining the study programme. The education regulations indicate compliance with the European directive.

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

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

1. Code, faculty and department responsible;
2. Title of the course unit;
3. Type of study programme to which the course unit primarily belongs;
4. Language of instruction;
5. Semester in which the course unit is organised or indication that it is a full-year course unit;
6. Study load of the course unit expressed in ECTS credits;
7. Enrolment requirements, including pre- and co-requisites;
8. The teaching methods associated with the course unit;
9. The lecturer (in charge) and other education providers;
10. Specific structure of the course unit set up for working students;
11. Indication of whether enrolment is or is not possible via an examination contract and, if so, what the specific requirements are regarding these students;
12. Learning outcomes;
13. Content of the course unit;
14. Examinations: exam form, how the exam mark/grade is determined, indication of whether or not there is a second exam opportunity. This information can be supplemented by the information provided on the learning platform before the start of the semester;
15. Study material;
16. Any additional costs associated with the course unit.

**§ 2.** If an internship, bachelor's thesis or master's thesis is not eligible for a credit contract, this will be stated in the course unit description.

**§ 3.** The course unit description is to be drafted in Dutch and English. If the course unit concerns the study of another language, the enacting provisions of the course unit description must always be drafted in Dutch.

## **Article 18 (course unit study load and study time)**

The study load of each course unit is expressed in whole ECTS credits. The minimum load of a course unit is 3 ECTS credits. An ECTS credit amounts to 25 - 30 hours of teaching and study activities or study time.

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

When developing a study programme, the curriculum structure guidelines must be followed.

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

#### **Article 20 (principle regarding administrative and teaching language)**

The administrative language and the language of instruction at VUB is Dutch. The principle that the language of instruction is Dutch may be derogated from in accordance with Article 21.

#### **Article 21 (course units in another language)**

In the initial bachelor's and master's programmes with Dutch as the language of instruction, the following course units can be organised in a language other than Dutch:

1. Course units that have a foreign language as their subject matter and which are taught in that language;
2. Course units taught by foreign-language guest professors;
3. Course units that, on the initiative of the student and with the consent of the university governing body, are attended at another institute of higher education;
4. Course units where the explicitly reasoned decision shows the added value for the students and the related professional field of practice and the functionality for the training programme.

In the cases referred to in article 21 (2) and (4), students may request to take the examination for the course unit in a language other than Dutch no later than one month before the start of the examination period concerned.

#### **Additional faculty regulations to Article 21**

Students who wish to exercise their right to take the exam in Dutch should send an email to the faculty secretariat ([faces@vub.be](mailto:faces@vub.be)).

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

**§ 1.** Subject to justification on the basis of added value for the student and the functionality of this for the study programme, the faculty may ask the Education Council to organise course units other than those described in Article 21 in a language of instruction other than Dutch. For the bachelor's programme, the organisation of courses in other languages is limited to 18.33% of the study load for the overall study programme. For the calculation of this percentage, the course units focusing on the study of a foreign language and the course units that the student attends at another institution can be disregarded.

**§ 2.** For the master's programme, the organisation of courses in other languages is limited to 50% of the study load for the overall study programme. For the calculation of this percentage, the course units focusing on the study of a foreign language and the course units that the student attends at another institution can be disregarded. The master's thesis and the internship are considered Dutch-language course units.

## **Article 23 (study programmes entirely in another language)**

**§ 1.** If the study programme has been specifically designed for foreign students or if the added value for the students and the related professional field of practice and the functionality for the study programme can be sufficiently demonstrated, initial bachelor's and master's programmes can be organised entirely in a language other than Dutch, provided that a full study programme is organised in Dutch within the Flemish Community.

**§ 2.** Within the Flemish Community, institutions can offer an equivalent initial bachelor's or master's programme jointly. All course units of such a jointly organised equivalent bachelor's or master's programme are attended by the students in a single location.

**§ 3.** By way of derogation from § 1, the obligation to set up a Dutch equivalent will cease to apply if:

- it concerns a study programme that, based on a prior decision by the Flemish Government, benefits from an exemption from the condition of equivalence;
- it concerns a study programme that has the International Course Programme status, or a study programme that has been selected in accordance with the provisions of a European programme for the promotion of international cooperation in higher education and in which a multi-diploma or joint diploma is a prerequisite;
- the foreign-language initial bachelor's or master's programme is jointly organised with an institution outside the Flemish Community and is validated by way of a joint diploma and if the expertise for the course units organised outside the Flemish Community is not available within the Flemish Community.

**§ 4.** The examinations are taken in the language in which the instruction takes place.

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

For advanced master's programmes, micro-credentials, postgraduate programmes and continuing education, the language of instruction can be freely determined. If the language of instruction is not Dutch, there is no obligation to establish a Dutch-language equivalent. The examinations are taken in the language of instruction of the study programme or in the language of instruction of the course unit if this differs from the language of instruction for the overall study programme.

## **Article 25 (language support measures)**

**§ 1.** Students who pursue a foreign-language initial bachelor's or master's programme or an initial bachelor's or master's programme with course units in another language can have their proficiency in that other language tested. More information in connection with the language tests organised at VUB can be found on the ACTO website (<https://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/alle-opleidingen/leer-een-nieuwe-taal/acto-taalopleidingen-voor-vub-studenten>).

**§ 2.** The institution provides initial bachelor's or master's programmes with course units in other languages or initial bachelor's or master's programmes in other languages in adapted facilities. These language support measures may include:

1. language course units (including language courses) offered within the package of mandatory course units or as a compulsory elective course unit;
2. language support measures integrated into the foreign-language course units. These language support measures provide for active coaching of the students and are clearly recognisable as such for the students in the course unit.

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

1. a consecutive master's programme, where the language support measures were included in the previous bachelor's programme;
2. a non-consecutive master's programme, where the language support measures were included in the preparatory programme or in the bridging programme.

**§ 4.** The institution provides a free, accessible and needs-based range of Dutch and foreign-language courses as well as language support measures.

### **CHAPTER III. – Admission requirements**

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

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

**§ 1.** The admission requirements listed below apply both to enrolment for study programmes, bridging and preparatory programmes as well as enrolment for course units. They apply notwithstanding the specific conditions that may also be imposed, and which are specified for each study, bridging or preparatory programme or course units contained in the programme description or the course unit description.

**§ 2.** A prospective student who wants to enrol for a study programme with a diploma contract and who enrolls for the relevant course at VUB for the first time should enrol via the registration application.

**§ 3.** Prospective students wishing to enrol under a credit contract should contact the Dean. Students must submit their application via the central registration application.

**§ 4.** Prospective students who want to enrol under an examination contract with a view to obtaining credits should contact the Dean. Students must submit their application via the central registration application.

**§ 5.** Enrolment that is inconsistent with the measures taken for the prospective student's study progress monitoring will be refused.

**§ 6.** Students who are in arrears with payment will be refused (re)enrolment in accordance with article 67, § 3.

**Article 27 (time of assessment of admission requirements)**

Whether a prospective student satisfies the admission requirements will be assessed at the time of enrolment.

**Section 2: Admission requirements - diploma**

**Subsection 1: Admission requirements for a bachelor's programme**

**Article 28 (general)**

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

- a secondary education diploma, awarded up to and including the 2024-2025 school year;
- a secondary education diploma, educational qualification level 4, awarded from the 2024-2025 school year;
- a secondary education diploma awarded by an adult education centre up to and including the 2025-2026 school year;
- a short-cycle higher education diploma with a full curriculum;
- a higher education diploma for social advancement, with the exception of the Pedagogical Proficiency Certificate;
- a graduate diploma or certificate awarded in the context of higher vocational education;
- a bachelor's or master's degree.

**§ 2.** A prospective student who has obtained a diploma or study certificate outside Flanders can also be admitted to a bachelor's programme:

- if such a diploma or study certificate has been recognised by the university as equivalent to one of the diplomas listed under § 1 by virtue of a legal standard or an international agreement;
- if such a diploma or study certificate has been recognised as equivalent by the Agency of the Flemish Community for Quality Assurance in Education and Training (National Academic Recognition Information Centre – Flanders, NARIC Vlaanderen);
- if such a diploma or study certificate has been recognised as equivalent by the Agency of the French Community (National Academic Recognition Information Centre - Le centre ENIC-Naric de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles).

These prospective students must apply in accordance with the procedure for enrolment on the basis of a foreign diploma, as set out in these regulations.

**§ 3.** If the prospective student is unable to submit a diploma, enrolment will only be possible in accordance with the special admission procedure stated in Article 29.

**§ 4.** If the prospective student submits a different diploma or study certificate, they must apply in accordance with the procedure for enrolment on the basis of a foreign diploma as set out in these regulations.

### **Article 28bis (SIMON)**

Students who start a bachelor's programme are required to fill in 'SIMON zegt'.

### **Article 29 (special admission procedure for those unable to submit a diploma)**

**§ 1.** A prospective student who cannot submit any of the diplomas as stated in the previous article may be permitted to take an aptitude test. In this regard, the student concerned may invoke humanitarian grounds, or medical, psychological or social reasons, or a general qualification level, merits or competencies. The student must submit a file to Student Guidance, compiled as specified below.

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

**§ 3.** The prospective student must have reached the age of 21 at the time of enrolment or must reach the age of 21 in the calendar year in which they apply for admission.

**§ 4.** Taking the aptitude test as part of this special admission procedure is only possible once per academic year.

**§ 5.** Prospective students who have taken a specific 'exam d'admission aux études universitaires de premier cycle' at a university in the French Community and can submit an accompanying certificate are exempted from the aptitude test.

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

**§ 1.** The file submitted on humanitarian grounds must contain the following documents:

- Proof of identity;
- Proof that the prospective student is a recognised refugee, has additional protection status, or the application for this is still being examined or processed;
- Declaration that they do not hold the required diploma;
- Overview of the study path already followed, with supporting documents where possible.

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

- Proof of identity;
- Evidence in support of the medical, psychological or social grounds invoked;
- Overview of the study path already followed, with supporting documents;
- Copy of the last diploma or certificate of secondary education obtained.

**§ 3.** The file submitted on the basis of the general qualification level, merits or competencies must contain the following documents:

- Proof of identity;
- Overview and proof of work experience;
- Overview of the study path already followed, with supporting documents;
- Copy of the last diploma or certificate of secondary education obtained.

**§ 4.** Opinions and recommendations from the university service units, e.g. student counselling, medical service, etc., can be included in the file.

**§ 5.** The Vice-Rector for Education and Student Affairs decides whether the file is complete. If the decision is positive, the prospective student will be notified that they can take the aptitude test.

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

**§ 1.** After receiving the assessment of the aptitude test, the Vice-Rector for Education and Student Affairs decides whether the prospective student may enrol in the degree course, programme or course units they wish to enrol for. If the aptitude test shows that the prospective student does not attain the required level compared with the standard group of secondary school-leavers, the student concerned will not be admitted.

**§ 2.** The Vice-Rector for Education and Student Affairs will inform the prospective student of the decision taken within one month of receiving the assessment of the aptitude test. The validity period in the event of a positive result is five years.

### **Article 32 (admission to the medical study programme and to advanced training in dentistry and oral and maxillofacial surgery)**

**§ 1.** Anyone wishing to enrol for a bachelor's programme in the field of medicine or for course units of such a bachelor's programme must have achieved a high ranking beforehand on the basis of the comparative doctor's entrance examination as stipulated by law.

**§ 2.** A student enrolled for the master's programme in dentistry who at the same time wishes to enrol for the basic course in medicine at VUB in order to commence the postgraduate course in stomatology/oral and maxillofacial surgery may submit an application to the Dean of the Faculty

of Medicine and Pharmacy for exemption from the entrance examination for the complementary basic course.

The specific procedure is set out in the Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations.

### **Article 33 (admission to certain bachelor's programmes: positioning test)**

Anyone wishing to enrol for the bachelor's programme in bioscience engineering, biomedical sciences, chemistry, pharmaceutical sciences, physics and astronomy, geography, industrial sciences, engineering: civil engineer, engineering: architecture or mathematics and data science must, notwithstanding the admission conditions set out in Article 28 and Article 29, have taken part in a positioning test or a non-mandatory level test as stipulated in the cross-institutional regulations.

A student who does not achieve the pre-determined pass mark for the positioning test/level test must attend a mandatory remedial course. This remedial course can be taken on an extracurricular basis before the start of the academic year (digitally or via a preparatory course) or on an intracurricular basis in the first year of the bachelor's programme. The remedial course has a load within the range of one to three ECTS credits. Students entering the second semester can be required to take extracurricular remedial courses. If a student has not attended the mandatory remedial course required of them, the institution can take this into account in its deliberation.

If the mandatory remedial course is organised no later than in week seven of the academic year, the lecturer in charge can stipulate in the course unit description that students who do not attend this remedial course will be given a second chance in the first examination period of the first examination session or in the second examination session. Students will not be offered a third chance.

### **Article 34 (exemption from mandatory participation in the positioning test)**

In the event of not taking part in a positioning test or a non-mandatory level test as stipulated in the aforementioned Article 33, the student may, by way of a well-reasoned application, ask the Exemptions Committee for level tests to nevertheless admit them to the relevant study programme. The student must submit such a well-reasoned application by 23 September at the latest. The application will be dealt with by the Exemptions Committee, comprising the Dean, a member of the independent academic staff, a study programme supervisor and a 'central study advisor for level tests'.

Where appropriate, the student may be required to attend a remedial course in the first year of the bachelor's programme.

The reasoned request to the Exemptions Committee for level tests is to be made via the application form 'exemption from mandatory participation in a positioning/level test', which is available at <https://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/inschrijven-aan-de-vub/toelatingsexamen-en-ijkingstoetsen/ijkingstoetsen>.

### **Article 34bis (exemption from the mandatory remedial course within the framework of the positioning test)**

In order to be exempted from the mandatory remedial course referred to in the aforementioned Article 33, the student may submit a well-reasoned application to the Exemptions Committee for level tests. The application will be dealt with by the Exemptions Committee, comprising the Dean, a member of the independent academic staff, a study programme supervisor and a 'central study advisor for level tests'. The student must submit such a well-reasoned application by 8 October at the latest.

The reasoned request to the Exemptions Committee for level tests is to be made via the application form 'exemption from the mandatory remedial course', which is available at <https://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/inschrijven-aan-de-vub/toelatingsexamen-en-ijskingstoetsen/ijskingstoetsen>.

### **Subsection 2: Admission requirements for a master's programme**

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

**§ 1.** For enrolment in a master's programme (initial master's programme, not an advanced master's programme), the prospective student must have obtained an academic bachelor's degree.

**§ 2.** For each master's programme, at least one academic bachelor's degree is stipulated as a general condition for admission to the master's programme. Admission to a master's programme may be restricted to an academic bachelor's programme with specific programme characteristics. For similar bachelor's programmes followed at another educational institution, the content of the master's programme may vary according to the degree of similarity of content, without the study load being adjusted. A university and one or more colleges of higher education may jointly offer master's programmes within an association, with a bachelor's degree in higher vocational education stipulated as a general condition for admission.

**§ 3.** Those who have obtained another academic bachelor's degree may be admitted if they have passed a preparatory programme defined for this purpose.

**§ 4.** Those who have obtained a professional bachelor's degree will be admitted if they have passed a bridging programme defined for this purpose.

**§ 5.** Derogations from this general rule are included in the following articles.

### **Article 36 (special admission procedure for those unable to submit a diploma)**

**§ 1.** A prospective student who has obtained an academic bachelor's degree but cannot submit it for humanitarian reasons may be permitted to take a specific test that gauges the student's required prior knowledge and is tailored to the initial competencies of the master's programme concerned. This test is drawn up by the Education Council responsible for the master's programme in which the prospective student wishes to enrol. To this end, the person concerned should address their reasoned application to the Vice-Rector for Education and Student Affairs. They should also submit a file, compiled as set out below. On the basis of the prospective student's file, the Education Council may decide that the applicant is exempt from the admission test referred to above. In doing so, the prospective student should demonstrate that they have the necessary initial competencies.

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

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

**§ 1.** The submitted file must contain the following documents:

- Copy of identity card;
- Proof that the prospective student is a recognised refugee, has additional protection status, or the application for this is still being examined or processed;
- Declaration that they do not hold the required diploma;
- Overview of the study path already followed, with supporting documents where possible.

**§ 2.** At the request of the Vice-Rector for Education and Student Affairs, VUB service departments, such as student counselling, the medical service, etc., can invite the student and provide advice to enable them to complete their file.

**§ 3.** The Vice-Rector for Education and Student Affairs will inform the prospective student of the decision they have taken within one month of receiving the application. If the decision is positive, the prospective student will immediately be informed that they can attend the relevant test.

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

**§ 1.** The specific test is drawn up and administered by the Education Council with responsibility for the master's programme in which the prospective student wishes to enrol.

**§ 2.** Based on the prospective student's file, the Education Council may decide to exempt them from the specific test.

**§ 3.** The Education Council will inform the Vice-Rector for Education and Student Affairs without delay of the decision to grant an exemption or with regard to whether or not this specific test has been passed.

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

The Vice-Rector for Education and Student Affairs will inform the prospective student of the decision taken within one month of receiving the assessment from the Education Council.

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

**§ 1.** For enrolment in an advanced master's programme, the student must have obtained a master's degree. In addition, permission to enrol can be made dependent on an aptitude test. Where appropriate, attendance of a preparatory programme can be required. Admission to an advanced master's programme may be restricted to a master's programme with specific programme characteristics. For similar master's programmes followed at another educational institution, the content of the advanced master's programme may vary according to the degree of similarity of content, without the study load being adjusted.

**§ 2.** Permission to enrol in the advanced master's programme in specialist medicine is subject to an aptitude test, in which a quantitative limitation may be determined for each specialisation, depending on the programme capacity available. The specific modalities are set out in a separate set of regulations.

Permission to enrol in the advanced master's programme in general medical practice is subject to an aptitude test.

In order to be able to take the advanced master's programme in specialist medicine and the advanced master's programme in general medical practice, students must be authorised to practice medicine in accordance with the legal provisions applying in Belgium.

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

**§ 1.** The further enrolment conditions for each area of study have been established by MILO. This also applies to the terms and conditions regarding language proficiency. These terms & conditions can be found per programme at [https://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/alle-opleidingen/bachelor-en-masteropleidingen-aan-de-vub?term=education&program\\_type=uuid=6b819c2c-b70b-4e2c-a153-6efa6d26cb1f](https://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/alle-opleidingen/bachelor-en-masteropleidingen-aan-de-vub?term=education&program_type=uuid=6b819c2c-b70b-4e2c-a153-6efa6d26cb1f).

**§ 2.** The diploma for the shortened master's programme in education can only be awarded if the diploma for the relevant master's programme has been obtained.

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

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

§ 1. A student who was enrolled in a bachelor's programme and has not yet obtained the bachelor's degree required for admission to a subsequent master's programme may enrol in this master's programme at the same time, subject to the conditions set out below. However, the restrictions set out in Article 59 and Article 88, § 3, § 8 and § 9 also apply.

The above rule also applies to inter-university combined enrolments, both at home and abroad.

§ 2. A student who needs a maximum of 44 ECTS credits to obtain a bachelor's degree can enrol in a subsequent master's programme or for course units of that master's programme in accordance with the applicable continuity requirement rules.

§ 3. The additional faculty regulations may provide that students wishing to avail themselves of the possibility of combined enrolment referred to in this article are obliged to consult with the study programme supervisor prior to enrolment.

§ 4. The master's degree can only be awarded and is only valid if the required bachelor's degree has been obtained.

#### **Article 43 (other combinations)**

§ 1. The same rules as those referred to under the previous article apply equally to a student who enrolled in a bridging or preparatory programme and has not yet obtained the associated ECTS credits. Such a student can already enrol for the subsequent master's programme, under the conditions stated in that article.

§ 2. The same rules as stated in the previous article also apply analogously to students who have not yet obtained the master's degree required for admission to an advanced master's programme.

### **Section 3: Language proficiency**

#### **Subsection 1: Language proficiency requirements**

#### **Article 44 (language of instruction)**

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

§ 2. A student who enrolls for a study programme, a programme or a course unit must have a command of the language in which this education is provided at an academic level. How language proficiency is to be demonstrated is set out in greater detail in the following provisions.

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

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

Students shall provide proof of their knowledge of the language of instruction at the time of enrolment.

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

**§ 1.** The prospective student is deemed to have provided proof of sufficient knowledge of Dutch as a language of instruction if one of the following conditions is met:

1. they have obtained a secondary or higher education diploma with Dutch as the language of instruction;
2. they have successfully completed at least one academic year in secondary education with Dutch as the language of instruction;
3. they have successfully completed course units with a total of at least 60 ECTS credits in higher education with Dutch as the language of instruction;
4. they have achieved a favourable ranking for the medical or dentistry entrance examination organised by the Flemish Government;
5. they have obtained a higher education certificate for social advancement in Dutch;
6. they have passed the Dutch State Examination in Dutch as a Second Language (NT2), Programme II;
7. they have passed a test devised in accordance with the European reference framework level B2, in particular the Dutch as a Foreign Language Certificate (CNaVT) - 'Educatief Startbekwaam', (up to and including 2014: the Dutch Language Skills Profile for Higher Education (PTHO)), the Inter-university Language Test in Dutch for Speakers of Other Languages (ITNA - CEFR B2).

The attestations and certificates of language tests may not be more than five years old when enrolling for the first time.

**§ 2.** Each faculty may require a higher level of language proficiency for a particular study programme. This is stated in the programme description.

**§ 3.** In the case of courses for which MILO is responsible, specific language requirements may be imposed in accordance with Article 41, § 1.

**§ 4.** The chairperson of the Education Council may also grant a derogation from the requirements for language proficiency on the basis of the overall assessment of the particular case.

**§ 5.** Each faculty may decide for a postgraduate or advanced master's programme that the students do not have to provide proof of their knowledge of the language of instruction when enrolling. This is stated in the programme description.

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

**§ 1.** The prospective student is deemed to have provided proof of sufficient knowledge of English as a language of instruction if one of the following conditions is met:

1. they have obtained a secondary education diploma with English as their sole language of instruction, with the exception of any language subjects;
2. they have obtained a degree in higher education with English as the sole language of instruction;
3. they have successfully completed secondary education organised by (an educational institution recognised by) the Flemish, French-speaking or German-speaking Community;
4. they have passed one of the following language tests in accordance with the European Framework of Reference for Languages with minimum level B2:
  - TOEFL iBT with the following score requirements:
    - For exams taken before 21 January 2026: a minimum of 79, with a minimum sub-score of 18 for each of the four components.
    - for exams taken on or after 21 January 2026: a minimum of 4.5, with a minimum sub-score of 4 for each of the four components.
    - MyBestTM scores are not accepted;
  - IELTS with the following minimum level: academic module 6.5, with a minimum sub-score of 6.0 in each of the 4 components;
  - ITACE with the following minimum level: B2 in at least 4 of the 5 components of the ITACE test;
  - Cambridge English Qualification with the following minimum level: B2 First (FCE) with a minimum score of 170.

The attestations and certificates of (online) language tests may not be more than five years old when enrolling for the first time.

**§ 2.** Each faculty may require a higher level of language proficiency for a particular study programme. This is stated in the programme description.

**§ 3.** The chairperson of the Education Council may also grant a derogation from the requirements for language proficiency on the basis of the overall assessment of the particular case.

**§ 4.** Each faculty may decide for a postgraduate or advanced master's programme that the students do not have to provide proof of their knowledge of the language of instruction when enrolling. This is stated in the programme description.

## **Article 48 (language test)**

**§ 1.** ACTO can administer a language test to prospective students who have not been able to submit a language certificate, according to the conditions stated on the ACTO website.

**§ 2.** Students who change their enrolment and wish to transfer to a programme that imposes different language requirements must submit to a new language test.

**Article 49 (course units in another language)**

A prospective student who only wants to enrol in course units that are taught in a language other than that applying to the overall course does not have to provide proof of their knowledge of the language of instruction of the course; but does have to provide proof regarding the language of instruction for the course unit if the faculty so desires.

Proof of knowledge of the language of the course unit is to be provided in accordance with Article 46 to Article 48 at the time of enrolment.

**Section 4: Admission requirements regarding learning account**

**Article 50 (admission requirements regarding learning account)**

**§ 1.** Students can enrol for a bachelor's programme under a diploma contract, provided they have a positive learning account. Enrolment may be refused for a course unit if the student wishes to enrol for more ECTS credits than their available learning account allows. First enrolment in a new bachelor's programme under a diploma contract can be refused if the learning account is less than 60 ECTS credits.

**§ 2.** Students can enrol for one or more course units under a credit contract, provided they have a positive learning account. Enrolment may be refused if the student wishes to enrol for more ECTS credits than their available learning account allows.

**§ 3.** Students can enrol for one or more course units under an examination contract, provided they have a positive learning account. Enrolment may be refused if the student wishes to enrol for more ECTS credits than their available learning account allows.

**§ 4.** By way of derogation from § 1, students in a bachelor's programme whose learning account is less than or equal to zero may be admitted for one academic year to further complete that bachelor's programme, provided that they meet the admission conditions and still have to complete a maximum of 30 ECTS credits from that bachelor's programme.

**§ 5.** Students whose learning account is less than or equal to zero are also allowed to start or continue a master's programme with a negative learning account, provided that they meet the admission conditions.

**§ 6.** These provisions apply without prejudice to any study progress decisions, including measures for monitoring study progress.

## **CHAPTER IV. – Study contracts and further rules concerning enrolment**

### **Section 1: Enrolments and study contracts**

#### **Subsection 1: Enrolments**

##### **Article 51 (general)**

**§ 1.** A prospective student enrolls for:

- One or more study programmes at the same time;
- One course unit;
- Multiple course units, which are part of one or more study programmes;
- A bridging programme;
- A preparatory programme.

**§ 2.** Students enrolled with a diploma contract must then register their programme for the year.

**§ 3.** Prospective students who wish to enrol under an examination contract or a credit contract must register via the central application procedure.

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

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

**§ 1.** At the time of enrolment, the prospective student must conclude an admission agreement with the university. When enrolling, a student has the choice between the following contracts:

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

**§ 2.** Students can opt for a combination of study contracts. However, the following 2 combinations of contracts are not permitted for the same programme:

- (i) combination of diploma contract and examination contract with a view to obtaining a diploma;
- (ii) combination of credit contract and examination contract with a view to obtaining credits.

### **Article 53 (consent)**

When concluding the admission agreement, students grant consent by agreeing to their enrolment and the associated conditions in the Student SelfService portal or by signing the study contract.

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

**§ 1.** Anyone who has enrolled for courses under an examination contract may not take part in the associated educational activities.

**§ 2.** Whether enrolment is permitted under an examination contract is stated in the course unit description. Enrolment under an examination contract may possibly be permitted for a course unit, subject to the student performing alternative activities. In that case, the course unit description will state which alternative activities are to be imposed in this regard.

**§ 3.** If an internship, bachelor's thesis or master's thesis is not eligible for a credit contract, this will be stated in the course unit description.

### **Subsection 3: Change of study contract**

#### **Article 55 (change of type of contract)**

Changes to the choice of type of study contract are possible throughout the academic year. The student concerned should contact OWSA to terminate the current study contract and apply for a new type of study contract.

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

**§ 1.** Students who change their study programme unenroll from the entire study programme for which they have enrolled and immediately enrol for another study programme. This change to the curriculum may have consequences for the learning account.

**§ 2.** Such a change in the choice of study programme can only be made under a diploma contract and is only possible for students enrolling in a bachelor's programme for the first time. Changing the study programme is possible up to 1 December.

**§ 3.** In the event of such a change, additional tuition fees will be charged if due in accordance with Article 70.

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

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

**§ 1.** A standard study path is defined for each study programme that can be enrolled for via a diploma contract. The standard study path is divided into programme years.

**§ 2.** Students follow a standard study path when they follow the standard study path approved by the Education Council and take between 54 and 66 ECTS credits annually.

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

Students follow an individual study path when they:

- do not take a package of course units worth between 54 and 66 ECTS credits each year, or
- deviate from the order of course units as stipulated the standard study path, or
- deviate from the total study load of the study programme.

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

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

**§ 1.** Enrolment in a study programme, a bridging programme or a preparatory programme is permitted for a maximum of 72 ECTS credits, except for students who find themselves in the situation referred to in Article 78, § 3 and Article 88, § 3, § 8 and § 9. This maximum number also applies in the case of enrolment where different types of contracts are combined.

**§ 2.** Derogation from the maximum of 72 ECTS credits can only be requested if the student can graduate in the master's programme. To this end, the student concerned should address their request to the Dean. The reasoned request to the Dean is to be made via the 'study path exception' application form, which is available at <https://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/praktische-info-voor-studenten/studiebegeleiding/studietraject/uitzondering-studietraject>.

**§ 3.** Without prejudice to the rules concerning learning account, a student who is subject to a binding condition in the context of a particular study programme has the right to take at least 45 ECTS credits in that study programme within the academic year to which the binding condition relates, unless this is not permitted in terms of the continuity requirement.

## **Section 2: Enrolment arrangements**

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

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

**§ 1.** The first period for submitting an enrolment application runs from 1 July to 23 September. Prospective students wishing to enrol for the first semester must complete their online application by no later than 23 September. From 24 September, enrolment for the first period will no longer be possible.

**§ 2.** For those who want to start in the second semester, the second period for submitting an enrolment application runs from 1 December to 15 February. Prospective students wishing to enrol for the second semester must complete their online application by no later than 15 February. From 16 February, enrolment for the second period will no longer be possible.

Faculties can determine in the Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations which study programmes cannot be enrolled in for the first time in the second semester for organisational reasons.

**§ 3.** Students who have obtained permission to enrol and can sign the enrolment contract must complete this (online) contract signature by no later than 8 October for enrolment in the first semester or by no later than 28 February for enrolment in the second semester.

**§ 4.** Students who re-enrol must complete their re-enrolment by 15 February at the latest.

**§ 5.** After enrolling in the study programme, students must register their course units in accordance with Article 78, and do so within the following deadline periods:

- For course units in the first semester and full-year course units, registration for course units is only possible until 8 October;
- For course units in the second semester, registration for course units is only possible until 28 February.

The registration of course units outside these deadlines is only possible with the explicit permission of the Dean, in accordance with the deadlines and procedures provided for in Article 79.

The reasoned request to the Dean is to be made via the 'study path exception' application form, which is available at <https://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/praktische-info-voor-studenten/reglementen-en-verzekeringen/reglementen>

**§ 6.** By way of derogation from § 1 to § 3, a student can enrol in the advanced master's programme in specialist medicine throughout the academic year.

In addition, by way of derogation from § 5, a student may be enrolled in the advanced master's programme in specialist medicine without registering for course units.

**§ 7.** Also in derogation from § 1 to § 3, if there are still internship places available after the quota has been used up, a student who is not required to have a visa may enrol in the advanced master's programme in specialist medicine throughout the academic year.

**§ 8.** For postgraduate programmes, a different enrolment period is possible if the structure of the postgraduate programme differs from the academic calendar approved by the Academic Council.

**§ 9.** By way of derogation from § 1, students who enrol in a study programme for which payment of the enrolment fee must be made before 1 July and who are already in possession of the diploma that gives access to the study programme in question can enrol from 1 January prior to the start of the academic year.

**§ 10.** Students who are primarily enrolled at another educational institution and have been granted permission to take one or more course units at VUB must enrol as guest students by no later than 15 October for the first semester or 15 March for the second semester. After these dates, enrolment is only possible with the explicit permission of the Dean. From 15 November it will no longer be possible to enrol as a guest student in the first period. From 16 March, it will no longer be possible to enrol as a guest student in the second period.

The reasoned request to the Dean is to be submitted via the 'guest student request' application form, which is available at <https://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/inschrijven-aan-de-vub/aanmelden-en-inschrijven/info-voor-gaststudenten>.

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

**§ 1.** Insofar as VUB is not yet in possession of these documents, prospective students enrolling in a new study programme at VUB for the first time must submit the following documents:

1. identity card or passport;
2. a supporting document on which the National Register or INSZ number is stated;
3. for students requiring a visa: a passport with a provisional residence permit for the purpose of study (type D visa) or a valid residence permit, on the understanding that the (prospective) student may also add this document to the file after enrolment, no later than on the date stated at <https://www.vub.be/en/internationalisation-vub/international-relations-what-we-do-how-you-can-reach-us/welcome-desk-international-office>;
4. the diploma granting access to the study programme, a copy is not sufficient; anyone who obtained their secondary education diploma from the Flemish Community after 31 December 2004 does not have to submit this, unless the diploma cannot be consulted in a database;
5. for prospective medical school students:
  - certificate of favourable ranking in the admission examination for medical studies, or

- proof of equivalence diploma in medicine issued by NARIC (National Academic Recognition Information Centre)
- 6. for prospective students in the bachelor's programmes referred to in Article 33: proof of taking a positioning test/(mandatory) level test;
- 7. for refugees and asylum seekers for whom a professional or residence procedure is in progress, the certificate issued by the Office of the Commissioner-General for Refugees and Stateless Persons, unless they are in possession of a secondary education diploma obtained in Belgium;
- 8. for scholarships from the Flemish Community, VLIR-UOS and Enabel and other scholarships awarded for study courses at VUB, the scholarship holder certificate;
- 9. for prospective students who cannot enrol directly, the admission letter signed by the Vice-Rector for Education and Student Affairs
- 10. any supporting document required to demonstrate that the conditions for admission have been met;
- 11. for foreign students, proof that they are covered by health insurance that is valid in Belgium, except for students who have a diplomatic passport, a special identity card or a valid residence permit. Prospective students who are not covered by such health insurance can take out a policy via the VUB *International Relations Office* (IRMO). The (prospective) student may also add this document to the file after enrolment, no later than on the date stated at <https://www.vub.be/en/internationalisation-vub/international-relations-what-we-do-how-you-can-reach-us/welcome-desk-international-office>.

**§ 2.** If the above-mentioned documents cannot be substantiated in a (Flemish) government database, verification of the diploma will be required. The student must take the necessary steps in this regard.

**§ 3.** Students who wish to pursue continuing education or a postgraduate programme can also apply to the Vice-Rector for Education and Student Affairs for permission to enrol remotely via a reasoned request. If such enrolment is permitted, the student wanting to start a continuing education or postgraduate programme must provide a certified copy of their diploma and passport/identity card to OWSA in advance.

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

**§ 1.** The student will be provided with the student card and the enrolment certificates.

**§ 2.** The Flemish Education Administration sends the enrolment data directly to the Study Grants Department of the Flemish Government as well as those bodies remitting the Growth Package (Flanders) and child benefit (Brussels) by electronic means. The student therefore does not receive any documents in this regard.

§ 3. The student can obtain enrolment certificates from OWSA.

### **Subsection 2: Specific arrangements for enrolment on the basis of a foreign diploma**

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

§ 1. Enrolment on the basis of a foreign diploma is only possible if permission has been obtained from the Vice-Rector for Education and Student Affairs.

§ 2. A prospective student can apply for admission from 15 November of the academic year preceding the academic year for which they are submitting their application. The application for permission to enrol is to be submitted to OWSA. Students submit their application for admission by completing an online application.

Except for postgraduate programmes, the following deadlines apply to applications for admission:

- Visa required: 31 March. Derogation from the aforementioned deadline is granted to the categories of prospective students included in the list to be validated annually by the Education Council; these prospective students must submit their application for admission by 30 April at the latest.
- No visa required: 31 July. Derogation from the aforementioned deadline is only possible for students changing their study programme within VUB, with the explicit consent of the Dean, and in accordance with the deadlines applicable to students who do not require a visa and hold a Belgian degree.

Applications for admission to a postgraduate programme must be submitted before 1 September.

§ 3. The Vice-Rector for Education and Student Affairs will only admit the prospective student if they have obtained a diploma at the same level as the diploma required by VUB as a condition of admission to that programme.

Prospective students can submit their application during the year in which they expect to obtain their degree. If the file is assessed favourably and no other substantive conditions still have to be met in addition to obtaining the diploma, they may be granted a conditional letter of admission.

§ 4. Furthermore, prospective students from China holding a Chinese qualification must submit an *APS certificate (Akademische Prüfstelle)*, with the exception of those prospective students from China who are exempt under the guidelines of the Flemish Government, which can be found on the IRMO website: <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/apply-and-enrol-vub/application-and-enrolment/enrolling-with-foreign-diploma#paragraph-81726>. A Chinese student who

obtained a diploma outside China must present proof of authenticity of such a diploma, issued by the embassy of the country where the diploma was obtained.

**§ 5.** After the file has been assessed by OWSA and the faculty, the prospective student will receive an admission or refusal letter signed by the Vice-Rector for Education and Student Affairs.

**§ 6.** With the exception of prospective students who are granted direct admission on the basis of a qualification awarded by Flemish, French or German-speaking community, prospective students will be charged a registration fee of €90 per application.

VUB must receive payment of the registration fee no later than 30 calendar days after the payment notice has been sent. Applications for which VUB receives payment of the registration fee later than this period will no longer be processed.

Scholarship holders and students from partner institutions approved by the Education Council are exempt from this registration fee.

**§ 7.** Students permitted to stay in Belgium for a limited or unlimited duration on the basis of Article 49, § 1 of the Aliens Law of 15 December 1980:

- may submit their application for admission up to 23 September, by way of derogation from Article 63, § 2 of these regulations;
- the registration fee referred to in Article 63, § 6 of these regulations will not be due in this case.

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

- the registration fee referred to in Article 63, § 6 of these regulations will not be due in this case.
- a tuition fee will be charged equal to the tuition fee for EEA students.

## **Article 64 (admission file)**

With a view to obtaining the desired admission letter, the prospective student must submit a completed electronic application form and a file containing at least the following documents:

- For admission to a bachelor's programme:
  - diploma and score sheets;
  - copy of identity card or passport;
  - passport photo;
  - cover letter;
  - any documentary evidence required to demonstrate that the conditions for admission have been met.
- For admission to a master's programme, teacher training and a postgraduate programme course:
  - diploma and score sheets;

- copy of identity card or passport;
- passport photo;
- cover letter;
- letters of recommendation;
- any documentary evidence required to demonstrate that the conditions for admission have been met.

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

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

**§ 1.** Students who do not wish to continue their studies at VUB can unenroll by completing the online unenrolment form available for this purpose and submitting it to OWSA.

**§ 2.** A student who asks to completely discontinue their study programme must hand in their student card. If this is not done so immediately, their application to discontinue the study programme will in any case include the undertaking to no longer use or present their student card or other certificates issued to them.

**§ 3.** Discontinuation of enrolment in a study programme is no longer possible from 15 May to the end of the academic year.

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

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

**§ 1.** The tuition fee for enrolment in a bachelor's programme or initial master's under a diploma, credit or examination contract comprises:

- a fixed part, payable only once per academic year;
- a variable part, according to the number of ECTS credits for which the student enrolls.

**§ 2.** The fixed part of the tuition fee is only due once per academic year. For the calculation of the tuition fee, a student's enrolments for one or more study programmes and for one or more course units under a diploma and credit contract are therefore regarded as one enrolment. All the ECTS credits are therefore totalled together for this purpose.

**§ 3.** Contrary to the general rule, enrolments in the following study programmes are always regarded as separate (i.e. not as additional) enrolments:

- enrolments for advanced master's programmes;
- enrolments for a PhD;
- enrolments for a postgraduate programme;
- enrolments on the basis of an examination contract with a view to obtaining credits;

- enrolments on the basis of an examination contract with a view to obtaining a diploma.

These enrolments are not subject to the provisions concerning scholarship and quasi-scholarship students.

**§ 4.** The student will pay the tuition fees set by the ruling of the Academic Council annually. For tuition fees, go to <https://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/praktische-info-voor-studenten/hoeveel-kost-studeren/studiegeld>.

**§ 5.** VLIR-UOS and Enabel scholarship holders pay the same rate as EEA non-scholarship holders.

**§ 6.** Scholarship holders within the framework of the Master Mind Scholarships – Fellowship Programme for Excellent Students initiated by the Flemish Government pay the same rate as EEA scholarship students.

**§ 7.** Further rules for calculating the tuition fees are included in a spreadsheet and the accompanying note, as stipulated annually by the VUB Academic Council. These rules form an integral part of the Teaching and Examination Regulations.

**§ 8.** By way of derogation from § 1, a student who is enrolled in the advanced master's programme in specialist medicine during the entire academic year without registering for any course units will not be liable to pay a tuition fee.

**§ 9.** Prospective refugees pay the same tuition fees as EEA non-scholarship students. These students must submit current proof of their residence status by 31 December at the latest. If a student has obtained full recognition as a refugee, the EEA rate will continue to apply. If the request for recognition was rejected, the student can remain enrolled, but the tuition fee will be adjusted to the non-EEA rate. If the application procedure has not yet been completed or has been extended, the EEA rate will continue to apply. On re-enrolment, the student must again submit current proof of their residence status.

**§ 10.** If the student applies on the basis of a certain residence status, but this residence status changes before the start of the academic year, the tuition fee will be charged in accordance with the new residence status.

## **Article 67 (time of payment)**

**§ 1.** The tuition fee becomes due on signing the study contract or on notification of approval on the Student SelfService portal.

**§ 2.** After signing or agreeing in the Student SelfService portal, the student will receive a payment notice for the amount to be charged at that time. The student must then pay immediately. The

tuition fee is recalculated after any change to the student's curriculum. Where applicable, the student will receive a payment notice at their VUB email address.

**§ 3.** Default in payment means that there is no legal entitlement to take part in examinations. In addition, any student not paying the tuition fee due, including any additional administrative costs, in full by the due date, even after a reminder, will be suspended.

The suspension can only be lifted once the full tuition fee and the additional administrative costs have been paid. If payment takes place during an ongoing examination period, the suspension cannot be lifted during that period. In order to be able to participate legally in examinations, the tuition fee, with the additional costs, must be paid in full no later than one week before the start of the examination period. Furthermore, interim evaluations, the final assessment of which also occurs within that examination period, will not be taken into consideration either.

As long as the tuition fee due has not been paid in full, credit certificates, diplomas and certificates (including associated diploma and certificate supplements and pertaining to each academic year in which the student is/was enrolled) will be withheld.

Any student not paying after the end of the academic year to which the tuition fee relates will be excluded from the possibility of (re-)enrolling.

In none of the above cases does this release the student from the obligation to pay the amount owed – plus the administrative surcharge.

VUB reserves the right to demand the collection of the amounts owed by judicial means.

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

**§ 1.** The tuition fee is paid by means of:

- valid training vouchers;
- bank transfer, quoting the reference given in the payment notice;
- SME portfolio.

**§ 2.** The tuition fee paid can be refunded in exchange for training vouchers.

**§ 3.** When a scholarship body deposits the tuition fees for non-EEA scholarship holders (who cannot benefit from a reduced tuition fee) into a VUB project account, the holder of that project account can issue a voucher.

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

**§ 1.** Students enrolling must pay the tuition fees set by the institution on an annual basis immediately upon receipt of the payment notice.

**§ 2.** A student who, on enrolling at VUB for the first time, declares that they received a study grant from the Flemish Government in the previous academic year at another educational institution and explains that they have submitted or will submit an application for a study grant from the Flemish Government for the academic year for which they are enrolling will pay the tuition fee for scholarship students.

If the student's application or the renewal is not approved, or if no decision is taken before 1 May regarding their scholarship, they must pay the balance of the tuition fee. If the student's study grant is then approved later, VUB will reimburse the excess amount paid.

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

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

### *Consequences concerning the variable part*

**§ 2.** If the enrolment was changed before 1 December, the student will not be due to pay an additional variable tuition fee insofar as the change does not lead to the total number of ECTS credits for which they are enrolled exceeding the number for which they were originally enrolled.

**§ 3.** The same rule applies to students who enrol in the second semester after the end of the first semester if the enrolment was changed before 1 March.

**§ 4.** If the enrolment is changed after 1 December but before 1 March, the student will not be due to pay an additional variable tuition fee for second-semester course units insofar as the change does not lead to the total number of ECTS credits for second-semester course units in which they are enrolled exceeding the number for which they were originally enrolled.

**§ 5.** If the change is not requested in time, the student must pay the full amount of variable tuition fees required for the new enrolment, without offsetting the variable tuition fees due for the previous enrolment.

### *Consequences concerning the fixed part*

**§ 6.** In the event of changing to a study programme for which the fixed amount is different from the fixed amount due for the study programme in which the student was first enrolled, the two fixed amounts will be offset against each other if the enrolment was changed before 8 October.

**§ 7.** The same rule applies to students who enrol in the second semester after the end of the first semester if the enrolment was changed before 15 February.

**§ 8.** If the change is not requested in time, the student must pay the full amount of fixed tuition fees required for the new enrolment, without offsetting the fixed amount of tuition fees due for the previous enrolment.

## **Article 71 (payment of tuition fees after changing the choice of course units)**

**§ 1.** Changing the choice of course units is possible as set out in greater detail in Article 79, and results in the obligation to pay tuition fees, as follows.

**§ 2.** If the total number of ECTS credits for which the student is enrolled due to the change exceeds the number for which they were originally enrolled, the tuition fee due will be recalculated. The student must pay the additional tuition fees.

**§ 3.** If the student enrolls for first-semester course units or for full-year course units before 1 December, they will not have to pay an additional tuition fee if the total number of ECTS credits for which they are enrolled due to the change does not exceed the number for which they were originally enrolled.

**§ 4.** If the student enrolls for second-semester course units before 16 March, they will not have to pay an additional tuition fee if the total number of ECTS credits for which they are enrolled due to the change does not exceed the number for which they were originally enrolled.

**§ 5.** If the total number of ECTS credits in the student's curriculum is lower after the change than the number of ECTS credits before the change, they will be entitled to reimbursement if the student unenrolled from those courses before 1 December (when changing the choice of first-semester course units and full-year course units), or before 16 March (when changing the choice of second-semester course units).

**§ 6.** In the event of changing from 1 December (when changing the choice of first-semester course units and full-year course units) or from 16 March (when changing the choice of second-semester course units), the student will pay tuition fees for the ECTS credits relating to the additional course units for which they enrol.

## **Article 72 (reimbursement of tuition fee on discontinuation of the study programme)**

**§ 1.** Discontinuing the study programme will in no way release the student from the obligation to pay the amount due.

**§ 2.** If the study programme is discontinued before the start of the academic year (week 1), the tuition fee will be waived completely.

**§ 3.** In the event of discontinuation up to 30 November, the student will receive a refund of the tuition fee paid, with the exception of the fixed amount.

**§ 4.** In the event of discontinuation from 1 December to 15 March, the student will receive a refund of the tuition fees paid for the second-semester course units.

**§ 5.** In the event of discontinuation from 16 March on, the full tuition fee will remain payable to VUB.

### **Section 5. Learning account**

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

**§ 1.** If the study programme is discontinued before 1 December, the student will get back the full learning account.

**§ 2.** If the study programme is discontinued from 1 December to 15 March, the student will get back the learning account for second-semester course units and full-year course units.

**§ 3.** If the study programme is discontinued after 15 March, the student will lose all the learning account used.

#### **Article 74 (learning account and reorientation)**

**§ 1.** A student who wants to change their study programme must discontinue their current study programme and enrol for a different study programme. The learning account for the discontinued study programme will be returned in accordance with the provisions of Article 73.

**§ 2.** A first-time student who changes study programmes between 1 December and the last day before the start of the first examination period of the first examination session will get back half of the learning account for first-semester course units, as well as the learning account used for second-semester course units and full-year course units.

#### **Article 75 (learning account and change of yearly programme)**

**§ 1.** If the student unenrolls from course units before 1 December, they will be reimbursed for the learning account they have used. From 9 October, unenrolling from course units is only possible with the approval of the Dean, in accordance with Article 79.

**§ 2.** If a student unenrolls from course units between 1 December and 15 March, they will lose the learning account for the first-semester course units. The learning account for second-semester course units and full-year course units will be returned. Unenrolling from course units is only possible with the approval of the Dean, in accordance with Article 79.

**§ 3.** If a student unenrolls from course units after 15 March, they will lose the learning account used.

**§ 4.** When unenrolling from course units under a credit contract, the student will lose the learning account used, regardless of when this happens.

## **Article 76 (correction and requests for restitution of learning account)**

**§ 1.** If an administrative legal act leading to the establishment, increase or reduction of learning account is affected by a material error or inaccuracy, the student must request correction of such a material error or inaccuracy in writing within 10 calendar days of notification of the administrative legal act. To this end, the student must address the Dean, who will make a decision within 15 calendar days of receiving the request. The student will then be notified of the decision by registered letter.

**§ 2.** As an administrative tribunal, the *Raad voor betwistingen inzake studievoortgangsbepalingen* rules on the applications submitted to it directly by students to adjust their learning account on grounds that they found themselves in a situation of force majeure.

## **Section 6: Annulment of enrolment**

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

**§ 1.** An erroneous or invalid enrolment will be corrected at the institution and cancelled in the DHO.

**§ 2.** An enrolment obtained on the basis of incorrect or false information, despite this having been essential, will be declared null and void by the Vice-Rector for Education and Student Affairs.

## **CHAPTER V. – Establishing the student's individual yearly study programme**

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

#### **Article 78 (establishing the yearly study programme)**

**§ 1.** For enrolments ensuing on the basis of a diploma contract, the student must define their yearly study programme for each academic year. In this regard, the student must comply with the specific provisions associated with the study programme and as set out in the programme description or, where applicable, in the course unit description.

**§ 2.** Students register their course units in the Student SelfService portal.  
For enrolments ensuing on the basis of an examination contract or credit contract, registration is carried out by the faculty administration. The registration of course units for guest students is also carried out by the faculty administration.

**§ 3.** Students enrolling in a particular bachelor's programme at VUB for the first time are automatically registered for the mandatory first-year course units in the standard study path for that programme.

By way of derogation from the first paragraph, the following students may apply to deviate from the first year of the standard study path when enrolling in a bachelor's programme for the first time:

- Students from the following groups (applications can be submitted up to 8 October):
  - students who have been granted ReFlex status;
  - students with an elite sports status, who are granted ReFlex status in this context;
  - working students with employment of 80 hours per month;
  - scholarship-eligible students with employment of at least 16 hours per week;
  - students who change their study programme - whether or not within the same institution - during the course of the academic year.
- Students who have already obtained a bachelor's or master's degree (or a degree equivalent to this) (applications for this can be validly submitted up to 8 October).
- Students who, on the basis of their exceptional situation, submit a reasoned request to deviate from the standard study path. This includes students who enrol at VUB in the second semester. For students who enrol at VUB in the second semester, the faculty can determine which course units cannot be included in their yearly study programme, taking into account the consecutive structure of the first year of the standard study path or for reasons of continuity.

The procedure and modalities for requesting an exception are available on the web page: <https://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/iedereen-welkom-aan-de-vub/eerstejaars-aan-de-vub/hoe-ziet-een-studietraject-eruit>.

A student who provides incorrect or false information with a view to obtaining permission to deviate from the standard study path when enrolling for the first time will still be registered for the standard study path and will also be exposed to sanctions as stipulated in the 'Order and Disciplinary Regulations for Students of Vrije Universiteit Brussel'.

**§ 4.** A student who has not obtained a credit certificate or tolerated fail grade for all the course units taken must, on subsequent enrolment in that study programme, at least re-enrol for all the course units for which they have not obtained a credit certificate or a tolerated fail grade. If one of these course units is an elective course unit, the student can opt for an alternate elective course unit within the arrangement applying to the study programme in question.

The obligation stated in the first paragraph may be waived if the student can prove that a case of force majeure exists or special individual circumstances apply.

The reasoned request for such derogation is to be submitted via the 'study path exception' application form, which is available at <https://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/praktische-info-voor-studenten/reglementen-en-verzekeringen/reglementen>

**§ 5.** When compiling the individual study path, students can call on the advice of the study path counsellor.

**§ 6.** Students can plan their individual yearly study programme for first-semester course units and full-year course units up to 8 October.

They can plan second-semester course units up to 28 February. If students fail to plan their individual yearly study programme before 15 November or before 31 March in consultation with the study path counsellor, they will be deemed to have tacitly terminated the admission agreement, after which the student will be administratively unenrolled. In this case, they will also lose all rights as a VUB student.

**§ 7.** When compiling the individual yearly study programme, students are limited to 18.33% of ECTS credits for the bachelor's programme and 50% of the study load of ECTS credits for the master's programme when including course units in a foreign language.

## **Article 79 (change in yearly study programme)**

**§ 1.** Changing the choice of and unenrolling from course units in the study programme for which the student is enrolled is possible at the following points in time.

This change to the curriculum may have consequences for the learning account.

**§ 2.** Students can make changes on the Student SelfService portal, without any restrictions, up to 8 October.

**§ 3.** For first-semester course units, students need the approval of the Dean to enrol or unenrol from 9 October to 1 December at the latest. The Dean may refuse enrolment if, among other things, the teaching for that course unit has already progressed too far. The Dean may refuse unenrolment if, among other things, a (partial) result or proclamation code is attached to the course unit.

The reasoned request to the Dean is to be made via the 'study path exception' application form, which is available at <https://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/praktische-info-voor-studenten/studiebegeleiding/studietraject/uitzondering-studietraject>.

**§ 4.** For full-year course units, students need the Dean's permission to enrol between 9 October and 15 March at the latest. The Dean may refuse enrolment if, among other things, the teaching in that course unit has already progressed too far. For full-year course units, students need the Dean's permission to unenroll from 9 October until 15 March at the latest. The Dean may refuse unenrolment if, among other things, a (partial) result or proclamation code is attached to the course unit.

The reasoned request to the Dean is to be made via the 'study path exception' application form, which is available at <https://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/praktische-info-voor-studenten/studiebegeleiding/studietraject/uitzondering-studietraject>.

**§ 5.** For second-semester course units, students may only make the change via the Student SelfService portal up to 28 February. Students need the Dean's permission to enrol or unenrol between 1 March and 15 March at the latest. The Dean may refuse enrolment if, among other things, the teaching for that course unit has already progressed too far. The Dean may refuse unenrolment if, among other things, a (partial) result or proclamation code is attached to the course unit.

The reasoned request to the Dean is to be made via the 'study path exception' application form, which is available at <https://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/praktische-info-voor-studenten/studiebegeleiding/studietraject/uitzondering-studietraject>.

**§ 6.** By way of derogation from § 1 to § 6, it is not possible to change the yearly study programme for students enrolling in a bachelor's programme for the first time, except in those cases where permission is given to deviate from the standard study path in accordance with Article 78, § 3.

**§ 7.** The implications for the calculation of the tuition fees, including the possible obligation to pay tuition fees, are set out in Article 71.

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

In the event of changes to the study programme (adjustments to the curriculum), students can validate ECTS credits already acquired within the renewed study programme. The transitional measures

taken for this purpose are submitted to the Education Council together with the curriculum reforms.

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

If a student wishes to deviate from the continuity requirement in the study programme, they must obtain permission from the Dean accordingly.

The student can submit an exemption request up to 8 October. If the application concerns second-semester course units only, the deadline is 15 February. Students who have been given permission to enrol late may submit an exemption request no later than seven calendar days after the date on which the notification of permission to enrol late was given.

The reasoned request to the Dean is to be made via the 'study path exception' application form, which is available at <https://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/praktische-info-voor-studenten/reglementen-en-verzekeringen/reglementen>.

## **Section 2: Exemptions on the basis of EVC/EVK**

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

**§ 1.** If a student believes they are eligible for an exemption on the basis of an EVC or an EVK, they must submit an application in accordance with the procedure indicated.

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

- a credit certificate or diploma issued by the specific institution or another institute of higher education;
- a certificate of proficiency issued by a validating authority;
- an EVC, other than a credit certificate or diploma, that meets the definition of the Higher Education Code.

**§ 3.** A student may not submit an EVC application with a view to obtaining exemption for a course unit they included in their individual study programme in a previous academic year or have done so in the current academic year.

### **Article 83 (transfer of exam result)**

When granting an exemption, the examination result obtained is not transferred, unless:

- a) a credit certificate was obtained in the context of a credit contract for an identical course unit included in a study programme that is subsequently enrolled for on the basis of a diploma contract;
- b) a credit certificate was obtained for an identical course unit that several study programmes taken simultaneously or consecutively have in common.

### **Article 84 (assessment criteria)**

When granting an exemption, it is assessed to what extent there is sufficient consistency in terms of objectives, content and learning outcomes of the course unit for which the exemption is requested and the course unit on the basis of which the exemption is requested.

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

**§ 1.** The exemption may be total or partial. If a total exemption is not possible, it must be examined in each case to what extent a partial exemption is possible.

**§ 2.** The extent of an exemption is expressed in whole ECTS credits.

**§ 3.** If a partial exemption is granted, it must be stated explicitly in the decision which parts the student has been granted an exemption for and those for which they still have to take an examination. This also indicates how the exam grade will be determined.

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

A credit certificate obtained within the same study programme at VUB, as well as a certificate of proficiency issued by a validating authority within the association, is valid indefinitely.

After five years, however, if substantial differences can be demonstrated between the competencies that the student has acquired according to the credit certificate and the current competencies desired for a course unit, the Dean may require the student to bridge these substantial differences by taking one or more complete or partial course units. The aforementioned term of five years is calculated from the first day of the month of October following the academic year in which the credit certificate was acquired.

## **Article 87 (procedure)**

**§ 1.** The decision to grant an exemption is taken by the Dean, where applicable following advice from the lecturer in charge and/or the Education Council. The further procedure for applying for and granting an exemption is published on the faculty website.

The application for exemption can be submitted up to 8 October. If the application concerns second-semester course units only, the deadline for the application is 28 February. Students who have received permission to enrol late may submit an application for exemption no later than seven calendar days after the date on which the notification of permission to enrol late was issued.

### **Additional faculty regulations to Article 87,§1**

**Per academic year, only one exemption request can be submitted in which all applications for exemptions are included.**

**§ 2.** If it is established on the basis of EVKs and/or a certificate of proficiency that a person has acquired the domain-specific learning outcomes associated with a study programme, the relevant diploma will be awarded to that person. Administrative enrolment in the study programme is required for this. As a contribution to the costs for the award of the diploma, an amount of €50 will be charged.

**§ 3.** When taking a decision on the granting of exemptions on the basis of a foreign diploma or study period abroad, the provisions and principles of the Convention of the Council of Europe and UNESCO on the Recognition of Higher Education Diplomas in the European Region are applied, insofar as the country of origin has also ratified this Convention.

**§ 4.** Decisions on granting or refusing an exemption must be saved. The relevant documents from the file will be kept at the faculty for at least 1 academic year.

### **Section 3: Threshold package content**

#### **Article 87a (threshold package content)**

If a student has not obtained a credit certificate or tolerated fail for all the course units taken after enrolling for the first time, they must obtain these in the same study programme in a subsequent academic year when enrolling for the second time. This provision remains valid if a student changes universities or replaces an elective course unit with another elective course unit when enrolling for the second time. This provision does not apply if a student changes their main subject.

### **Section 4: Study progress monitoring**

#### **Article 88 (imposing a measure to monitor study progress)**

**§ 1.** Regardless of the university where they started their study programme, students who, on first enrolling in a particular initial bachelor's programme at VUB, did not obtain a credit certificate or a tolerated fail grade for all the course units included in that enrolment will be subject to the measures for monitoring study progress as follows.

If, at the time of enrolling in the same bachelor's programme for a second time in a subsequent academic year, a student has not yet obtained a credit certificate or a tolerated fail grade for all the course units included in their first enrolment, as stipulated in article 87bis of these regulations, they may not re-enrol in the relevant study programme, except in cases of force majeure or special individual circumstances.

A student whose enrolment in a particular study programme has been refused in accordance with paragraph 3 may re-enrol in the same study programme if they have obtained a higher education diploma after the refusal to allow enrolment or after a waiting period of six academic years following the academic year in which enrolment was refused.

**§ 2.** If a student enrolled in a bachelor's programme, bridging programme or preparatory programme on the basis of a diploma contract has not achieved a success rate of at least 30%, that student will be refused re-enrolment in the same study programme, as well as re-enrolment for course units in that programme on the basis of a credit or examination contract, except in cases of force majeure or special individual circumstances. The Examination Board may decide against such refusal in the case of students who have only enrolled for one or two course units.

**§ 3.** A student enrolled on the basis of a diploma contract who has not obtained 60% of the ECTS credits taken will be subject to a binding condition when re-enrolling for the same study programme on the next occasion. When re-enrolling for the same study programme via a diploma contract, the student must acquire 75% of the ECTS credits or tolerated fail grades and must pass or obtain a tolerated fail grade for each course unit for which they have already been

enrolled at least twice, though without yet obtaining a credit certificate. In addition, students in a bachelor's programme can only register for a maximum of 60 ECTS credits. A student can also be placed under mandatory study guidance. If the student concerned does not meet this binding condition, the next re-enrolment in the same study programme, including course units of the same, will be refused under any type of contract, except in cases of force majeure or special individual circumstances.

At the start of the academic year, the student is entitled to an interview with a student counsellor regarding the student's study progress and any relevant student counselling.

**§ 4.** When re-enrolling for the same study programme on the next occasion, a binding condition is also imposed on any student enrolled on the basis of a diploma contract who has already been enrolled twice for a course unit but has not obtained a credit certificate or a tolerated fail grade for such unit. When re-enrolling for the same study programme, the student must obtain a credit or tolerated fail grade for the course unit in question. A student can also be placed under mandatory study guidance. If the course unit was previously included in another study programme or under a different type of contract, these enrolments will also be taken into account.

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

**§ 5.** If a student enrolled in a master's programme on the basis of a diploma contract has not obtained any credits, that student will be refused re-enrolment for the same study programme, as well as for course units of that programme on the basis of a credit or examination contract, except in cases of force majeure or special individual circumstances. The Examination Board may decide against such refusal in the case of students who have only enrolled for one or two course units.

**§ 6.** For the purposes of this article, students enrolled under an examination contract with a view to obtaining a degree or diploma associated with a study programme are subject to the regulations that apply to students under a diploma contract.

**§ 7.** Except in cases of force majeure or special individual circumstances, a student enrolled on the basis of a credit contract or examination contract with a view to obtaining credits will be refused entry to a particular course unit if they have already been enrolled twice for that course unit without obtaining a credit certificate.

**§ 8.** A student who has been refused re-enrolment for a study programme at VUB will be subject to a binding condition the next time they enrol for another study programme within the same field of study on the basis of a diploma contract. The student must obtain 75% of ECTS credits or tolerated fail grades for the course units taken and must register for and pass each course unit for

which the student has not yet obtained a credit certificate and for which they have already been enrolled twice. In addition, students in a bachelor's programme can only register for a maximum of 60 ECTS credits. A student can also be placed under mandatory study guidance.

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

**§ 9.** A student who has not acquired 60% of the enrolled ECTS credits for a study programme at another institution will be subject to a binding condition when next enrolling in a study programme within the same field of study on the basis of a diploma contract: when enrolling for a study programme within the same field of study via a diploma contract, the student must acquire at least 75% of the ECTS credits or tolerated fail grades for the course units taken. In addition, students in a bachelor's programme can only register for a maximum of 60 ECTS credits. The student may also be placed under mandatory study guidance. If the student concerned does not meet this binding condition, the next re-enrolment in the same study programme, including course units of the same, will be refused under any type of contract, except in cases of force majeure or special individual circumstances.

**§ 10.** If a student is refused enrolment for a study programme in accordance with the provisions set out in this article, a refusal to (re-)enrol will also be imposed for the further study programme and the language equivalents of that study programme.

**§ 11.** The decision to impose binding conditions or deny enrolment is announced in the Student SelfService portal.

**§ 12.** If a student is refused enrolment for a study programme in accordance with the provisions of § 2 to § 10 of this article, the student may, following a break in enrolment of at least one academic year for the course programme(s) and course unit(s) for which the student was refused, submit a written and substantiated file showing that circumstances have changed. The file should be submitted to the administrative secretariat of the faculty before 1 June and 1 September respectively, and will be dealt with by the Examination Board. The Examination Board may impose a binding condition on the student in accordance with § 3 and § 4 of this article, as applicable at the time of the decision.

If the student obtains admission from the Examination Board, they must then enrol in the academic year for which permission is granted. If the student does not wish to enrol again until a subsequent academic year, they must submit a new, substantiated file to the Examination Board in writing.

## Additional faculty regulations to Article 88,§12

The student who wishes to re-enrol after an interruption of at least one academic year must send an email to the Faculty Secretariat ([faces@vub.be](mailto:faces@vub.be)).

**§ 13.** In the event of force majeure or special individual circumstances, a student may dispute the imposition of a binding condition or a refusal to allow re-enrolment (even if this results from a failure to achieve the threshold package) by submitting a substantiated file to the chairperson of the Examination Board, which must include at least a factual description of the force majeure or special individual circumstances, backed up by supporting documents. The file is to be submitted to the administrative secretariat of the faculty no later than ten calendar days before the deliberation date (second session).

## Additional faculty regulations to Article 88,§13

The student sends the substantiated file to the faculty secretariat ([faces@vub.be](mailto:faces@vub.be)).

**§ 14.** A decision taken by a partner institution to refuse enrolment in an inter-university study programme that is subject to the 'examination regulations for inter-university master's programmes for which it is possible to enrol at more than one university' will be recognised at VUB.

**§ 15.** The study progress decision is made subject to Article 50.

**§ 16.** The provisions of § 1 to § 14 of this article do not apply to advanced master's programmes or postgraduate programmes, unless stipulated otherwise in the Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations.

### **Article 88bis (discontinuation of internship or other practical course unit)**

**§ 1.** If a student has demonstrated through their behaviour that they are unfit to practise a profession for which the relevant training is imparted in the study course, the internship may be terminated prematurely.

**§ 2.** If the facts are proven, the Dean will decide, possibly after consultation with the chairperson of the Examination Board, whether or not to discontinue the internship(s) or practical course unit(s). Pending a decision by the Dean, the student may continue to participate in the internship, notwithstanding any regulatory measures and/or sanctions as stipulated in the 'Order and Disciplinary Regulations for Students of Vrije Universiteit Brussel'.

The Dean may decide on (a combination of) the following measures:

- imposition of specific conditions that the student must meet in order to continue the internship(s) or other practical course unit(s) during the current academic year;

- discontinuation of internship(s) or other practical course unit(s) if the student has shown that their behaviour renders them unfit to practise the profession concerned; the student will not be entitled to a second examination opportunity. Subsequent enrolment for internship(s) or other practical course unit(s) may be refused.

**§ 3.** The student has the right to be heard before the decision is made. The faculty ombudsperson is invited to attend. The student has the right to inspect the file and may be assisted by counsel during the hearing.

**§ 4.** If the internship commences before the start of the academic year in which the student is enrolled for the internship, such internship will only commence under the suspensive condition of the possibility of the student being (re-)enrolled in the study programme and course units of the same at the start of the academic year.

An internship that is inconsistent with the measures for monitoring the student's study progress will be terminated immediately.

**§ 5.** If the student's enrolment is suspended during the internship period, the internship will be discontinued immediately. If the suspension is lifted, the student may ask for the internship to be restarted.

## **Section 5: Timetable**

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

Students are informed about the date, time and room where the classes (lectures, WPO, etc.) take place via a timetable issued before the start of the semester in question on the student portal. Any changes to the timetable will be communicated to the students in the same way.

## **Section 6: Taking course units at another institution and international internships**

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

Under an agreement concluded between the Flemish universities, a student can take a course unit offered by another university as an elective course unit if the study programme provides for this or explicitly permits it. The agreement stipulates the following conditions/arrangements:

- the student is enrolled via a diploma contract or an examination contract with a view to obtaining a diploma;
- the course is not organised within the student's own institution;
- the student does not have to pay any additional tuition fees to the other institution;
- the exam grade is communicated to the home institution by the host institution;
- the credit certificate is issued by the home institution.

## **Article 91 (taking a course unit at another institute of higher education and international internships)**

**§ 1.** In the context of internationalisation/student mobility, faculties of different universities can make arrangements concerning exchanges and the ‘borrowing/lending’ of course units.

**§ 2.** If a student wishes to take one or more course units at another institution outside the cases referred to in Article 91 and Article 90 § 1 of these regulations, they must submit a reasoned request to the Dean for this purpose.

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

### **Additional faculty regulations to Article 91,§2**

The student who wishes to make use of this arrangement should send an email to the dean at [faces@vub.be](mailto:faces@vub.be).

The external programme units will be presented to the chairman of the study programme council, who provides advice to the Dean.

Written permission from the lecturer of the external course unit is required.

The results obtained at the host university will be converted using the standard conversion table of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

**§ 3.** Outgoing exchange students set out in a Learning Agreement which package of VUB course units is to be replaced by a package of course units at the partner institution. Any deviation from this in a negative sense will only be permitted for a maximum of 2 ECTS credits.

**§ 4.** Every international student movement must be registered by the student in the SOP Mobility Online portal. Students must do this following administrative and/or academic approval of the move by the person responsible at the faculty and no later than one month before departure to the country concerned.

## **Article 92 (travel policy)**

**§ 1.** In the context of safety, public health and the public interest, students may be prohibited from travelling abroad as part of their educational activities, even requiring them to return to Belgium if necessary. The decision will be taken by the Vice-Rector for Internationalisation.

**§ 2.** Students who fail to comply with a ban on travel and/or an order to return to Belgium will be deemed not to be legally registered for the course units covered by the relevant outbound mobility scheme and/or international internship, and will consequently lose any right to take part in the teaching and evaluation activities abroad. In such cases, any exam results obtained will be declared null and void.

## **Section 7: Equal opportunities**

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

**§ 1.** All educational activities must be inclusive. Every student should be given equal opportunities. For this, it may be necessary to call for reasonable flexibility (according to criteria of feasibility, acceptability and defensibility), with variations being agreed for an individual student in a specific situation. A reasonable variation is deemed to be one that does not impose a disproportionate burden. A reasonably flexible variation makes education more feasible for the student, remains acceptable to the lecturer and is defensible vis-à-vis fellow students or the educational institution. The student can obtain advice from Student Guidance or the Department of Top-level Sport and Study, leading to a reasoned request being made to the lecturer based on a professional certificate and a discussion with a student counsellor under the responsibility of the Dean. A decision to refuse the requested adjustments may be justified on the basis of an assessment made by the institution that the requested adjustment concerned detracts from the possibility of achieving the domain-specific learning outcomes associated with the study programme or the possibility of achieving other objectives of the study programme in overall terms. Students with disabilities can lodge an appeal against such refusal to make adjustments within the institution in accordance with Article 154.

**§ 2.** Efforts will always be made to reach a workable arrangement by way of dialogue. If difficulties arise in this dialogue, the intervention of the faculty ombudsperson can be requested.

## **Section 8: Flemish Training Leave, Paid Educational Leave and Study Leave**

### **Article 94 (Flemish Training Leave, Paid Educational Leave and Study Leave)**

**§ 1.** A student combining work and study can be registered as a working student. The criteria for and the method of registration as well as the nature of the special educational facilities that working students can avail themselves of are detailed at <https://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/alle-opleidingen/werkstudenten-aan-de-vub> and <https://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/alle-opleidingen/werkstudenten-aan-de-vub/info-voor-werkstudenten#inschrijven-en-herinschrijven>.

**§ 2.** In order to enjoy the right to paid educational leave, the student concerned must have their attendance list signed by the lecturer after each lecture they have attended. The student must submit these attendance lists to OWSA on a quarterly basis, at the latest on:

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

Students enrolled on the basis of an examination contract with a view to obtaining a diploma and who are entitled to paid educational leave must provide the employer with proof of effective

participation in the exams. The student must request this proof of effective participation after the second session by sending an email to the faculty secretariat.

**§ 3.** To benefit from study leave, students must have their attendance list signed by the lecturer after each lecture they have attended. They must submit these attendance lists to OWSA by 30 June at the latest.

**§ 4.** To benefit from Flemish educational leave, students should email the completed 'Working and studying' form to [werkstudent@vub.be](mailto:werkstudent@vub.be). It is not possible to apply for training leave directly during online registration or re-enrolment. The enrolment certificate (stating the OBD number) will be delivered to the student in the week following the deadline for course registration. Participation in the final evaluation or attendance (in the case of continuing education) is communicated to the departments concerned automatically.

## **CHAPTER VI. – Student feedback**

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

As students are important stakeholders in education, they are explicitly asked for their opinion about that education. One of the tools used to do this is the survey aimed at gauging student feedback. All bachelor's and master's programmes as well as the bridging and preparatory programmes are evaluated annually by the students by means of this survey.

This survey has a multiple purpose. The results provide an insight into the extent to which students are pleased with the quality of the education on offer. The feedback from students can help the lecturers, the education councils and the institution to reflect on the quality of the education offered, detect and address any problems and further optimise teaching. The quantitative feedback is also used by the institution for reporting purposes and quality assurance. The qualitative feedback is initially used by the lecturers with a view to improve quality.

The participation of students in the student feedback is necessary to achieve these objectives in the context of quality assurance and is therefore mandatory. Students who do not participate in the student feedback can be temporarily denied access to the learning platform.

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

The survey consists of several components:

- a survey per course unit, in which the satisfaction of the students is surveyed with regard to five aspects: goals, content, guidance, study material and forms of evaluation. In addition, questions are asked about students' satisfaction with each member of teaching staff associated with the course as a lecturer in charge or co-lecturer in charge;
- a survey on how study time is experienced;
- a questionnaire that measures satisfaction with the study programme, the training facilities and the generic competencies acquired during the study programme;
- a questionnaire regarding general satisfaction with VUB and central services.

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

The student feedback survey is organised twice a year, at the end of the first and second semesters, respectively, for the course units taken by the students in the semester in question. All course units are evaluated, including internships as well as bachelor's and master's theses. The questionnaire about the study programme is provided at the end of the second semester to bachelor's and master's degree students who complete their study programme. The general satisfaction survey is provided to all students at the end of the first semester.

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

The survey is organised, coordinated and managed by Education and Student Affairs, under the supervision of the Vice-Rector for Education and Student Affairs.

The survey is conducted electronically via a secure website. Students have access via their individual VUB account. Education and Student Affairs takes the necessary measures to ensure the anonymity of the students.

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

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

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

### **Article 100 (follow-up signals resulting from the survey per course unit)**

A follow-up signal is deemed to exist if, at macro-level (aggregated by course catalogue number), at least 34% of the participating students gave an answer below 5 on a scale of 0-10 for any of the aspects. Furthermore, the following participation criteria must be met (the percentages relate to the proportion of students enrolled in the course unit taking part in the survey for the same course unit):

- at least 50% for group size [1-15]
- at least 40% for group size [16-50]
- at least 30% for group size [51-150]
- at least 20% for group size 151 and above

A signal is only generated if at least three students participate.

Follow-up signals that occur two or three times within a period of five years for the same aspect for the same course unit are referred to as second or third follow-up signals. These follow-up signals must be followed up in a formal manner.

## **Part III. - Examination regulations**

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

#### **Article 101 (written examinations)**

**§ 1.** For full-year course units within the bachelor's programmes or within the bridging and preparatory programmes, a written examination can be organised in the first examination period of the first session.

**§ 2.** If a written examination is organised, this will be stated in the course unit description.

**§ 3.** The way in which the results of these examinations are included in the final result of the course unit is explained in the course unit description

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

**§ 1.** For each course unit for which they are enrolled, a student is entitled to two exam opportunities during the course of the academic year to obtain a credit certificate. Due to the nature of a course unit, the number of exam opportunities, at exam component level where relevant, can be limited to one. This is referred to in the course unit description.

**§ 2.** Under no circumstances may a student attend more than twice for the same exams or exam sections during the course of the same academic year.

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

**§ 1.** Each faculty has the opportunity to evaluate the competencies associated with these activities separately for course units consisting of several learning activities.

The information regarding the student must include at least the following aspects:

- Description of the various learning activities;
- The percentage share of the various learning activities in the final exam grade;
- The method and times of evaluation that occur (at least partially) outside the actual examination periods;
- The possibility to share the results of individual evaluations with students;
- The possibility to also include results of individual evaluations in the exam grade for the second session.

**§ 2.** The modalities for implementing § 1 will be announced before the start of the academic year via the course unit descriptions.

### **Article 104 (retaking exams)**

**§ 1.** With regard to course units for which an exam was taken in the first examination period of the first session, a new exam can be taken in the second session at the earliest.

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

### **Article 105 (time of exams)**

**§ 1.** Except for elite sports students, no examination may be taken outside the periods specified in Article 8, § 1. If there is a public holiday during the examination period, the relevant examination period will begin on the Saturday of the previous pre-exam study week.

**§ 2.** For international students, students participating in international exchange programmes and students enrolled in an inter-university study programme, the decision to derogate is taken by the competent faculty bodies and set out in the Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations.

#### **Additional faculty regulations to Article 105, §2**

The request for a derogation must be submitted at least one month before the start of the relevant examination period by sending an email to the faculty secretariat ([faces@vub.be](mailto:faces@vub.be)).

**§ 3.** In the non-standard situation as described in § 2, teaching activities should not be suspended.

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

**§ 1.** For the first and second examination periods of the first session, the provisional examination schedule will be announced at least fourteen weeks in advance on the VUB notice boards and/or in person via the VUB email address. As far as the second session is concerned, this period is reduced to at least four weeks.

For the first and second examination periods of the first session, the examination schedule will be finalised four weeks before the commencement of the relevant examination period. The examination schedule for the second session will be finalised two weeks before the commencement of the examination period.

**§ 2.** The examination schedule is compiled on the basis of the standard study path. Students who have several examinations at the same time, either by deviating from the standard study path or

through combined enrolment or as a result of elective course units, will take the examination that occurs first in the standard study path or the examination for the course unit component that is mandatory (relative to the elective course unit). With regard to the exams for the other course units, the student can ask whether a new exam time can be set within the examination period concerned. The new examination arrangement may be accompanied by an adjustment of the form of the examination, as decided by the Dean. The procedure for requesting the rescheduling of an examination is outlined in the Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations. This procedure stipulates that students have a period of at least 3 calendar days after the announcement of the final examination schedule to report any overlap in their examination schedule.

When compiling the examination schedule on the basis of the standard study path, consideration is given to distributing the demands placed on students fairly. With regard to the faculties, it is recommended that, as far as possible in organisational terms, an examination is not organised over two days in a row, unless it concerns different evaluations associated with the same course unit.

#### Additional faculty regulations to Article 106,§2

The overlap must be reported to the faculty secretariat by e-mail ([faces@vub.be](mailto:faces@vub.be)), no later than three weeks before the start of the first and second examination sessions of the first term and no later than one week before the start of the examination session of the second term.

**§ 3.** For students participating in international exchange programmes who are abroad at the time of the exam, the Dean, following consultation with the lecturer in charge and with a change in the form of the examination where appropriate, will decide whether a digital oral examination is possible on the same or another day. The procedure for this is set out in the Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations.

#### Additional faculty regulations to Article 106,§3

The request for a digital oral exam must be communicated to the faculty secretariat by e-mail ([faces@vub.be](mailto:faces@vub.be)), no later than three weeks before the start of the first and second examination sessions of the first term and no later than one week before the start of the examination session of the second term.

**§ 4.** The faculty ombudsperson will be involved in drawing up the final examination schedule at their request or following a complaint.

**§ 5.** Any change instigated by the institution after the announcement of the examination schedule will be announced immediately and in person to the student concerned via the VUB email address. Such a change may not lead to the examination being brought forward.

**§ 6.** The Dean is responsible for the implementation of this article.

### **Article 107 (selling time slots)**

If the student has to register for an oral exam, the chosen time slot is strictly person-related. Transferring the time slot chosen or obtained to another student in any way, commercially or for any benefit, is not permitted. Any infringement of this provision shall be deemed an irregularity and gives rise to the application of the procedure provided for in Article 118 of these regulations.

## **CHAPTER II. – Equal opportunities**

### **Article 108 (inclusivity)**

**§ 1.** All examination activities must be inclusive. Every student should be given equal opportunities. A number of examination measures are provided for which are inclusive (for each student and in each course unit). The overview of these inclusive examination measures is published annually on the website. In addition, it may be necessary to call for reasonable flexibility (according to criteria of feasibility, acceptability and defensibility), with variations being agreed for an individual student in a specific situation. A reasonable variation is deemed to be one that does not impose a disproportionate burden. A reasonably flexible variation makes examinations more feasible for the student, remains acceptable to the lecturer and is defensible vis-à-vis fellow students or the educational institution. The student can obtain advice from Student Guidance or the Department of Top-level Sport and Study, leading to a reasoned request being made to the lecturer based on a professional certificate and a discussion with a student counsellor under the responsibility of the Dean. A decision to refuse the requested adjustments may be justified on the basis of an assessment made by the institution that the requested adjustment concerned detracts from the possibility of achieving the domain-specific learning outcomes associated with the study programme or the possibility of achieving other objectives of the study programme in overall terms. Students with disabilities can lodge an appeal against such refusal to make adjustments within the institution in accordance with Article 154.

**§ 2.** Students who wish to apply for the ReFlex status or make adjustments to a previously acquired ReFlex status must do so at the latest between:

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

After the student has submitted their application, they receive a proposal of measures to which they are entitled or an invitation to an interview to discuss their measures. Only students who

have completed the full procedure for applying for status and the granting of measures within the deadline can apply for the education and examination measures granted to them (within the deadlines provided for). If the status is recognised, ReFlex students will direct their request for reasonable flexible adjustments to student counselling no later than at the following times:

- for educational measures for the first semester or examination measures for the first examination period of the first session: before 1 December;
- for the examination period of April in the first session: before 15 March;
- for educational measures for the second semester or examination measures for the second examination period of the first session: before 1 May;
- for the second session: before 15 July;
- for evaluations outside the examination periods: no later than 14 calendar days before the evaluation.

The procedure and the form for requesting ReFlex status are communicated via the website in every case.

**§ 3.** Efforts will always be made to reach a workable arrangement by way of dialogue. If difficulties arise in this dialogue, the intervention of the faculty ombudsperson may be requested.

### **CHAPTER III. – Participation in examinations**

#### **Article 109 (participation in examinations)**

**§ 1.** Students will only be permitted to take exams if they are properly enrolled for the relevant academic year and are registered for the relevant course unit in the Student SelfService portal. The examination list contains the names of the students who are registered for the course unit in question.

**§ 2.** If a student does not appear on the examination list and still believes that they should be admitted to the exam, they must contact the faculty secretariat before the start of the examination at the latest. In exceptional circumstances, the examiner may decide that the student can be provisionally admitted to the examination. If it emerges that the student is not properly enrolled, the examination will not be valid.

**§ 3.** Participation in examinations is only possible if all necessary certificates/diplomas have been submitted at the time of enrolment.

**§ 4.** Students not presenting themselves until after the official start time or time slot of the exam may be denied access to such exam. In that case, the student may be recorded as absent.

**§ 5.** A student cannot legally take part in examinations for as long as there is an outstanding balance of tuition fees.

**§ 6.** A student who has been suspended in accordance with Article 67, § 3 is not entitled to participate in any educational or assessment activities; furthermore, participation in examinations already taken shall have no legal validity, and the student shall be deemed not to have acquired any exam grades in this regard.

If payment of the tuition fee, and the additional costs, is made during an ongoing examination period, the suspension will remain in force until the end of that examination period. In order to be able to participate legally in examinations, the full tuition fee, including the additional costs, must be paid no later than one week before the start of the examination period. Furthermore, interim evaluations, the final assessment of which also occurs within that examination period, will not be taken into consideration either.

**§ 7.** Without prejudice to § 6 of this article, the faculties determine the conditions under which students are admitted to or excluded from examinations. These rules must be made known to students from the beginning of the academic year. These rules are included in the Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations.

[Additional faculty regulations to Article 109, §7](#)

[If the examination schedule states that the student has to register in advance for an oral examination, the student must strictly adhere to the registration period. A student who has not registered on time cannot participate in the examination, except in case of force majeure.](#)

[Special conditions for admission or refusal are mentioned in the course information sheet.](#)

**Article 110 (criminal record check and termination of internship agreement)**

**§ 1.** VUB may require a criminal record extract to be submitted prior to commencement of the internship for verification purposes. This verification is carried out at most once per academic year. The student shall submit the required extract in a timely manner and provide all necessary cooperation to this end. If this verification reveals that the student cannot be admitted to the internship or cannot commence or continue the internship, VUB can terminate the internship agreement.

**§ 2.** The internship organisation or VUB may terminate the internship agreement in the event of misconduct, bad faith, unlawful absence or deliberate violation of the regulations of the internship agreement. If this is the case, the student will be assigned a zero for the (part of the) course unit. In such a case, the student is not entitled to a replacement assignment.

**Article 111 (participation in the 2nd session exams)**

**§ 1.** Without prejudice to the provisions of Article 109 and Article 110, students are automatically enrolled for the second session for all course units for which they have not yet obtained a credit in the first session, subject to tolerated fail grades.

**§ 2.** If, in accordance with the provisions of § 1 of this article, students have to retake a course unit in the second session, the exam grade for the first session will cease to apply automatically and irrevocably, and a new examination decision will take its place.

#### **CHAPTER IV. – Conduct of examinations**

##### **Article 112 (force majeure)**

**§ 1.** Students must adhere strictly to the established schedule and examination venue.

In cases of force majeure, a student may ask for the examination to be rescheduled, provided that they provide the necessary proof of such force majeure. Any case of force majeure as well as a request to postpone the examination as a result thereof must be reported by the student to the secretariat of the faculty in writing by no later than the day of the examination. The student concerned must complete the form provided correctly and in full for this purpose. The faculties set out in their Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations where the form can be found and what procedure the student must follow before submitting the same.

The original supporting documents substantiating the force majeure are to be sent to the secretariat of the faculty within one calendar day of the examination date and, where applicable, no later than on the day of the examination under the new examination regulations.

##### **Additional faculty regulations to Article 112,§1**

Force majeure must be reported through the online force majeure form available on <https://www.vub.be/en/studying-vub/practical-info-for-students/exams-and-deliberations/absences#paragraph-132518>.

**§ 2.** If force majeure is demonstrated, the Dean will decide, after consultation with the examiner, whether a new examination arrangement is possible in terms of organisation within the same examination period.

In the event of a positive decision, the Dean will define the new examination arrangement, which may involve a change in the form or modalities of the examination.

##### **Additional faculty regulations to Article 112,§2**

Students will only be allowed to participate after confirming the new examination schedule no later than the deadline set by the faculty.

**§ 3.** In exceptional circumstances, the Dean may decide, on the basis of the file submitted, to extend the examination session/period, or move the new examination arrangement for examinations from the first examination period of the first session to the other examination

periods during the first session. The student concerned will be notified of the decision within 3 calendar days of receipt of the request to postpone the examination.

### **Article 113 (examiner)**

**§ 1.** An examination is administered under the responsibility of the lecturer in charge of the course unit or by the person who taught the course that year as a replacement. The examiner will keep an accurate attendance list of all students who have taken the examination in their presence. The examiner must respect the established schedule and examination venue.

**§ 2.** In the event of the examiner being unable to conduct the examination, the Dean will decide on a new examination arrangement for each of the students concerned.

The new examination arrangement may involve a change in the form and/or modalities of the examination and/or transferring it to another day within the same examination period and/or replacing the examiner with the appointment of a deputy examiner (member of the independent academic staff or a post-doctoral assistant).

Where possible, the examiner will submit a reasoned request to the Dean to waive all or part of their examination assignment and/or change the form and/or modalities of the examination accordingly.

In exceptional circumstances, the Dean may also decide to move the new examination arrangement for exams from the first examination period of the first session to the other examination periods in the first session.

**§ 3.** In the case of blood or family ties up to and including the fourth degree, or in the event of personal involvement between a student and an examiner, the Dean will appoint a deputy examiner in consultation with the chairperson of the Examination Board. In that case, the examiner must request such replacement from the Dean before the start of the examination sessions.

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

**§ 1.** Examinations requiring the physical presence of students are conducted by the lecturer in charge in an exam room at VUB. In exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Dean, the location of the exam may be changed.

**§ 2.** The public nature of the oral examination is ensured by offering the student the opportunity to request an observer. To this end, the student must submit a reasoned written request to the chairperson of the Examination Board no later than two weeks prior to their oral examination. The observer may not be a student who is to be examined by the examiner concerned during that academic year, nor may they have any blood or family ties up to and including the fourth degree, nor may they be anyone with whom the student has a personal involvement. The observer may only take notes.

The examiner may request the chairperson of the Examination Board to appoint a member of the independent academic staff as an observer during the oral examination of one or more students.

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

Each faculty determines in its Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations how this inspection is organised.

The examiner keeps the copies of the examination, in whatever form the exam took place, for three months after the end of the academic year in which the examination was taken.

**Additional faculty regulations to Article 114, §3**

The request for an appointment must be sent by e-mail to the lecturer responsible for the course unit in question.

**§ 4.** To ensure pedagogically sound guidance, students may request an explanation of the results of examinations within a period of five calendar days following publication of the results in accordance with Article 145 of these regulations.

**§ 5.** After receiving feedback, students may request a copy of their written examination by submitting the "Exam Copy Request Form" to the lecturer and the faculty secretariat no later than on 1 December of the following academic year; the form can be found at [www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/praktische-info-voorstudenten/examens-en-deliberatie/examenregeling#paragraph--id--84103](http://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/praktische-info-voorstudenten/examens-en-deliberatie/examenregeling#paragraph--id--84103). This copy must be treated as private and confidential and may only be used in relation to the student's educational advancement.

Any student who reproduces and/or disseminates such copy will be liable to sanctions as set out in the 'Order and Disciplinary Regulations for Students of Vrije Universiteit Brussel'.

## **Article 115 (examination modalities)**

**§ 1.** The course unit description explains the modalities under which the exams are administered.

**§ 2.** No digital written exams are organised remotely.

**§ 3.** When taking digital oral exams, supervision is carried out via webcam. Students will be asked to make themselves clearly visible in the picture and hold their student card in front of the webcam at the beginning of the exam. This form of supervision is necessary to identify the

student and ensure that the examinations are conducted fairly; this is in itself essential for due and proper performance of the study contract.

In the case of webcam monitoring, personal data is processed. This processing is carried out on the basis of performance of the study contract (Art. 6(1)(b) of the GDPR) with the student concerned and with the objective of ensuring that the examinations are conducted fairly. Images may also be recorded in the context of monitoring and fraud prevention and will in that case be kept until after the Examination Board meeting.

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

**§ 4.** Digital written examinations on campus can be organised in such a way that they can only be taken via a specific browser. Prior to the examination, students must follow the necessary steps regarding the use of this browser, otherwise the student will not be able to participate in the exam and will thus be registered as absent.

**§ 5.** If a student experiences technical difficulties while taking a digital examination, they should contact the examiner (or a member of the teaching team or supervisor designated by the examiner) immediately. If the student fails to contact the examiner immediately, the exam result may be determined on the basis of the answers that the student has already given, where applicable.

#### **Article 116 (derogation from examination modalities)**

**§ 1.** No later than on the dates stated below, a student may, for compelling reasons, ask the chairperson of the Examination Board to grant a derogation from the proposed examination format with regard to the teaching material for one or more course units:

- first examination period, first session: 1 December
- second examination period, first session: 1 May
- second session: 15 July

In exceptional circumstances, this period and/or type of reasons may be changed.

**§ 2.** The chairperson of the Examination Board will inform the Dean and the lecturer(s) in charge of any permitted change.

#### **Article 117 (identification)**

**§ 1.** Students must be able to identify themselves at the exam by means of a valid student card as stipulated in Article 7 of these regulations.

**§ 2.** Students are responsible for filling in their personal and administrative details relating to the examination fully and correctly.

**§ 3.** If identification is not possible, the lecturer in charge of the course unit may decide to record the student as being absent.

## Article 118 (irregularities)

**§ 1.** If an academic staff member suspects or detects that a student has committed an irregularity while taking the examinations or other forms of evaluation, they must report this in writing to the Dean immediately. If an examiner, or another person in charge of supervision, determines that a student has committed irregularities during an examination, they will inform the student accordingly and may terminate the ongoing examination of that student, if necessary after seizing the disputed documents and the copy already produced.

A student who is aware of possible irregularities committed by other students can report this to the Dean or supervisors during the exam. Such report will be treated confidentially.

### Additional faculty regulations to Article 118,§1

The student who wishes to report a suspected irregularity should send an email to [decaan.es@vub.be](mailto:decaan.es@vub.be).

**§ 2.** Any behaviour by a student in the context of a course unit that makes or attempts to make a correct assessment of their own or other students' knowledge, insight and/or skills completely or partially impossible is deemed an irregularity.

Any form of fraud that constitutes a breach of scientific integrity, including the use of statements or texts produced by generative AI applications without reference to original sources<sup>1</sup>, or the simulation or falsification of research data, is deemed an irregularity as referred to in this article. Possession during the examination of a mobile phone or smartphone or any other (electronic) device whose use has not been explicitly permitted is also deemed an irregularity within the meaning of this article. The mere possession of such a device suggests that the student intended to use it in a way that could influence the forming of a correct assessment of their knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

To ensure compliance with this provision, the university may carry out random checks on the possession of unauthorised devices during the examination and collect the necessary evidence.

Plagiarism is also deemed an irregularity under the provisions of this article. Plagiarism is understood to mean the use of someone else's work, whether or not in edited form, without accurate citation of the source. Plagiarism may relate to various forms of work, such as text, images, music, databases, structure, lines of thought, ideas. More specifically, the following situations, among others, are deemed to constitute plagiarism:

- A student copies work from other authors, although citing the source, without using quotation marks in the case of a verbatim copy (or translation);

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<sup>1</sup> Students may not present work generated by AI as their own. Under no circumstances may reference be made to primary source material where the work and citations have been generated by generative AI applications and these applications are not mentioned. Each source to which students refer must be consulted, assessed and processed by the students themselves to substantiate their work. Additional provisions regarding the use of AI may be included in the faculty regulations.

- A student incorporates (translated) excerpts from other authors, whether verbatim or not (translated), without citing the source;
- A student refers to primary source material where they copy (or translate) the work and the citation verbatim from unlisted secondary sources;
- A student uses (translated) excerpts from other authors, with or without citing the source, with minor and/or misleading modifications.

VUB reserves the right to check for plagiarism and the use of generative AI applications using the tools it deems appropriate for this purpose.

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| <p><b>Additional faculty regulations to Article 118,§2</b></p> |
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Students must properly acknowledge and document their use of AI tools (including but not limited to paraphrasing tools, translation software, and generative AI models) by adhering to the instructions in the course information sheet or on the course's Canvas page, or in the absence of such instructions, by attaching an addendum to the work that explains where, why and how the tools were used.

**§ 3.** If the facts are proven, the Dean will decide, possibly after consultation with the chairperson of the Examination Board, whether or not to impose an examination-related disciplinary decision. The student concerned may continue to participate in the examinations pending a decision by the Dean.

If the student's individual guilt cannot be demonstrated, but it is determined on the basis of objective evidence that the examination taken or the assessment can no longer serve as a reliable basis for forming an accurate judgement of the student's knowledge, understanding and/or skills, the course instructor concerned may decide that a score of 0/20 should be assigned for that examination or assessment component. This result does not constitute an examination-related disciplinary measure.

**§ 4.** The student has the right to be heard in this regard. The faculty ombudsperson will be invited to attend, as will the lecturer (or members of the teaching team). The student has the right to inspect the file and may be assisted by counsel during the hearing.

**§ 5.** The Dean may decide on (a combination of) the following examination-related disciplinary sanctions:

- a 0/20 for the exam or paper relating to the course unit or part thereof in one or more examination periods of the current academic year;
- exclusion from one or more exam periods: the student cannot obtain any credit for the courses taken during one or more exam periods of the current academic year (UGS examination result for the course units), whereby the decision may apply to all the course units taken;
- exclusion from the institution: immediate discontinuation of enrolment in the current academic year. This sanction leads to immediate loss of the student status;

- a ban on (re-)enrolment at the institution for one or more academic years.

Depending on the severity of the infringement, the 'exclusion from one or more examination periods' sanction may also be imposed with regard to other study programmes for which the student is enrolled within the same faculty.

**§ 6.** The severity of the violation and the level of punishment are assessed, among other things, on the basis of the following elements:

- the nature and extent of the irregularity;
- the student's experience;
- the intention to commit the cheating/deception.

When assessing the severity of the sanction to be imposed, the student's cooperation in the investigation may also be taken into account, including voluntarily reporting the involvement of other students, provided that the student provides specific, relevant and verifiable evidence in this regard. Such cooperation may lead to a lesser sanction being imposed.

**§ 7.** The student concerned may lodge an internal appeal with the chairperson of the Internal Appeal Committee within seven calendar days (expiry period starting on the day after notification of the decision), in accordance with the modalities and procedure set out in Article 153.

The lodging of an internal appeal against the Dean's decision shall result in the Internal Appeals Committee reassessing the case in its entirety with full authority, meaning that a more severe sanction can also be imposed.

**§ 8.** In the event of serious irregularities, a penalty may be imposed after the exam grade has been determined, in which case such exam grade shall be deemed invalid and any credit certificates, certificates of completion and attestations or diplomas issued - regardless of when the irregularity was discovered - may be declared null and void and cancelled.

**§ 9.** The application of this provision does not affect the application of the 'Order and disciplinary regulations for students of Vrije Universiteit Brussel', insofar as the facts may give rise to the initiation of disciplinary proceedings as provided for in article 3 of the aforementioned disciplinary regulations.

#### **Article 119 (minor irregularities)**

By way of derogation from Article 118, in cases of minor irregularities - and provided these are not repeated - the Dean may notify the student by email of the irregularities identified and inform the student that the Dean is considering imposing a 0/20 grade for that course unit or for an examination component thereof as a sanction. If the student does not agree with the sanction being considered, they must inform the Dean by email accordingly within seven days of receiving

the notification. The Dean will then initiate the procedure provided for in Article 118, § 4 and, if he deems the irregularities proven, impose a sanction as provided for in Article 118, § 5. In the absence of a response from the student or on agreement, the sanction considered will be imposed.

## **CHAPTER V. – Master's thesis**

### **Article 120 (subject, supervisor, Supervisory Board members)**

**§ 1.** A master's thesis must be included in every master's programme. With regard to the master's thesis, each faculty determines in its Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations when the students communicate the following information to the Dean:

- the subject of the master's thesis;
- the approval of the supervisor;
- where applicable, an indication of the objective and method.

#### **Additional faculty regulations to Article 120,§1**

The administrative procedures for the master's thesis are carried out digitally in the 'Master Thesis Information System' (MaThIS).

The student requests a subject and supervisor, via MaThIS, at the latest by:

- 1 December of the graduation year, or
- 1 November of the graduation year if the student wishes to graduate at the end of the first examination session in application of article 133.

The supervisor's approval is given through MaThIS. In case the request is rejected, the student must submit a new request via MaThIS within 14 days.

Exceptionally, students may still be allowed to submit their master's thesis for the second examination period. The reasoned request must be submitted via e-mail to the faculty secretariat (faces@vub.be) at the latest on 1 February. After approval of the Dean, a subject and supervisor must be requested in MaThIS by 1 March at the latest.

The master's thesis must be written in the language of the programme. In Dutch-language programmes, the master's thesis may be written in English or French, provided that the supervisor agrees. In this case, the student must attach a summary (at least 1 page) in Dutch to the master's thesis.

Programme-specific guidelines can be found in the course description of the relevant master's thesis.

For the Master's Thesis Handelsingenieur: Handelsmissie, the Master's Thesis Business Engineering-Trade Mission, the Master's Thesis: Pre-doctoraal traject and the Master's Thesis: Predoctoral Track a separate regulation will be included in the programme sub-division, to replace the provisions in chapter V.

**§ 2.** The list of the master's theses, stating the topic, the supervisor and at least one Supervisory Board member appointed by the faculty, is submitted for approval. The supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations specify the competent body and set the deadlines by which this has to be done.

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| Additional faculty regulations to Article 120,§2 |
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The bureau of the faculty will approve the list of master's theses along with their subjects and supervisors at its last meeting before winter break.

The bureau of the faculty will appoint the assessor(s) at its first meeting after submission of the master's thesis.

**§ 3.** A supervisor must be an independent academic staff member, a post-doctoral research assistant or guest professor, or another member of the academic staff who holds a doctorate. In principle, the Supervisory Board members are members of the academic staff of VUB. The faculty may decide to appoint one Supervisory Board member from among experts outside the institution. The supplementary faculty provisions can stipulate that more than one supervisor can be designated. Only one of those supervisors will be responsible in academic terms.

## **Article 121 (amendments)**

**§ 1.** Changes of subject, a change of supervisor by the student or the supervisor withdrawing from the assignment must be reported to the Dean in writing. Reasons for this must be given in each case.

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| Additional faculty regulations to Article 121,§1 |
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Any change of subject and/or change of supervisor must be requested by the student at least 3 months before the submission date of the master's thesis, by sending an e-mail to [masterthesis.es@vub.be](mailto:masterthesis.es@vub.be).

**§ 2.** In accordance with the provisions of Article 120, a new subject and/or another supervisor must be designated, subject to the deadlines where applicable.

## **Article 122 (supervisor guidance)**

The supervisor undertakes to provide the student with guidance on a regular basis, while the student

undertakes to keep their supervisor informed of the research progress made. In the event of non-compliance, the student or the supervisor concerned may notify the Dean in writing accordingly.

### **Article 123 (date of submission)**

The faculty determines the dates on which the master's thesis is submitted annually, preferably before 15 August of the calendar year in which the academic year begins; these dates are included in the Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations or in the procedure set out on the faculty student portal.

#### **Additional faculty regulations to Article 123**

The master's thesis must be submitted before the first examination period, at the latest by the last Monday before the start of the study period. For the Bedrijfskunde and Management programmes, this must be done at the latest by the first Monday of the study period.

For the second examination period, the master's thesis must be submitted at the latest by the Monday of the second week prior to the start of the second examination period.

Students in a graduation year who, in accordance with Article 133, wish to graduate at the end of the first examination session must submit their master's thesis no later than by the last Monday before the winter holidays.

If the deadline for submitting the thesis is a public holiday, the deadline will be postponed to the next business day.

### **Article 124 (form of submission)**

**§ 1.** The master's thesis must be submitted to the faculty in digital form. The Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations determine whether one or more copies of the master's thesis are to be submitted in print. The Supplementary Faculty Education and Examinations Regulations state that, together with their master's thesis, students must submit a publishable summary as well as an abstract to be included in the standard lists of theses published in Belgian specialist journals.

#### **Additional faculty regulations to Article 124, §1**

A master's thesis can only be submitted electronically.

The student is obliged to upload the master's thesis to the platform specified by the faculty.

The student is exempted from the summary and from the abstract for inclusion in the common listings of theses in Belgian journals.

**§ 2.** The digital version of the master's thesis for which the student has obtained a credit is kept by the University Library.

The student agrees to the publication of the master's thesis under the conditions set out in VUB's General Privacy Statement, unless the student explicitly withdraws this consent using the 'Declaration of Disclosure of Master's Thesis' form or unless the supervisor objects to it.

The Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations determine the procedure and the modalities for publication.

**Additional faculty regulations to Article 124,§2**

If the student wishes to withdraw the consent for publication and/or if the supervisor objects to the publication, they must send a message to [masterthesis.es@vub.be](mailto:masterthesis.es@vub.be) no later than the day on which the master's thesis is submitted.

The student must attach the form 'Declaration of Publication Master's Thesis' to his request.

**§ 3.** The student must be able to prove the authenticity of the research material.

**Additional faculty regulations to Article 124,§3**

All research material should remain available and should be immediately deposited with the Deanery as soon as possible in the event of a dispute. It should also be bundled in a clear and comprehensible manner.

**Article 125 (assessment)**

**§ 1.** The supervisor and the Supervisory Board members will discuss and assess the master's thesis, without prejudice to the provisions of § 2.

**§ 2.** If a public oral defence is not provided for all students with regard to the master's thesis, students will be given access to the reasoned report drawn up by the supervisor and the Supervisory Board member(s) and the proposed examination mark at their request. On that basis, a student may decide whether or not to proceed with an oral public defence of their master's thesis with the supervisor and the Supervisory Board member(s), among other things should the student concerned wish to contest the grade awarded at that moment.

**Additional faculty regulations to Article 125,§2**

The substantiated report of the supervisor and the assessors and the proposed exam mark is communicated to the student through MaThiS. The student who wishes to do so can, within three calendar days after the announcement of the result, submit a request, via [masterthesis.es@vub.be](mailto:masterthesis.es@vub.be), to defend their master's thesis orally.

**§ 3.** The student concerned may be required to conduct an oral public defence on the basis of a reasoned report.

**§ 4.** If a public oral defence is provided for all students, the Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations state whether the student is provided with a qualitative assessment for the defence.

Additional faculty regulations to Article 125, §4

For the Master's programme in Sociology, the oral defence is mandatory, and the student receives the reports from the supervisor and the assessors at least three calendar days before the oral defence.

For the Master's programmes in Communicatiewetenschappen, Communication Studies, Toegepaste Economische Wetenschappen, Handelsingenieur, Business Engineering: Business and Technology, and International Business, the oral defence is mandatory, and the student receives the qualitative assessment after the oral defence.

**§ 5.** The Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations may provide for a procedure to derogate from the public nature of the oral defence. The decision to override the public nature of the defence must be justified on the basis of exceptional circumstances in each case.

**§ 6.** The Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations may provide for a procedure to replace the supervisor or a Supervisory Board member if they cannot be present at the oral defence in the event of force majeure or a legitimate reason for being indisposed.

### **Article 126 (reports)**

The reports drawn up by the supervisor and the Supervisory Board member(s) are available to the members of the Examination Board, and it must be possible to consult these during the meeting.

### **Article 127 (supervision by more than one institution)**

In the event of joint supervision of a master's thesis by two or more institutions, the modalities of this joint supervision will be set out in the cooperation agreement.

## **CHAPTER VI. – Examination Board**

### **Article 128 (examination board)**

For all bachelor's and master's programmes, bridging and preparatory programmes and postgraduate programmes, an Examination Board will be set up for the entire study programme.

### **Article 129 (composition)**

**§ 1.** The competent faculty body will determine the names of the Examination Board members before the start of the academic year. It will also determine whether replacements can be nominated to deputise for members.

#### **Additional faculty regulations to Article 129,§1**

Unless the Faculty council decides otherwise for a particular academic year, the following composition applies to the Examination Board:

- The dean (chairman);
- The academic secretary (secretary);
- The chairmen of the programme councils.

Substitutes may be appointed:

- The dean and the academic secretary are replaced by the vice-dean;
- The chairperson of the programme council is replaced by the secretary of the programme council concerned.

If the chairperson or secretary of the Social Sciences programme council is not connected to the VUB in the main order, or if the secretary of the programme council is not a ZAP-member, the previous VUB chairperson of that programme council shall be designated as the substitute.

For the bachelor in Social Sciences, the Examination Board will be expanded by three members of the University of Ghent who are entitled to vote.

**§ 2.** The Examination Board is constituted in a representative manner, comprising at least six independent academic staff members with voting rights, unless the total number of examiners is fewer. In order to make a valid decision regarding a student, at least half of the Board members must participate in the deliberation.

**§ 3.** The faculty ombudspersons may not participate in an Examination Board as voting members. In cases where an ombudsperson nevertheless wishes to participate in the Examination Board as a voting member, they must then be replaced as an ombudsperson by their deputy in the faculty during the deliberation. The faculties establish the necessary rules in their Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations for this purpose.

## Additional faculty regulations to Article 129,§3

If one of the faculty ombudspersons is a voting member of the examination board, he will need to be replaced by the other faculty ombudsperson.

**Article 130 (chairperson and secretary)**

§ 1. For each Examination Board, a chairperson and a secretary as well as replacements to deputise for both positions are appointed by the competent faculty body before the start of the academic year. Their names are to be communicated to the faculty ombudsperson by the Dean.

§ 2. The name of the chairperson of the Examination Board will be announced to the students during the academic year.

**Article 131 (members in an advisory capacity)**

The following persons may take part in the functioning of an Examination Board in an advisory capacity:

- the Dean, who may attend and chair all meetings of the Examination Boards for their faculty;
- the supervisor of a master's thesis;
- the faculty ombudsperson;
- the faculty secretary;
- a member of the administrative staff appointed by the Dean to prepare the deliberation;
- the study adviser.

**CHAPTER VII. – Deliberation and study progress based on examinations**

**Section 1: Powers of the Examination Board**

**Article 132 (powers of the examination board)**

§ 1. The Examination Board has the following powers:

1. adjusting an exam grade in the event of a material error, a gross irregularity or obvious unreasonableness;
2. taking a measure to monitor study progress in accordance with Article 88;
3. declaring a student to have passed the entire study programme in a reasoned manner. To this end, the Examination Board will weigh up its final assessment vis-à-vis the objectives of the study programme and any specialisation undertaken by the student by including

specific choices to broaden or deepen their knowledge. The application of this article at least expects the student to have demonstrated that special personal or family circumstances exist and that the aforementioned objectives have been achieved.

The fact that a student is deemed to have passed in overall terms does not mean that they are eligible for a credit certificate for those courses units that they have not passed. If the student is deemed not to have passed, they must retake everything that they have been found to have failed.

4. in exceptional circumstances, the Examination Board may, in derogation of Article 144, determine the degree of merit with which the diploma is awarded.

**§ 2.** The Examination Board competent for the Master of Medicine degree has the additional authority to decide whether the student is allowed to continue clinical internships.

## **Section 2: Conduct of deliberation**

### **Article 133 (deliberation meetings)**

Each Examination Board meets at least twice per academic year. The first meeting concerns dealing with the examination results of the first and second examination periods in the first session. The second meeting concerns dealing with the second session. Deliberation can only be organised for students in a graduation year at the end of the first examination period of the first session, in accordance with the modalities set out in the Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations. Students who wish to graduate at the end of the first examination period of the first session are to request this in the Student SelfService portal.

#### **Additional faculty regulations to Article 133**

A deliberation at the end of the first examination session of the first examination period may be organized for students who are in a graduation year and:

1. only have to take examinations for courses of the first semester;
2. only have to complete their internship; and/or
3. only have to complete their Bachelor's and/or Master's thesis and were already registered for this in a previous academic year or have the agreement from their supervisor

The student who wishes to make use of this option should apply for this at the latest by 1 November via the Student Self-service. Students may not waive their application for early graduation save in exceptional circumstances.

### **Article 134 (conduct of deliberation and voting)**

**§ 1.** The activities of the Examination Board during the deliberation will be accurately recorded in the minutes by the secretary of the Examination Board. The minutes, signed by the chairperson

and secretary of the Examination Board, are available to the Rector and the faculty ombudsperson.

**§ 2.** The Examination Board has absolute authority and acts as a college. A decision concerning a student is taken by way of a simple majority. In the case of a tied vote, the decision will be made in favour of the student. Each member has only one vote, regardless of the number of course units for which they have been the examiner. Members of the Examination Board cannot take part in the deliberation if blood or family ties up to and including the fourth degree are involved. Each voting member of the Examination Board is entitled to request a secret ballot.

#### **Article 135 (attendance)**

Attendance at the deliberation is mandatory for all members of the Examination Board with voting rights. Being legitimately indisposed must be communicated to the chairperson of the Examination Board or to the Dean beforehand.

The deliberation can be organised electronically.

#### **Article 136 (discretion)**

The members of the Examination Board and all persons present at the deliberation ex officio are obliged to safeguard the confidential nature of the discussions.

### **Section 3: Study progress based on examinations**

#### **Article 137 (exam grade)**

**§ 1.** One exam grade is assigned for each course unit. The exam grade is expressed in the form of an integer from 0 to 20 or in the form of a non-numeric score. The exam grade is calculated in accordance with the calculation method described in the course unit description.

**§ 2.** The exam grade calculated in accordance with § 1 is rounded down to the lower grade for decimals < (less than) 0.5 and rounded up for decimals ≥ (greater than or equal to) 0.5. Partial grades are never rounded, only the final grade.

**§ 3.** Absence from a mandatory part of the evaluation results in absent as a result code, unless specified otherwise in the course unit description.

#### **Article 138 (passing a course unit)**

**§ 1.** Students obtain a credit certificate for each course unit they have passed. The pass mark for a course unit is at least 10/20. The document attached to the credit certificate is issued once only at the student's request. A student cannot forgo a credit certificate.

**§ 2.** A credit certificate remains valid indefinitely within the relevant study programme at the institution where it was obtained.

### **Article 139 (passing the first year of the bachelor's full-time standard study path)**

**§ 1.** Students in the first year of the bachelor's full-time standard study path are automatically deemed to have passed if examinations have been taken for all first-year course units of the bachelor's full-time standard study path and:

1. All examinations have resulted in a credit certificate, or
2. the following cumulative conditions are met:
  - the student achieves a weighted average of at least 55%;
  - the student does not achieve an examination result lower than 8/20;
  - the weighted points deficit is a maximum of 18;
  - the student obtains a maximum of three points below 10/20, spread over a maximum of two course units;
  - the student has passed those course units with a mandatory internship component, for which no deficit is tolerated. tolerated fail grades will be tolerated for all other first-year course units.

In the case of exemptions being granted, the maximum permitted weighted deficit is determined proportionally.

**§ 2.** Within the academic year, a student may take advantage of a second examination opportunity to retake a tolerated fail grade permitted in accordance with the previous paragraph; if the tolerated fail grade relates to two course units, the student must retake both. The student concerned must submit a written request to this effect to the faculty secretariat within a deadline period of seven calendar days from the day after the electronic publication of the results in accordance with article 145 of these regulations.

If the student indicates that they wish to take advantage of a second examination opportunity for a tolerated fail grade, the original result will irrevocably cease to apply and the newly achieved result will become final. The previously pronounced deliberation result will be adjusted accordingly.

### **Article 140 (average percentage result of a study programme)**

**§ 1.** To determine the percentage for the overall study programme, all examination marks obtained for a course unit in the context of a diploma contract or an examination contract for the purpose of obtaining a diploma are taken into account.

**§ 2.** The weighting of the course units is based on the number of ECTS credits associated with the course unit.

**§ 3.** The percentage calculated in accordance with § 1 and § 2 is rounded down to the underlying percentage for decimals < (less than) 0.5 and rounded up for decimals ≥ (greater than or equal to) 0.5.

#### **Article 141 (transferring different exam components)**

**§ 1.** If the final result for a course unit consists of several partial results, the results of these individual evaluations/components that cannot be retaken in the second session will be retained, unless an alternative form of examination or alternative calculation of results for the next examination period is included in the course unit description.

**§ 2.** Partial results of individual evaluations/components that can be retaken in the second session will not be transferred to the second session, unless stipulated otherwise in the course unit description.

Partial results will not be transferred to a subsequent academic year, unless stipulated otherwise in the course unit description.

If the course unit description allows a transfer of partial results of at least 10/20 or passed, the conditions for transfer will be included in the course unit description, and it will also be stipulated whether a student can waive the partial result.

#### **Article 142 (conversion of exam grades)**

If a student takes course units at another institution in accordance with article 90 and Article 92 of these regulations, the examination for these course units will be taken at the time and place and in accordance with the modalities determined by the other institution. The examination grades obtained from the institution may be the subject of conversion.

### **CHAPTER VIII. – Awarding a degree or diploma**

#### **Article 143 (passing a study programme)**

**§ 1.** A student acquires a degree or diploma at the end of a study programme if they are deemed to have passed the study programme as a whole.

**§ 2.** The student is automatically deemed to have been successful at the end of the programme if they have passed all the examinations associated with the study programme and if all examinations have resulted in a credit certificate.

**§ 3.** At the end of a bachelor's programme, a bridging or preparatory programme or a master's programme (including advanced master's programmes), the student is also automatically

deemed to have been successful if they have passed all the examinations associated with the study programme and the following cumulative conditions are met:

- the student achieves a weighted average of at least 55% over the entire programme;
- the student does not achieve an examination result lower than 8/20 over the entire programme;
- the weighted points deficit achieved does not exceed the limits stated below:
  - o 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the full-time standard study path for the bachelor's programme: max. 18 GPT
  - o master's programme of 60 ECTS credits: max. 12 GPT
  - o master's programme of 90 ECTS credits: max. 13.5 GPT
  - o master's programme of 120 or more ECTS credits: max. 18 GPT
  - o bridging programme (s ECTS credits): max. 18 x s/90 GPT
  - o preparatory programme (s ECTS credits): max. 18 x s/90 GPT, with 18 GPT as a maximum, even if s > 90 ECTS credits;
- either within the entirety of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years of the full-time standard study path of the bachelor's programme and provided that the student has obtained a credit certificate or post-deliberation grade as referred to in Article 139 for all first-year course units of the full-time standard study path, or at the end of the other study programmes referred to above in this § 3, the student obtains a maximum of three points below 10/20, spread over a maximum of two course units;
- the student has passed in relation to the bachelor's thesis, the master's thesis and/or the mandatory internship, insofar as these course units are part of the study programme. Furthermore, the Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations determine for which course units, if any, a deficit (tolerated fail grade) is not tolerated.

If, because of a shortened study path, the study load of the programme either for the entirety of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the full-time standard study path of the bachelor's programme for a student is less than that generally provided for, and/or in the case of exemptions that have been granted, the maximum permitted weighted deficit is determined proportionally.

**§ 4.** A student who is deemed to have passed in accordance with § 3 of this article may take advantage of a second examination opportunity within the same academic year to retake a tolerated fail grade in accordance with this paragraph; if the tolerated fail grade relates to two course units, the student must retake both. The student concerned must submit a written request to this effect to the faculty secretariat within a period of seven calendar days from the day after the electronic publication of the results.

If the student indicates that they wish to take advantage of a second examination opportunity for a tolerated fail grade, the original result will irrevocably cease to apply and the newly achieved result will become final. The previously pronounced deliberation result will be adjusted accordingly.

**§ 5.** Students cannot be deemed to have passed for the entirety of the study programme if they have not yet completed the preparatory programme.

#### **Article 144 (degrees of merit)**

**§ 1.** Students who obtain a bachelor's, master's or teaching degree are awarded one of the following degrees of merit:

- passed - satisfactory, average final result less than 68%;
- passed with distinction, average final result from 68%;
- passed with high distinction, average final result from 77%;
- passed with the highest distinction, average final result from 85%.

**§ 2.** A degree of merit can only be awarded if a minimum number of ECTS credits has been obtained within the study programme at VUB. The minimum number of ECTS credits is:

- for a bachelor's programme, 60 ECTS credits,
- for a master's programme. at least half the total study load.

### **CHAPTER IX. – Announcement of results**

#### **Article 145 (announcement of exam results)**

**§ 1.** After each examination period, the results of the examinations are communicated to students via the Student SelfService portal.

**§ 2.** The results of the examinations taken in the first examination period of the first session will be announced to students on the first day of the first week of lectures in the second semester.

**§ 3.** The results of the examinations taken in the second examination period of the first session, and the results of the examinations taken in the second session, will be announced to students after deliberation by the Examination Board in accordance with the provisions set out in Article 146. The same applies to the results of those students who, in accordance with their request under the terms of Article 133, were the subject of deliberation by the Examination Board at the end of the first examination period of the first session.

#### **Additional faculty regulations to Article 145,§3**

The results of the examinations taken in the additional examination session of the first examination period as determined by article 8,§3 shall be communicated to the students at the latest 20 calendar days after the end of this additional examination session.

**Article 146 (announcement of the examination board's decision)**

After the deliberation, the chairperson of the Examination Board, the Dean or a member of the Examination Board designated by them will announce the decision taken by the Examination Board via the Student SelfService portal.

**Article 147 (points sheet and points list)**

Either an individual points list or an individual points sheet stating the examination mark per course unit as discussed by the Examination Board, including a proclamation code, is made available to each student in the Student SelfService portal.

## PART IV. – Legal protection

### CHAPTER I. – Ombudspersons

#### Article 148 (appointment and job description)

§ 1. Following consultation in the Education Council, the Vice-Rector for Education and Student Affairs will appoint at least one member of the independent academic staff per faculty as an ombudsperson for complaints regarding educational organisation and examination matters before the start of each academic year. Each faculty must designate a faculty deputy using the same procedure. A central ombudsperson and deputy for the same are to be appointed at the same time and as part of the same procedure. The names of the faculty ombudsperson, the central ombudsperson and their deputies, as well as details of where and when they can be reached, must be published via the VUB website (<https://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/praktische-info-voor-studenten/geef-ons-feedback/ombudspersoon>) at the very least throughout the entire academic year.

#### Additional faculty regulations to Article 148, §1

The faculty appoints two ombudspersons who can act as each other's substitutes in the event of unavailability or a conflict of interest.

§ 2. The faculty ombudspersons are authorised to receive complaints and comments from students that may relate to educational organisation, examination regulations, the examination procedure, the assessment of the master's thesis, the deliberation, the publication of results, study progress based on examinations and the obtaining of a credit certificate.

§ 3. The central ombudsperson is authorised to receive and deal with complaints and comments from students with regard to educational organisation, examination regulations, the examination procedure, the assessment of the master's thesis, the deliberation, the publication of results, study progress based on examinations and the obtaining of a credit certificate when the faculty ombudsperson is involved, as a result of which their independence and impartiality is jeopardised, or in the absence of the faculty ombudsperson, in which case they are prevented from performing their function.

§ 4. The ombudsperson concerned (central or faculty) mediates at the request of the students with the Dean, the chairperson of the Examination Board, the members of the academic staff and the faculty secretary with the aim of reaching an amicable settlement within the shortest possible time.

#### Article 149 (reporting)

The central and faculty ombudspersons report annually on their activities to the Vice-Rector for Education and Student Affairs before 15 November of the following academic year.

## **CHAPTER II. – Appeal procedures**

### **Article 150 (material errors)**

If a material error is identified in a study progress decision, this is to be reported formally to the Dean within 10 calendar days of the day on which it was made.

After this period, a material error can only be rectified in the following cases:

- if the correction is in the student's favour;
- if the material error involves a violation of legal terms and conditions;
- if the material error is demonstrably the result of serious negligence or a serious error on the part of the student.

An error that does not lead to a less favourable decision with regard to the student will be rectified by the Dean. The rectification is communicated to the student and adequately documented within the faculty.

If the error ascertained leads to a less favourable decision for the student, the error must be rectified by the body that made the original decision. If necessary, this body will be convened as soon as possible by the Dean. The rectification is communicated to the student and adequately documented within the faculty.

### **Article 151 (decisions against which an appeal can be lodged)**

The following study progress decisions may be appealed against internally and then externally in accordance with Article 153:

- a) examination decision, i.e. any decision that, whether or not on the basis of deliberation, involves a final assessment of compliance for a course unit, several course units of a study programme, or a course of study as a whole, in accordance with Article 132, Article 143 and Article 144 of these regulations;
- b) examination-related disciplinary decision, i.e. a sanction imposed as a result of facts concerning an exam, as provided for in Article 118 of these regulations;
- c) granting an exemption - i.e. lifting the obligation to take an examination for a course unit, or part thereof – in accordance with Article 87 of these regulations;
- d) decision requiring attendance of a bridging and/or preparatory programme and determining the study load of such a programme;
- e) imposing a measure to monitor study progress, in accordance with Article 88 and Article 88bis of these regulations;
- f) refusing to include a particular course unit in the study contract for which the student pursuing an individual study path has not previously enrolled;
- g) decision refusing enrolment on the basis of an inadequate learning account or a learning account lower than or equal to 0, unless this results from a general regulatory provision
- h) a decision on substantial differences in competencies if a credit certificate was acquired more than five years previously.

A decision to refuse adjustments requested by students with disabilities may be appealed internally in accordance with Article 154.

### **Article 152 (composition of internal appeals committee)**

A central Appeals Committee is set up with the authority to hear all internal appeals lodged against the study progress decisions referred to in Article 151.

The Appeals Committee is composed of a chairperson and two assessors. The Academic Council designates the persons who can take on the role of chairperson and assessor within the Internal Appeals Committee, as well as their deputies, from among the members of the independent academic staff (including emeriti).

The Internal Appeals Committee may invite the following persons to the hearing for the purpose of dealing with the case:

- the faculty ombudsperson,
- the study programme supervisor of the faculty to which the student belongs,
- the faculty secretary or the faculty policy officer for education,
- a representative of the Rector with expertise in education regulations,
- If the Appeal Committee deems it expedient, it may be assisted in the handling of an appeal by the chairperson of the Examination Board concerned.

The function of the secretariat of the Internal Appeals Committee is performed by a representative of the Rector with expertise in education regulations.

### **Article 153 (internal appeals procedure with the exception of the decision concerning reasonable adjustment)**

**§ 1.** An appeal can be lodged against a study progress decision which the student or person to whom the decision relates considers is tainted by a breach of the law. The appeal must be lodged within a limitation period of seven calendar days. For appeals against examination decisions, this limitation period commences on the day after the electronic announcement of the examination results in accordance with Article 145. For other appeals, this limitation period commences on the day after announcement of the decision.

If the inspection of the examination paper is planned for later than the five calendar days provided for in Article 114, § 3, the appeal must likewise be lodged within the limitation period. The student must expressly mention this in the appeal petition and must substantiate their complaint regarding the exam decision with factual evidence within seven calendar days of the limitation period. If they fail to do so, their appeal will automatically be deemed inadmissible, provided there are no other grounds for appeal and provided that no factual description of the objections raised has yet been included. If this option is exercised, the expansion of the appeal may relate solely to the contested exam result.

The appeal must be lodged by means of a digital petition (in Dutch), failing which the appeal shall be deemed inadmissible; the relevant form can be found at <https://www.vub.be/nl/studeren-aan-de-vub/praktische-info-voor-studenten/geef-ons-feedback/beroep-aantekenen>.

If the person filing the appeal does not have a VUB email address, the appeal must be lodged by means of a signed and dated petition, drafted in Dutch, submitted by way of registered letter to the Internal Appeals Committee, attn the Chairperson, Education and Student Affairs – BraeM 3, Pleinlaan 2, 1050 Brussels, failing which the appeal shall be deemed inadmissible. In the latter case, the postmark on the registered mail is deemed to be the date of the appeal.

In the event of technical problems due to a malfunction in the application used to submit the digital petition, the student must send an email the same day containing their petition (in Dutch), the supporting documents and proof of the technical malfunction to [interneberoepen\\_os@vub.be](mailto:interneberoepen_os@vub.be). No later than the next working day, the student must send the same documents by registered letter to the Internal Appeals Committee, attn the Chairperson, Education and Student Affairs – BraeM 3, Pleinlaan 2, 1050 Brussels.

As a minimum, the identity of the student concerned, the disputed decision(s) and a factual description and reasons for the objections invoked are to be included in the petition. The burden of proof rests entirely with the student, who must submit all the relevant information and documents to the Internal Appeals Committee. The Internal Appeals Committee will not actively question the student on this matter. Insofar as the student believes that they can invoke exceptional circumstances as referred to in Article 132 § 1, 3, they must demonstrate in the petition that special circumstances exist and that they have achieved the objectives in overall terms.

**§ 2. The appeal can result in:**

- the reasoned rejection of the appeal on the grounds of inadmissibility or lack of jurisdiction; this decision may be made by the Internal Appeals Committee or the Chairperson;
- a decision by the Internal Appeals Committee that either upholds or reverses the original decision, providing a reasoned explanation. If the appeal is directed against an exam-related disciplinary decision, imposed in accordance with Article 118 or Article 119 of these regulations, the Internal Appeals Committee may decide to impose a more severe sanction, as provided for in Article 118, § 5, than that imposed by the Dean.

Examination of the admissibility of the appeal and examination of the authority are always dealt with on the basis of the file, without the student being heard. In principle, the Appeals Committee will also examine the merits of the appeal on the basis of documents, except where the appeal is directed against a decision as referred to in Article 151,(1) (a), (b) or (e), in which case the student will be invited to be physically present at the Appeals Committee hearing.

The Appeals Committee may invite anyone whose presence it deems useful for dealing with the case to be heard at any time.

The deliberation and vote of the Internal Appeals Committee are secret.

A decision will be taken by way of a majority vote of the three members of the Appeals Committee.

The decision shall be signed by the chairperson and the secretary of the Internal Appeals Committee, thereby ensuring that the decision and the reasons for the same are consistent with the deliberations.

The chairperson of the Internal Appeals Committee is responsible for maintaining order during the hearing.

If an external appeal is lodged against a decision arrived at by the Internal Appeals Committee or the appeal was wrongly declared inadmissible, the chairperson may decide to revoke that decision. Following such revocation, the chairperson will ask the Internal Appeals Committee to reach a new decision or take a new decision personally, depending on the body responsible for the revoked decision.

**§ 3.** Notwithstanding Article 6, § 4 of these regulations, the decision arrived at by the Internal Appeals Committee may also be communicated via the student's personal email address if the VUB email account has been deactivated or if the person lodging the appeal does not have a VUB email address, provided this was stated in the petition.

**§ 4.** An appeal against the decision taken pursuant to § 2 can be lodged with the *Raad voor betwistingen inzake studievoortgangsbepalingen*, as set out in Article 155.

**§ 5.** The documents the student concerned becomes aware of in the context of the appeal procedure may not be used for anything other than personal purposes. The student is therefore not permitted to reproduce and/or distribute these documents, under penalty of disciplinary sanctions as stipulated in the 'Order and Disciplinary Regulations for students of Vrije Universiteit Brussel'.

#### **Article 154 (internal appeal procedure for reasonable adjustment)**

**§ 1.** A student can, within a limitation period of seven calendar days starting on the day after notification of the decision, lodge an internal appeal with the dean against a decision to refuse reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities where the student concerned considers that such decision is tainted by a breach of law. The following will also be invited in an advisory capacity: the faculty ombudsperson, the faculty secretary and a student counsellor.

**§ 2.** The student concerned has the right to be heard on the merits of the case.

**§ 3.** The decision will be notified to the student within a period of twenty calendar days, commencing on the day following that on which the appeal is lodged.

**§ 4.** The documents the student concerned becomes aware of in the context of the appeal procedure may not be used for anything other than personal purposes. The student is therefore not permitted to reproduce and/or distribute these documents, under penalty of disciplinary sanctions as stipulated in the 'Order and Disciplinary Regulations for students of Vrije Universiteit Brussel'.

**Article 154bis (procedure for appealing against positioning tests (mandatory level tests and non-mandatory level tests))**

Students can appeal to the inter-institutional appeal body against the following decisions in accordance with the procedure available at [www.starttoets-ijkingstoets.be](http://www.starttoets-ijkingstoets.be) :

- a) their results in the test;
- b) failure to obtain support measures when taking part in a test, or the nature of such measures;
- c) failure to obtain an exemption from taking part in a test;
- d) failure to obtain an exemption from a mandatory remedial course for the students as defined in the cross-institutional regulations on positioning tests:
  - based on standard exemptions;
  - based on special individual skills.

**Article 155 (external appeal procedure)**

After exhausting the internal appeal option in accordance with Article 153 of these regulations, students may lodge an external appeal with the *Raad voor betwistingen inzake studievoortgangsbepalingen* in accordance with the provisions of the Higher Education Code and the Decree of 4 April 2014 on the organisation and administration of justice of certain Flemish administrative courts. This appeal must be submitted in Dutch via secure mail within a limitation period of seven calendar days starting from the day following notification of the decision taken pursuant to Article 153 (Address: *Raad voor betwistingen inzake studievoortgangsbepalingen* (DBRC), Koning Albert II-laan 15 bus 130, 1210 Brussels).

A copy of this petition must be sent to the Board at the same time via secure mail (for the attention of the chairperson of the Appeals Committee, Education and Student Affairs – BraeM 3, with address at Pleinlaan 2, 1050 Brussels).

In the absence of a timely decision within the period provided for in Article 153, the appeal must be lodged with the Council within the limitation period of seven calendar days following expiry of that period, unless the internal appeal body informs the student concerned of a later date on which it will give judgement before the expiry of the period available to it.

The documents the student concerned becomes aware of in the context of the appeal procedure may not be used for anything other than personal purposes. The student is therefore not permitted to use, reproduce and/or distribute these documents, under penalty of disciplinary

sanctions as stipulated in the 'Order and Disciplinary Regulations for students of Vrije Universiteit Brussel'.

### **CHAPTER III. – Medical certificates**

#### **Article 156 (medical certificates)**

**§ 1.** In the event of a student attempting to establish a case of force majeure or special individual circumstances by providing a medical certificate, the following medical certificates will not be accepted:

- an insufficiently completed certificate or a certificate that contains contradictions;
- a certificate based solely on the patient's statement;
- a certificate that is issued later than the day on which the examination, evaluation or compulsory teaching activity takes place.

**§ 2.** If the student participates in an exam, evaluation or mandatory class activity during the period of incapacity as stipulated in the medical certificate, the validity of the medical certificate will be null and void from that day and for the remaining duration.

### **CHAPTER IV – Liability of staff and Board members**

#### **Article 157 (liability of staff and board members)**

Non-contractual claims by students against (direct and indirect) auxiliary persons of VUB (including staff and Board members) are ineligible with regard to harm caused by the non-fulfilment of an obligation or duty arising from the student's contractual relationships with VUB to the fullest extent permitted by law.

## **PART V. – Transitional and concluding provisions**

### **Article 158 (supplementary faculty provisions and derogations from the central regulations)**

**§ 1.** The competent faculty body may propose special provisions and criteria as stipulated in these regulations and other faculty provisions supplementing these Teaching and Examination Regulations. The supplementary faculty provisions are approved by the Education Council.

**§ 2.** Derogations from the central regulations are possible with regard to article 8 and article 120, § 3 of the Teaching and Examination Regulations, as proposed by the competent faculty body. The faculty derogations are approved by the Education Council and included in the Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations. For postgraduate programmes and micro-credentials, exceptions may be made to the provisions set out in these regulations, given the specific nature of these programmes.

**§ 3.** For the BRUFACE masters programmes, the Faculty of Engineering may request a derogation from Article 129, Article 143, § 1 and Article 144, § 1 of the Teaching and Examination Regulations via the procedure referred to in § 1.

**§ 4.** Derogations from the provisions contained in these regulations may be permitted for students participating in international mobility programmes. The cooperation agreements are submitted to the Education Council for approval.

### **Article 159 (code of conduct)**

The code of conduct on transgressive behaviour, as stated at [https://www.vub.be/sites/default/files/2025-10/2025\\_Reglementen\\_Addendum\\_OER\\_NL.pdf](https://www.vub.be/sites/default/files/2025-10/2025_Reglementen_Addendum_OER_NL.pdf), forms an integral part of these regulations as an addendum.

### **Article 160 (amendments)**

Amendments to these regulations are only possible by way of a decision taken by the Academic Council, following advice from the Education Council.

### **Article 161 (MILO powers)**

With regard to teacher training, the powers on the Dean conferred in these regulations are exercised by the chairperson of MILO.

The powers granted to the faculty secretary in these regulations are exercised by the general coordinator of MILO with regard to teacher training.

**Article 162 (integration of academic higher education study programmes)**

These regulations apply in full to students of the academic higher education study programmes that were transferred to the university in the 2013-2014 academic year.

**Article 163 (entry into force)**

These regulations will enter into force as of the 2026-2027 academic year.