

Regulations on Internal Quality Assurance in Education

Faculty of Social Sciences



Inhoudsopgave

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These regulations outline the faculty component of internal quality assurance in education. The education to which these regulations refer is the regular teaching provided by the faculty in its Bachelor's and Master's programmes, Pre-Master's classes and minors. These regulations are in line with the University's quality assurance framework as described in various documents, including the assessment framework of the Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organization (NVAO), the VU Education Checklist and Action Plan and the VU Educational Quality Handbook.

1 Vision of education quality

The faculty believes that good quality education has the following characteristics:

- The education meets the explicit and implicit criteria set by stakeholders with regard to:
 - the intended objectives of the education;
 - the methods applied in the education in order to achieve these objectives;
 - the extent to which the education achieves these objectives;
- The education:
 - involves a process of continuous development;
 - puts improvements into practice;
 - anticipates and responds to changes.

2 Explicit quality criteria

- 2.1 The explicit quality criteria for the Bachelor's and Master's programmes, the Pre-Master's classes and the minors are described in the following documents:
- The assessment frameworks of the NVAO (National)
 - VU Educational Quality Handbook (VU)
 - The Academic and Examination Regulations (OER) (Faculty)
 - The Rules and Guidelines for the Examination Board (Faculty)
 - The Bachelor's programme Work Placement Regulations (Faculty)
 - The Master's Thesis Regulations (Faculty)
 - The Study Guidance Regulations (Faculty)
 - The Testing and Assessment Manual (Faculty)
 - The formal requirements for the Bachelor's and Master's thesis (Programme)
 - The assessment forms for the Bachelor's and Master's thesis (Programme)
- 2.2 The faculty's target score in student questionnaires is 3.5 or higher on a five-point scale. The National Student Survey norms are different: under 3.4 is insufficient, from 3.4 to 3.7 is sufficient, and above 3.7 is good.
- 2.3 The faculty targets for the first-year completion rate in Bachelor's programmes are:

<i>Completion rate category</i> ¹	<i>Target</i>
60 credits or more after one year	40% or above
42 credits or more after one year	70% or above
Drop-out rate in 1 st year	25% or less

¹ Cohort definition: first-year programme, main registration, including late registrations.



2.4 The faculty targets for the diploma completion rate in Bachelor's programmes are:

<i>Completion rate category2</i>	<i>Target</i>
Diploma in 3 years	45% or above
Diploma in 4 years	70% or above
Drop-out rate in 2 nd and 3 rd year	7% or less

2.5 The faculty targets for the students moving on from fulltime Pre-Master's classes to Master's programmes are:

<i>Completion rate category3</i>	<i>Target</i>
Students proceed to Master's after 1 year	70% or above
Drop-out rate in 1 st year	15% or less

2.6 The faculty targets for the diploma completion rate in fulltime Master's programmes are:

<i>Completion rate category4</i>	<i>Target</i>
Diploma in 1 year	60% or above
Diploma in 2 years	80% or above
Drop-out rate in 1 st and 2 nd year	5% or less

3 Stakeholders

The most important stakeholders with regard to the quality of the Bachelor's and Master's programmes, the Pre-Masters classes and the minors are: students, teaching staff, alumni and the professional world.

3.1 Students

- 3.1.1 The faculty surveys the views of students on the quality of the education by means of, among others, questionnaires.
- 3.1.2 The faculty evaluates each subject by means of a course evaluation questionnaire from the VU Centre of Educational Training, Assessment and Research (CETAR). The CETAR is responsible for the quality of the questionnaire. The Education Office supports teaching staff in ensuring questionnaires are completed. Shortly after completion, the CETAR compiles a report of the course evaluation results.
- 3.1.3 The faculty board establishes a procedure for the implementation of course evaluations. This procedure guarantees students' anonymity.
- 3.1.4 Teaching staff take note of the course evaluation results for the subjects in which they are involved and implement improvement measures, if necessary. If the results of the course evaluation give cause for doing so, the member of teaching staff must discuss them with his or her teaching manager.

2 Cohort definition: first-year programme, main registration, including late registrations and re-registrations.

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The faculty actively participates in the Dutch National Student Survey (NSE). The results of the NSE are available via the Education Office. In addition to several standard reports, the Education Office can also provide customized reports on request.

- 3.1.5 The Education Office places the questionnaire reports at the disposal of the faculty board portfolio holder for teaching and the teaching manager. The teaching manager places the reports at the disposal of the programme committee and the teaching staff involved in the evaluated education in so far as the need to safeguard students' anonymity permits this.
- 3.1.6 The teaching manager takes note of students' views on education quality, proposes measures for improvement, implements these measures or ensures that others do so and investigates whether these improvement measures have had an impact.
- 3.1.7 The faculty board portfolio holder for teaching takes note of students' views on education quality at faculty level, proposes measures for improvement, implements these measures or ensures that others do so and investigates whether these improvement measures have had an impact.

3.2 Teaching staff

- 3.2.1 The teaching staff on the programme meet several times a year to discuss quality and quality assurance in the programme. These meetings discuss the teaching staff's views on quality and quality assurance in the programme.
- 3.2.2 The teaching manager takes note of teaching staff's views on education quality, reports on these to the portfolio holder for teaching where necessary, proposes measures for improvement, implements these measures or ensures that others do so and investigates whether these improvement measures have had an impact.
- 3.2.3 The faculty board portfolio holder for teaching takes note of teaching staff's views on education quality at faculty level, proposes measures for improvement, implements these measures or ensures that others do so and investigates whether these improvement measures have had an impact and discuss about these things with students⁵.

3.3 Programme committee (Stakeholders: teaching staff and students)

- 3.3.1 Each Bachelor's and Master's programme has a programme committee. The programme committee for the Master's programme also acts as the programme committee for the associated Pre-Master's class.
- 3.3.2 The composition, appointment, term of office, tasks and public access to the meetings of the programme committee are regulated in the faculty Regulations.

⁵ For the Bachelor's and Master's and pre-master classes the obvious partner in this regard are the student members of the programme committee. For minors it is up to the teaching manager to decide who of the students to discuss this with, they may also be the studentmembers of the programme committee .



- 3.3.3 The faculty board is authorized to establish a joint programme committee for a Bachelor's programme and one or more related Master's programmes.
- 3.3.4 The programme committee meets four times a year and is issued with an annual schedule including regular topics by the faculty board.
- 3.3.5 The programme committee is free to discuss quality and quality assurance in the programme with the teaching manager as often as it sees fit. In such discussions, the following subjects will be discussed: performance with regard to the implicit and explicit quality criteria, the effectiveness of improvement measures taken, improvement plans, ambitions and priorities.
- 3.3.6 As soon as the results are available, the programme committee will discuss the results from student questionnaires on education quality with the teaching manager.
- 3.3.7 The programme committee discusses the issues identified in the light of the questionnaires and the associated solutions with the teaching manager. These meetings follow each discussion of the results from student questionnaires on education quality.
- 3.3.8 The programme committee can opt to exclude teaching staff members from the discussion of the results from the student questionnaires on education quality. However, the teaching staff members are involved in the discussion of the issues identified in the light of the questionnaires and the associated solutions.
- 3.3.9 The programme committee compiles a report on the discussion of the issues identified in the light of the questionnaires and the associated solutions. The programme committee makes this report available to students and teaching staff on the programme.
- 3.3.10 The programme committee conducts discussions with the teaching manager on: the views of teaching staff on the quality of education, the issues identified in the light of these views and the associated solutions.
- 3.3.11 Annually the programme committee discusses the appraisal of the internal quality assurance in education by using the VU Education Checklist and Action Plan.
- 3.3.12 The programme committee discusses the annual teaching report with the teaching manager.
- 3.3.13 The programme committee discusses the self-evaluation report, the assesment report and the accreditation report with the teaching manager.
- 3.3.14 The programme committee ascertains whether the teaching manager is implementing the proposed improvement measures. The programme committee investigates whether the improvement measures instigated actually lead to improvement within the set time-frame.

3.4 Alumni

- 3.4.1 Once every six years, the faculty conducts a survey into the views of its alumni on the quality of the Bachelor's and Master's programmes.
- 3.4.2 The teaching manager takes note of alumni's views on education quality at programme level, proposes measures for improvement, implements these measures



or ensures that others do so and investigates whether these improvement measures have had an impact.

- 3.4.3 The faculty board portfolio holder for teaching takes note of alumni's views on education quality at faculty level, proposes measures for improvement, implements these measures or ensures that others do so and investigates whether these improvement measures have had an impact.

3.5 The professional world

- 3.5.1 Several representatives from the professional world are members of a programme's advisory council. The management team of the academic department responsible for the programme discusses the quality and quality assurance in the Bachelor's and Master's programmes and Pre-Master's classes with the advisory council.
- 3.5.2 The teaching manager takes note of the views from the professional field on education quality, reports on these to the portfolio holder for teaching where necessary, proposes measures for improvement, implements these measures or ensures that others do so and investigates whether these improvement measures have had an impact.
- 3.5.3 The teaching manager takes note of the views from the professional field on education quality, proposes measures for improvement, implements these measures or ensures that others do so and investigates whether these improvement measures have had an impact.

4 Testing and Assessment

- 4.1 The Examination Board supervises the quality of interim examinations and examinations.
- 4.2 The form this supervision takes is regulated in the Rules and Guidelines for the Examination Board.

5 Annual teaching report

- 5.1 Every year, the teaching manager writes an annual teaching report on behalf of the management team of an academic department.
- 5.2 The annual teaching report discusses quality and quality assurance in the Bachelor's and Master's programmes and the Pre-Master's classes in which the academic department is involved and the minors of which the secretariat is held by the academic department. The annual teaching report includes a description of performance with regard to the implicit and explicit quality criteria, the effectiveness of improvement measures taken in the previous year, and improvement plans, ambitions and priorities for the upcoming year.
- 5.3 The faculty board portfolio holder for teaching determines the format of the annual teaching report and the themes addressed in it.



6 Internal accountability

- 6.1 Every year, the faculty board discusses quality and quality assurance in the Bachelor's and Master's programmes, the Pre-Master's classes and the minors with the management teams of the relevant academic departments. In this discussion, the following subjects will be discussed: performance with regard to the implicit and explicit quality criteria, the effectiveness of improvement measures taken in the previous year, and improvement plans, ambitions and priorities for the upcoming year.
- 6.2 As part of its preparations for this official meeting, the faculty board will have access to the academic department's annual teaching report.
- 6.3 The faculty board portfolio holder for teaching holds an annual discussion with teaching managers and the head of the Education Office on the themes from the assessment frameworks of the NVAO or the VU Educational Quality Handbook. The portfolio holder will decide on a theme for each year. In these discussions, the following subjects will be addressed: performance with regard to the implicit and explicit quality criteria, the effectiveness of improvement measures taken, improvement plans, ambitions and priorities.
- 6.4 In the annual meeting with his or her supervisor, a member of teaching staff will discuss his or her contribution to the quality of the education he or she provides. The supervisor may involve course evaluation results relating to the staff member's teaching in this discussion. In this discussion, the following subjects will be addressed: performance with regard to the implicit and explicit quality criteria, including the standards for academic staff's teaching qualifications outlined in the VU Educational Quality Handbook, the effectiveness of improvement measures taken, improvement plans, including professionalization courses for teaching staff, ambitions and priorities

7 External accountability

- 7.1 Once every six years, the faculty has its Bachelor's and Master's programmes inspected by an inspection committee and subsequently submits these programmes to the Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organization (NVAO) for accreditation.
- 7.2 Every year, the faculty board discusses quality and quality assurance in the faculty's Bachelor's and Master's programmes and the Pre-Master's classes with the Executive Board of VU University Amsterdam. In this discussion, the following subjects will be addressed: performance with regard to the implicit and explicit quality criteria, the effectiveness of improvement measures taken in the previous year, and improvement plans, ambitions and priorities for the upcoming year.
- 7.3 Each year the Steering Committee Educational Quality (STOK) of the VU University Amsterdam evaluates the quality of the VU University Amsterdam wide offered minors.

8 Role of teaching staff



The role of teaching staff with regard to quality and quality assurance in the faculty's Bachelor's and Master's programmes, the Pre-Master's classes and the minors involves:

- Identifying and highlighting shortcomings in the explicit criteria in programme-specific, faculty and University-wide regulations and other quality documents and investigating whether those responsible are taking action to resolve these;
- Facilitating the completion of questionnaires about students' views on the quality of education;
- Taking note of the course evaluation results for the subjects in which he or she is involved and implementing improvement measures, if necessary. If the results of the course evaluation give cause for doing so, the member of teaching staff must discuss them with his or her teaching manager;
- Consulting with fellow teaching staff on quality and quality assurance in the programme several times per year;
- Discussing his or her contribution to the quality of the education he or she provides in the annual meeting with his or her supervisor. The supervisor may involve course evaluation results relating to the staff member's teaching in this discussion. In this discussion, the following subjects will be addressed: performance with regard to the implicit and explicit quality criteria, including the standards for academic staff's teaching qualifications included in the VU Educational Quality Handbook, the effectiveness of improvement measures taken, improvement plans, including professionalization courses for teaching staff, ambitions and priorities.

9 Role of the teaching manager

The role of the teaching manager with regard to quality and quality assurance in the faculty's Bachelor's and Master's programmes, Pre-Master's classes and minors involves:

- Ensuring that programme-specific explicit quality criteria are kept up to date;
- Taking note of students' views on education quality, proposing measures for improvement, implementing these measures or ensuring that others do so and investigating whether these improvement measures have had an impact.
- Making available reports of questionnaires to the teaching staff and programme committee involved in the education evaluated.
- Talking to the member of teaching staff about the quality of his or her teaching if the course evaluation results give cause for this;
- Organizing the teaching staff meeting to discuss quality and quality assurance in the programmes several times per year;
- Taking note of the views of teaching staff on education quality, proposing measures for improvement, implementing these measures or ensuring that others do so and investigating whether these improvement measures have had an impact;
- Discussing quality and quality assurance in the programme with the programme committee. In this discussion, the following subjects will be addressed: performance with regard to the implicit and explicit quality criteria, the effectiveness of improvement measures taken, improvement plans, ambitions and priorities;



- Discussing the quality and the quality of the minors with the students. This discussion will include the following topics: performance versus implicit and explicit measures of quality, effectiveness of measures taken for improvement, improvement plans, ambitions and priorities;
- Discussing the annual teaching report, the self-evaluation report, the assesment report, the accreditation report and the VU Education Checklist and Action Plan with the programme committee;
- Taking note of the views of alumni on education quality at programme level, proposing measures for improvement on the basis of these views, implementing these measures or ensuring that others do so and investigating whether these improvement measures have had an impact;
- Taking note of the views of the professional field on education quality, proposing measures for improvement on the basis of these views, implementing these measures or ensuring that others do so and investigating whether these improvement measures have had an impact;
- Taking note of the Examination Board's annual report;
- Writing an annual teaching report;
- Discussing quality and quality assurance in the Bachelor's and Master's programmes, the Pre-Master's classes and the minors with the faculty board on an annual basis. In this discussion, the following subjects will be addressed: performance with regard to the implicit and explicit quality criteria, the effectiveness of improvement measures taken in the previous year, and improvement plans, ambitions and priorities for the upcoming year;
- Holding at least one annual discussion with the faculty board portfolio holder for teaching on a theme from the assessment frameworks of the NVAO or the VU Educational Quality Handbook. The portfolio holder will decide on a theme for each year. In these discussions, the following subjects will be addressed: performance with regard to the implicit and explicit quality criteria, the effectiveness of improvement measures taken, improvement plans, ambitions and priorities;
- Writing an interim assessment report for the inspection and accreditation of a programme.

10 Role of the portfolio holder for teaching

The role of the portfolio holder for teaching with regard to quality and quality assurance in the faculty's Bachelor's and Master's programmes and the Pre-Master's classes involves:

- Ensuring that faculty explicit quality criteria are kept up to date;
- Ensuring that the views of students on the quality of the education are surveyed;
- Taking note of students' views on education quality at faculty level, proposing measures for improvement, implementing these measures or ensuring that others do so and investigating whether these improvement measures have had an impact;
- Taking note of the views of teaching staff on education quality, proposing measures for improvement, implementing these measures or ensuring that others do so and investigating whether these improvement measures have had an impact;



- Providing the programme committees with an annual schedule of regular topics on behalf of the faculty board;
- Taking note of the views of alumni on education quality at faculty level, proposing measures for improvement, implementing these measures or ensuring that others do so and investigating whether these improvement measures have had an impact;
- Taking note of the views of the professional field on education quality, proposing measures for improvement on the basis of these views, implementing these measures or ensuring that others do so and investigating whether these improvement measures have had an impact;
- Determining the format of the annual teaching report and the themes addressed in it.
- Holding an annual discussion with teaching managers and the head of the Education Office on the themes from the assessment frameworks of the NVAO or the VU Educational Quality Handbook. In these discussions, the following subjects will be addressed: performance with regard to the implicit and explicit quality criteria, the effectiveness of improvement measures taken, improvement plans, ambitions and priorities.

11 Role of the Education Office

The role of the Education Office with regard to quality and quality assurance in the faculty's Bachelor's and Master's programmes and the Pre-Master's classes involves:

- Supporting teaching staff in ensuring course evaluations are completed;
- Making available the results from the NSE and compiling a series of standard reports based on these;
- Placing the questionnaire reports at the disposal of the faculty board portfolio holder for teaching and the teaching manager;
- Providing the teaching manager with the information required in order to write an annual teaching report;
- Providing support to the teaching manager in compiling an self-evaluation report;
- Preparing for the annual amendments to the Academic and Examination Regulations, the Rules and Guidelines for the Examination Board and other faculty regulations and the faculty-related chapters of the VU Educational Quality Handbook;

12 Role of the Centre for Educational Training, Assessment and Research (CETAR)

The role of the CETAR with regard to quality and quality assurance in the faculty's Bachelor's and Master's programmes, the Pre-Master's classes and the minors involves:

- Guaranteeing the quality of course evaluations;
- Compiling a report on course evaluation results;

Adopted by the Faculty Board on 11 July 2011, having consulted the Programme Committees and with the approval of the Joint Assembly.

In force as of 1 September 2011.

