

# SBE Board of Examiners

## Rules and Regulations

**Academic Year: 2024-2025**

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**School of Business and Economics**

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## Introduction

These are the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Examiners of Maastricht University's School of Business and Economics for Academic Year 2024-2025 (abbreviated as 'SBE Board of Examiners' in the remainder of this document). The Maastricht University School of Business and Economics (SBE) provides high-quality education to students and conducts excellent research, offering an international perspective in the fields of economics and international business administration.

The 'definitions of terms' used in the Education and Examination Regulations (EER) of the study programmes also apply to these Rules and Regulations.

The Rules and Regulations will apply for the rest of academic year 2024-2025.

## Chapter I SBE Board of Examiners

### Article 1 – Legal basis

Article 7.12, 7.12a and 7.12b of the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act (abbreviated with WHW, Wet op het Hoger onderwijs en Wetenschappelijk onderzoek, hereonwards) call for the installment of a Board of Examiners. The Board of Examiners is the body that determines in an objective and professional manner whether a student meets the requirements as laid down in the Education and Examination Regulations regarding knowledge, insight and skills that are required for obtaining a degree.

### Article 2 – Applicability

2.1. In accordance with Article 7.12b of the WHW, the SBE Board of Examiners has formulated these Rules and Regulations for the execution of his tasks under the WHW. These Rules and Regulations apply to the examinations and exams of all Bachelor's and Master's programmes (including executive Master's) of the Maastricht University School of Business and Economics (SBE).

2.2. The Rules and Regulations apply to all students and examiners involved in the SBE programmes mentioned under 2.1.

2.3. The Rules and Regulations lay down the governance structure, appointment procedures, composition and tasks of the SBE Board of Examiners.

2.4. In case a discrepancy would arise between the Education and Examination Regulations (including clarifying texts on SBE intranet) and these Rules and Regulations, the Education and Examination Regulations are leading.

### Article 3 - Amendments and hardship clause

3.1. These Rules and Regulations are in principle revised once a year before the start of the new academic year. Intermediate changes during the academic year are allowed provided the changes do not disadvantage the cohort of students in that academic year.

3.2. The SBE Board of Examiners is authorized to deviate from these regulations if strict adherence to these regulations would result in unequitable circumstances for students.

### Article 4 – Governance structure of the SBE Board of Examiners

4.1. The SBE Board of Examiners consists of a Central Board of Examiners and two 'chambers' subordinate to the Central Board.

4.2. The current two chambers of the SBE Board of Examiners deal with all the regular BSc and MSc programmes (the SBE BoE chamber) and the executive teaching programmes (the UMIO chamber), respectively. The remaining (dis)similarities between these two educational programme clusters, their programme management as well as the different nature of student cases, student requests, and administrative processes has led the SBE to decide on this dual chamber structure.

4.3. The Central Board, inter alia, sets policies, discusses long-term strategic issues, advises on annual revisions of the general Education and Examination Regulations (EER) and monitors execution by the chambers. As such it acts as an alignment mechanism between the two chambers. The chambers are responsible for the day-to-day casuistry within a programme or cluster of programmes.

## Article 5 – Appointment and composition of the SBE Board of Examiners

5.1. Conform Article 7.12 of the WHW, The Faculty Board installs the Central Board of Examiners and appoints its members (including the chair) on the basis of their expertise. Before a member is appointed, the Faculty Board will consult the Central Board of Examiners on the proposed appointment. The Faculty Board also installs the chairs of the chambers. The chairs of the chambers are ex officio also members of the central board. This further contributes to the alignment between the two chambers, see 4.3. At least one of the members is also teaching in the programmes that the Central Board of Examiners covers. The Central Board of Examiners also has one external member, not connected to SBE. Apart from the chamber chairs and the external member, the Central Board of Examiners consists of at least three other members of which one is the chair. These members are part of the SBE academic staff. The chair and members are appointed for a period of three years.

5.2. The chair of the Central Board of Examiners is responsible and accountable for the execution of the SBE Board of Examiners' tasks. The other members partake in the decision-making during the meetings.

5.3. Members of the Faculty Board or other persons who have financial responsibilities within Maastricht University are excluded from serving on the Central Board of Examiners or one of the chambers.

5.4. The chambers of the SBE Board of Examiners consist of at least 2 members (including the chair). The chamber members (with exception of the chairs) are appointed by the Central Board of Examiners for a period of three years.

5.5. The SBE Central Board of Examiners and two chambers are supported by one or more secretaries. The secretaries are responsible for administrative and procedural matters.

## Article 6 – Tasks of the SBE Board of Examiners

The responsibilities of the Board of Examiners are regulated by law (see Article 7.12b of the WHW). These responsibilities include:

- a. determining in an objective and expert manner whether or not a student meets the conditions set in the Education and Examination Regulations relating to the knowledge, insight and skills necessary to be awarded a degree;
- b. maintaining and assuring the quality of all examinations and final degree assessments;
- c. determining guidelines and instructions to assess and determine the results of examinations and final degree assessments within the framework of the Education and Examination Regulations;
- d. granting exemptions for one or more examinations;
- e. investigating suspicions of fraud and deciding upon sanctions when fraud is established.

- f. appointing examiners to conduct examinations and determine their results;
- g. granting degree certificates, including a diploma supplement, as proof that the student has successfully completed his or her final degree assessment;
- h. granting permission to students to take part in a free-choice study programme, the final degree assessment for which leads to the awarding of a degree;
- i. issuing a transcript of the results attained to persons who have successfully completed more than one examination but are not eligible for a degree certificate;
- j. drawing up an annual report on its own activities.

## Article 7 – Working method of the SBE Board of Examiners

7.1. The (Central) Board of Examiners and the chambers determine their meeting frequency depending on the volume of work they need to handle. Given the volume of casuistry the meeting frequency of the chambers is higher than that of the Central Board of Examiners.

7.2. The meetings of the Central Board of Examiners as well as the chambers are not public due to the confidential nature of the matters discussed.

7.3. In the event that a request or complaint submitted to the SBE Board of Examiners involves an examiner who is a member of the Board of Examiners (either in the Central Board or one of the chambers), the examiner concerned will abstain from deciding on the request or complaint as stated in art. 7.12.b.4 of the WHW.

7.4. The SBE Board of Examiners may mandate clearly defined duties to its chambers, to its secretaries or to other SBE bodies (Assessment committee, Binding Study Advice Committee, Exam scheduling office etc).

7.5. The Central Board of Examiners takes decisions by ordinary majority of votes conditional on the presence of 60% of the members. In case of equal votes the chair's vote is decisive.

7.6. Minutes are prepared for each meeting of the Central Board of Examiners. All decisions of the SBE Board of Examiners, including those of the chambers, are documented and archived by the secretaries.

7.7. The SBE chambers to the Board of Examiners decide upon requests, (assessment-related) complaints or appeals (more specifically whether an amicable settlement will be offered or not) within a reasonable time period.

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## Article 8 – Decision criteria

In its decisions, the Board of Examiners is led by the following criteria:

- 8.1. The Education and Examination Regulations;
- 8.2. Maintenance of the exam quality demands;
- 8.3. Lenience towards students who have experienced delay in their studies due to unforeseen events (i.e. applying the hardship clause. When assessing postponement for a Negative Binding Study Advice, the advice of the Student Advisors is also taken into account).

## Article 9 – Examiners and invigilators

9.1. The SBE Board of Examiners appoints members of the scientific staff as examiners of educational units (courses, skill trainings, Bachelor and Master thesis supervision and assessment). The SBE Board of Examiners can appoint educators from other educational institutes and other experts as examiners.

9.2. Examiners are responsible for the design, assessment, determination and administration of results.

9.3. The SBE Board of Examiners is responsible for formulating a coherent set of criteria to appoint examiners. The specific appointment criteria are available on the SBE intranet pages.

9.4. Other members of the teaching or academic staff can perform tasks for an exam/examination upon delegation from the appointed examiner, but the appointed examiner keeps full responsibility for the quality of the assessment.

9.5. The SBE Board of Examiners can suspend or withdraw the appointment as examiner when the examiner does not comply with the Rules and Regulations or with guidelines of the SBE Board of Examiners or if the competency of the examiner with respect to design, assessment, or administering exams has proven insufficient.

9.6. The SBE Board of Examiners creates a register with all appointed SBE examiners and makes it available via UMPLOYEE. Periodically there is a check whether there are staff members that need to be appointed and included or removed from the register.

9.7. The Board of Examiners is also responsible for appointing exam invigilators. These invigilators need to safeguard that written examinations proceed in an orderly fashion and that committed acts of irregularities/fraud are detected. SBE's exam scheduling office is mandated by the SBE Board of Examiners to select, inform and train invigilators.

## Article 10 – Safeguarding the quality of assessment

The SBE Board of Examiners mandates the SBE Assessment Committee to safeguard the quality of assessment (For Rules and Regulations Assessment Committee SBE, see chapter II below). The SBE Board of Examiners safeguards the quality of assessment by checking whether:

- a. Examinations are being made on the basis of the formulated learning goals, learning objectives and end terms;
- b. The end qualifications of the programme as formulated in the Education and Examination Regulations are translated in learning objectives and outcomes per course that can be examined and that there are adequate procedures in place to ensure that students have met these qualifications before a diploma and or certificate is issued;
- c. Uniform agreements are made with regard to the way examinations are held;
- d. There is alignment between the course goals, course objectives and the end terms of the programme/exam of which the course is an element;
- e. The correct procedure regarding examinations is carried out;
- f. Tests can remain valid despite certain shortcomings in the testing. If it becomes apparent that a test has such serious shortcomings that it cannot be ascertained whether and to what extent the students have achieved the learning objectives of the course, by virtue of its quality assurance role pursuant to Section 7.12b (1)(a) of the Higher Education and Research Act (WHW), the SBE Board of Examiners may decide that the test concerned is invalid. Except in the event of fraud or plagiarism the SBE Board of Examiners may no longer declare a test invalid if the final test results have already been published.

## Article 11 – Order during the examinations

11.1. The Board of Examiners ensures that the order during the examinations is guaranteed and the correct procedure is followed. This responsibility is mandated in practice to the exam coordinator during the examinations. The invigilators follow the examiner's front page instructions. Student identification is required upon request by or on behalf of the Board of Examiners by a valid proof of identity (see Rules of Procedure for (course) exams at Maastricht University). Admission to an examination will be denied if the student is unable to identify himself/herself. The student must follow instructions of the exam coordinator and invigilator physically present at the exam location as well as the instructions of the examiner (examination front page), which are given before, during and after the examination.

11.2. The specific rules that apply during the examination are set out on the front page of the examination and in the 'Rules of Procedure for (course) exams at Maastricht University'.



## Article 12 –Timing and grading of examinations

12.1. Written final examinations are to be taken at times set by the Board of Examiners within the exam weeks in the SBE academic calendar. These dates need to be communicated to students and examiners in a timely fashion. In setting the exam schedules, the Board of Examiners must prevent any overlap of tests as far as possible. Changes to times set may be made only in cases of force majeure. If possible, end of period oral exams are to be administered by the examiner(s) in question at a time set during the exam week after consulting with the student. Deadlines for partial exam requirements like e.g. papers or presentations are decided by the course coordinator and written down in the course syllabus. The times of written resit tests (papers included) will be determined and announced in a timely fashion but are also part of the resit exam weeks conform the SBE academic calendar.

12.2. The Board of Examiners observes that the grading of examinations (including Bachelor and Master theses) takes place according to pre-established norms, possibly adjusted by a correction (e.g. multiple choice questions). These norms may be changed during grading, e.g. in case of a question that is deemed faulty based on exam comments or complaints received by students (see further below on 'comments and complaints procedure'). If the final grade of an educational unit consists of multiple exam requirements, the weighting scheme for the partial grades to arrive at the final grade is laid down in the course syllabus. If multiple assessors are involved in the grading process of an educational unit, the examiner appointed for this educational unit must ensure that all assessors grade on the basis of the same standards (for example by the use of common rubrics included in the course syllabus). The grading must be done in such a way that the student can understand how the grade was reached (e.g. by means of rubrics with standardized feedback, additional open comments, grading scheme). An educational unit's final grade is awarded on a scale of 1 to 10, where a result of at least 5.5 represents a pass. In some cases results may be awarded in terms of pass or fail. When no result can be assigned (for example because a student was registered for an examination but did not participate or because a student's examination was declared invalid because of established fraud) the examination will receive the label 'no grade' (NG). Further information on the grading of examinations in general is provided in the Education and Examination Regulations (EER).

12.3. The SBE Board of Examiners observes that clear grading criteria are established for the Bachelor and Master thesis, included in a BSc and MSc thesis Code of Practice document.

12.4. The Board of Examiners observes that the grading of the Bachelor and the Master thesis is performed by two appointed examiners.

12.5. These (thesis) examiners provide insight to the students in the way the final grade is established (e.g. via the detailed rubrics to be completed on the electronic learning environment Canvas for the Bachelor thesis and via an MS Excel Master thesis evaluation form for the Master thesis).

12.6. The certificate that the exam of a whole programme has been passed indicates the final grade point average (GPA) to provide a reflection of the student's academic performance. The final GPA is calculated on the basis of all overall assessments of modules a student passed.

12.7 The Education and Exams Office is mandated by the SBE Board of Examiners to organize examinations, to record examination results and to ensure that they are communicated to the students.

### Article 13 - Requests

13.1 The Board of Examiners assesses motivated requests by students who wish to be considered for deviation from the Education and Examination Regulations (EER's). The Board of Examiners decides within ultimately eight weeks after having received a request. If no decision can be taken within eight weeks (e.g. because the Board of Examiners has to wait for more information from the parties involved (e.g. student or examiner), the Board of Examiners will adjourn the request until further notice.

13.2 Requests include, inter alia, exemptions, the classification (Summa) Cum Laude, Open Programmes (i.e. deviation from the regular study programme), extra examination opportunities, extensions of thesis deadlines, postponements of graduation etc.

### Article 14 – Binding Study Advice (BSA)

14.1. With regard to the First-Year Bachelor's exam, the Board of Examiners, on behalf of the SBE Faculty Board, issues a binding study advice (BSA). In case of a negative BSA the student is first given the opportunity to be heard by the SBE Board of Examiners. During the hearing it will be assessed whether there are personal circumstances involved that may lead to postponement of the BSA decision. In this assessment the advice of the Student Advisors is also taken into account.

14.2. A Binding Study Advice (BSA) Committee is in place. The BSA Committee is mandated by the SBE Board of Examiners to perform the tasks as described under 14.1.

### Article 15 – Irregularities, fraud and plagiarism

15.1. An irregularity is an act and/or omission by a student in violation of the rules, guidelines and instructions relating to (the completion of) examinations (including course examinations, papers, theses etc.). This includes, among others, fraud and plagiarism.

15.2. Fraud refers to actions or omissions by a student which make it impossible in whole or in part to properly evaluate their knowledge, understanding and skills or creating the opportunity for others to commit fraud or plagiarism. A nonexhaustive list of examples of fraud is included in the EER (Article 8.1.2. (Msc EER) and Article 9.1.2. (Bsc EER)).

15.3. Plagiarism is a form of fraud that can in general be defined as the presentation of ideas or words from one's own (i.e. self plagiarism) or someone else's sources without proper acknowledgment of the sources. A nonexhaustive list of examples of plagiarism is included in the EER (Article 8.1.3. (Msc EER) and 9.1.3. (Bsc EER)).

15.4. Should an invigilator or exam coordinator ascertain an irregularity or an attempt to commit fraud during a written examination, they will inform the student and the SBE exam scheduling office and take possession of the evidence by means of an irregularity report form. The exam scheduling office receives this form and in turn informs the course coordinator and the SBE Board of Examiners. The course examiner reports a No Grade (NG) as long as the fraud investigation by the SBE Board of Examiners is running.

15.5. In case examiners suspect fraud (including plagiarism) in e.g. written course examinations, papers or theses during assessment/grading they need to report this to the SBE Board of Examiners by means of a fraud form. This form needs to contain a preliminary analysis of the assumed fraud or plagiarism accusation explaining why the examiner thinks there is a suspicion of fraud/plagiarism. The student is notified by the examiner and receives a No Grade (NG) as long as the investigation by the SBE Board of examiners is running.

15.6. In case of perceived irregularities and suspicions of fraud/plagiarism, the SBE Board of Examiners invites the involved student for a hearing (with the purpose of further information gathering as part of their fraud investigation). If the student does not show up at such a hearing, a written statement will be asked.

15.7. When irregularities, fraud or plagiarism is proven, the Board of Examiners has a number of sanctions available, which are also laid down in the Education and Examination Regulations (Article 9.2 BSc EER and Article 8.2 MSc EER).

15.8. The Board of Examiners does not recognize course credits obtained elsewhere during the period a student was excluded from participating in the programme's exams due to the fraud committed.

## Article 16 – Complaints and appeals

16.1 Students can file an appeal against written decisions made by the Board of Examiners or a decision made by an examiner. Next to this, students that feel like they have been treated unfairly or incorrectly, can file a complaint. Assessment-related complaints or appeals typically refer to a disagreement about grading and feedback. The first point of contact for students who disagree with the assessment and grading, is the examiner responsible for determining the result of the examination. The examiner needs to follow the comments, right of inspection and objection procedure as laid down in the Education and Exam Regulations (EER). If students still disagree with aspects of their assessment and grading after this procedure has taken place, they can file a complaint or an appeal at the Complaint Service point (CSP).

16.2 All complaints are first sent to the SBE Board of Examiners through the Complaints Service Point (CSP). The SBE Board of Examiners carries out the first substantive check of each received complaint. Matters regarding assessment remain with the Board of Examiners. Matters, including but not limited to behaviour of staff members as well as other non-assessment related matters, are forwarded to the SBE Complaints Committee. They will further investigate and process these complaints. Afterwards, the Complaints Committee informs the SBE Board of Examiners about the outcome in general (founded/unfounded). The SBE Board of Examiners then reports to the CSP that the complaints have been dealt with.

16.3 Students can file an appeal with the Board of Appeal for Examinations within six weeks after the day that the contested decision/grade has been published.

16.4 When a student lodges an appeal with the Board of Appeal for Examinations in reaction to a decision of an examiner or of the SBE Board of Examiners, the Board of Examiners has to respond timely to a request by the Board of Appeal to see whether an amicable settlement can be reached with the student. Depending on the outcome of the amicable settlement hearing, the Board of Appeal for Examinations will further handle the appeal (e.g. close the appeal or public hearing).

16.5 Each student who files an appeal is invited for an amicable settlement hearing with the SBE Board of Examiners. At the start of that hearing the student's identity is checked and the appeal procedure is explained. The student gets first of all the opportunity to once more explain orally the reasons of filing an appeal. Next, the SBE Board of Examiners asks eventual additional questions that may arise based on the student's written appeal documents and oral statement. If necessary to reach a decision, additional information is also collected via SBE Canvas pages or with the relevant examiner and/or tutor.

16.6 A flow chart of the SBE appeal procedure is made available to students via SBE intranet, is sent to the student, and is also explained at the start of every amicable settlement hearing.

## Article 17 – Graduation

17.1. The Board of Examiners [or: on behalf of the Board of Examiners the Exams Office] issues a degree and transcript, including a diploma supplement to students who have fulfilled all requirements of a programme unless the student's request to postpone the graduation has been approved by the Board of Examiners (cf. article 11.7 (MSc) EER and Article 13.7 (BSc) EER).

17.2. The chair of the SBE Board of Examiners and the Dean of the SBE sign the Degree certificate. The chair of the SBE Board of Examiners also signs the diploma supplement and the final grade transcript. In case of absence of the chair, the other members of the SBE Board of Examiners can replace the chair with signing.

17.3. Prior to each graduation ceremony, the chair of the SBE Board of Examiners and the Dean of the SBE need to formally approve the issuance of the diploma documents.

## Chapter II Assessment Committee SBE

### Article 1 – Relation to the Board of Examiners

1.1. The Board of Examiners is responsible for safeguarding the quality of exams and examinations at SBE (See Chapter I, Article 6 on the Tasks that the Board of Examiners receives by Law). The Board of Examiners formulates procedures and guidelines regarding the way in which examiners hold examinations.

1.2. The SBE Board of Examiners mandates the tasks as specified in Chapter I, Article 6, paragraphs b and c to the SBE Assessment Committee, see also Article 3 below for further details. With regard to these tasks and responsibilities, the SBE Board of Examiners remains formally responsible.

### Article 2 – The SBE Assessment Committee

2.1. The Assessment Committee has an important role in safeguarding the quality of exams and examinations at the SBE. The Assessment Committee works on the basis of quality demands as defined by the Board of Examiners, and reports to the SBE Board of Examiners on a regular basis.

2.2. The chairman and members of the Assessment Committee are appointed by the SBE Faculty Board, for a period of three years.

### Article 3 – Tasks and responsibilities

The Assessment Committee:

- a. Advises the SBE Board of Examiners and other bodies in the faculty regarding assessment policy, guidelines for assessment design for course coordinators, and the procedure for safeguarding the quality of exams and assessment. The Board of Examiners remains responsible for the final documentation of these policies, procedures, and guidelines;
- b. Advises the SBE Board of Examiners and other bodies in the faculty regarding the quality of the course examinations and the final work (e.g. Bachelor and Master thesis);
- c. Advises the SBE Board of Examiners, e.g. on student complaints related to the assessment and grading of examinations. The Board of Examiners decides on these matters;
- d. Contributes to the BoE annual report concerning the examination quality and policy at SBE.