

## **TEACHING AND EXAMINATION REGULATIONS 2019-2020**

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Throughout this text, the male pronoun is used to cover references to both male and female for the sake of brevity and convenience. No gender preference is intended.

### **CONTENTS**

TITLE I. - Scope, definitions, abbreviations and general provisions .....	2
Chapter I. - Scope .....	2
Chapter II. - Abbreviations and definitions .....	2
Chapter III: - General provisions .....	8
TITLE II. - Teaching regulations .....	10
Chapter I. - Composition of the academic year .....	10
Chapter II. - Rules concerning the setting-up of programmes.....	10
Chapter III. - Entry requirements .....	16
Chapter IV. - Study contracts and other enrolment regulations .....	26
Chapter V. - Set-up of the student's yearly programme.....	38
Chapter VI. Student feedback .....	45
TITLE III. – Examination regulations.....	47
Chapter I. - Organisation of examinations .....	47
Chapter II. - Equal opportunities.....	49
Chapter III. - Taking examinations.....	50
Chapter IV. - Examination proceedings.....	50
Chapter V. – Master's thesis .....	56
Chapter VI. - Examination board.....	58
Chapter VII. Proceedings at deliberations and study progress based on examinations .....	59
Chapter VIII. – Awarding a degree or a diploma.....	62
Chapter IX. - Announcement of results.....	63

TITLE IV. Ombudspersons and appeal options .....	64
Chapter I. - Ombudspersons .....	64
Chapter II. - Appeal options .....	64
TITLE V. - Transitional and final provisions .....	70

## **TITLE I. - Scope, definitions, abbreviations and general provisions**

### **Chapter I. - Scope**

#### **Article 1 (Scope)**

These teaching and examination regulations apply to all bachelor's programmes, master's programmes (master-after-bachelor and advanced master's programmes), preparatory programmes, bridging programmes, postgraduate programmes and the teacher education programme organised at Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

For doctoral programmes and the attainment of a PhD, specific regulations, approved by the Academic Council, apply.

For inter-university programmes, provisions other than those set out in these regulations may apply, provided they do not violate the relevant decrees.

### **Chapter II. - Abbreviations and definitions**

#### **Article 2 (Abbreviations)**

For the purpose of these regulations, the following abbreviations are used (some are derived from Dutch, so do not necessarily match the English explanation given):

**ACTO:** Academic Language Centre;

**BEV:** Paid educational leave;

**DGD:** Directorate General for Development Cooperation;

**DHO:** Higher Education Database;

**EEA:** European Economic Area;

**EVC:** Previously Acquired Competencies;

**EVK:** Previously Acquired Qualifications;

**IDLO:** Interfaculty Department for Teacher Training;

**IES:** Institute for European Studies;

**IRMO:** International Relations and Mobility Office;

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

**OWSA:** Education and Student Administration;

**VLIR:** Flemish Interuniversity Council;

**VOV:** Flemish training leave;

**WPO:** Tutorials, practical work and exercises.

### **Article 3 (Definitions)**

For the application of these regulations, the following definitions shall apply:

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

**Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations:** a set of regulations drawn up by the faculty in question specifying additions to the central Teaching and Examination Regulations. For the teacher training programme a supplementary Teaching and Examination Regulations document can be made; for programmes organised by the Institute for European Studies (IES), it is the Supplementary IES Teaching and Examination Regulations document that is used.

**Academic year:** a one-year period starting on 1 September at the earliest and 1 October at the latest, and ending on the day before the start of the following academic year; in exceptional circumstances, the governing body may decide to deviate from the one-year period by declaring an earlier or later start to the academic year.

**Aptitude inquiry:** the inquiry into a student's competencies prior to issuing an aptitude certificate.

#### **Scholarship students:**

- Students entitled to a Flemish Government educational grant.
- Students not entitled to the Flemish Government educational grant because they do not meet the study criteria but who do meet the financial criteria and nationality criteria mentioned in Art. I.1, point 14, b or c of the Higher Education Code. This does not apply to advanced post-graduate courses or continuing academic education;
- Bursaries related to a Master Mind Scholarship – fellowship Programme for Excellent Students of the Flemish Government.

**Certificate of aptitude:** proof or record showing that a student has acquired particular competencies as part of "EVC" (Previously Acquired Competencies) or "EVK" (Previously Acquired Qualifications).

#### **Almost-scholarship students**

- Students meeting the nationality criteria mentioned in Art. I.1, point 14, b or c of the Higher Education Code who are not entitled to a Flemish Government educational grant but where the reference income does not exceed the ceiling for eligibility for an educational grant by more than EUR 3166 (amount for the 2018-2019 academic year).

- Students meeting the nationality criteria mentioned in Art. I.1, point 14, b or c of the Higher Education Code who are not entitled to a Flemish Government educational grant because their “cadastral income” (i.e. the hypothetical rental value of property as listed in the property register for tax purposes, specific to Belgium) constitutes too great a proportion of their total taxable income.

**Pre-exam study week:** the period preceding the examination period which is kept free of lectures and examinations or other methods of assessment - barring the exception included in Article 7 - . This period is reserved for students to prepare for examinations.

**BRUFACE-masters** (Brussels Faculty of Engineering-masters):

English language master’s programmes jointly organised by Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) and Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB) and Dutch language variations 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:** formal recognition of the fact that a student has shown, by passing an examination, that he has acquired the competencies associated with a particular programme unit. This recognition is set out in a document or a record and expressed in the number of ECTS-credits acquired.

**Credit contract:** a contract entered into by a student with the university where the student enrolls with a view to acquiring a credit certificate for one or more programme units.

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

**ECTS-credit:** an international unit, recognised within the Flemish Community, which corresponds to no less than 25 and no more than 30 hours of regulatory teaching, learning and assessment activities and which indicates the study load of every programme and programme unit.

**First examination period:** this consists of a first set of examinations (weeks 18 to 20) and a second set of examinations (weeks 39 to 42) during which the student uses his first, and in some cases only, examination opportunity. The first examination period is concluded with a deliberation and electronic communication of the results.

**Previously acquired competencies (Eerder Verworven Competenties – EVC):** the total sum of knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes acquired through learning processes not attested by a study certificate.

**Previously acquired qualifications (Eerder Verworven Kwalificaties – EVK):** any study certificate from a domestic or foreign institution, excluding certificates confirming ECTS-credits acquired at the institution and as part of the programme where the attested qualification is to be used.

**Exam, Examination:** any assessment of the degree to which a student has acquired, as a result of his studies, the competencies associated with a particular programme unit.

**Exam contract:** a contract entered into by a student with the university where the student has enrolled for exams (under the conditions determined by the university). These conditions are the same for a diploma contract and a credit contract) with a view to acquiring:

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

**Examination period:** the period in which examinations and/or preliminary examinations are taken.

**Examinations schedule:** the document in which the time and place of examination is determined for every student within a certain examination period.

**Student embarking on higher education:** a student who for the first time enrolls with a diploma contract in a bachelor's programme.

**Degree:** designation as a Bachelor, Master or Doctor, granted at the end of a study programme or after graduation with the presentation of a diploma.

**Individual study path:** a study programme for an individual student governed by specific conditions regarding study load, deliberation and study progress monitoring.

**Full-year course unit:** a programme unit spanning two semesters. Examinations for full-year programme units (with the exception of preliminary examinations) are held in the examination period following the second semester.

**Prospective student:** anyone who wishes to enrol at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

**Qualification:** a certificate or diploma issued upon successful completion of a formal educational training path or study path.

**Qualification of a degree:** addition referring to the programme completed or, in the case of a doctorate, a specialisation.

**Study account:** the total number of ECTS-credits that a student may use during his studies, either towards enrolment under a diploma contract in an initial bachelor's or master's programme or towards enrolment for a programme unit under credit contract. A student's study account changes depending on the number of ECTS-credits enrolled for and obtained.

**Study outcomes:** they determine what a student is expected to know, understand, and do upon completion of a study path and the way in which this can be shown.

**Lecture-free week:** a period in which no examinations, lectures or other educational activities take place, except for induction and preparatory activities and qualification tests during the first lecture-free week of the first term.

**Master's thesis:** a final paper completing a master's programme which constitutes proof of the student's capacity for analytical and synthetic work, independent problem-solving skills at an academic level, or artistic creation. This paper reflects the student's general capacity for critical reflection or research.

**Standard study path:** a study programme, approved by the Education Council, for a specific educational training programme, governed by general conditions regarding study load, deliberation and study progress monitoring.

**Education and Student Administration (hereafter OWSA):** central service under the responsibility of the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs which manages all administrative aspects of all students during the entire study path.

**Study programme:** a structuring unit of the education provided. Upon successful completion of a study programme, a diploma or a postgraduate certificate is awarded.

**Programme description:** a description of a study programme, in which the formal details and content of the programme are set-out, before the start of the academic year, in accordance with article 15 of these regulations.

**Programme unit (= course unit):** a predetermined set of educational, study and evaluation activities designed for the acquisition of specific competences relating to knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes.

**Course unit description:** a description of a programme unit drawn up before the start of the enrolment period, providing the formal details and content set out in article 16 of these regulations. The course unit description is submitted to the proper faculty body for approval.

**Permanent education:** a shorter study path developed by the university itself or collectively agreed upon, in the framework of supplementary education.

**Post graduate:** a study path consisting of 20 or more ECTS-credits in the framework of supplementary professional education, aimed at widening or improving the competences acquired when finishing a bachelor or master education.

**Reflex students:** students who are eligible to be considered for some reasonable flexible arrangements. This includes, but is not limited to, working students, top tier sports students, students with a disability (with a sensory or physical disability, with a (chronic) medical condition, with psychological/psychiatric problems and learning difficulties), students appointed as student representatives with the VUB and students who find themselves in a specific situation, as determined by Study Guidance.

**Bridging programme:** a programme that can be made compulsory for a student who wishes to enrol in a master's programme on the basis of a Bachelor's degree from higher vocational education. The programme aims to provide the general scientific competencies and basic knowledge of scientific discipline, referred to in Article II.141, § 2, 2° of the Higher Education Code.

**Student SelfService:** the portal where students can consult and manage their study activities, finances and personal data and where they can consult their study outcomes.

**Semester-specific course unit:** a programme unit spanning one semester. Examinations in semester-specific programme units are held in the examination period following the semester in which the programme unit was taught.

**Specification of a degree:** the addition of the words 'of science', 'of arts', 'of law', 'of medicine', 'of veterinary science', 'of veterinary medicine' and 'of philosophy' to a degree.

**Students with a disability:** students with long-term physical, mental or sensory disabilities which may - in interaction with various barriers - hinder their full and effective participation in higher education on equal terms with other students.

**Study Guidance:** a central service falling under the aegis of the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs which provides study guidance to all students throughout their entire study path; in conjunction with the programmes and faculties, staff (study advisers, student psychologists, study path counsellors) try to provide a broad range of guidance services with a view to increasing both the well-being of the student and the student's chances of success in light of their individual needs.

**Study certificate:** a document indicating that a formal study path, within an educational framework or otherwise, has been successfully completed.

**Study contract:** contract entered into by the student with the university where a particular objective (degree, credit or examination contract) and a particular study path (standard or individualised) are agreed upon;

**Tuition fee:** the fee payable by the student for participation in education activities and/or examinations.

**Study load:** the number of ECTS-credits allocated to a programme unit or for a study programme.

**Study path:** the way in which the student can participate in the programme.

**Preliminary examination:** written examination of part of the subject matter of a full year-programme unit in the first year of a bachelor's programme, taken in the first set of examinations of the examination period.

**Enrolment agreement:** a contract between the university's governing body and the student where the latter agrees to the general terms and conditions as set out in the Teaching and Examination Regulations document.

**Second examination period:** this consists of one examination period (weeks 49 to 52) during which the student uses his second examination opportunity, if it exists. The second examination period is concluded by deliberations and electronic communication of the results.

**Sequence-rules:** the rules drawn up by the university governing body, stating that a student must have attended or successfully completed a programme unit or a programme, before being allowed to take an examination in another programme unit or programme.

**Full-time study path:** a study path which enables students to complete a programme of study with a minimum of 54 ECTS-credits and a maximum of 66 ECTS-credits per academic year.

**Preparatory programme:** a programme that may be made compulsory for a candidate student with an academic education who does not have a degree giving direct access to the programme he wishes to enrol for.

**Exemption:** removal of the obligation to sit an examination in a programme unit or a part thereof.

### **Chapter III: - General provisions**

#### **Article 4 (Definitive time limits and indicative time limits)**



The following rule applies to the application of these regulations with respect to time limits: the periods within which students must complete a specific action shall be deemed to be definitive deadlines, unless otherwise specified.

#### **Article 5 (Detailed rules on teaching activities and communication)**

**§1.** Producing audio-visual recordings of teaching activities (including continuous assessment activities) and projected teaching materials without the consent of the lecturer is prohibited and is deemed to be a disruption of teaching activities, unless a specific arrangement is made with the lecturer concerned. Students must then indicate clearly what, how, when and for what purpose they will be recording. The recorded materials may not be used for any purpose other than for which consent was granted by the lecturer. If a student records teaching activities in breach of these provisions, the recording must be destroyed upon first request.

**§2.** The Vrije Universiteit Brussel reserves the right to record classes for the purpose of distance education, etc., and to make these recordings available to the students and teaching staff involved, for educational purposes, through the electronic learning environment (and/or the electronic video platform). When students participate in these classes, they automatically give permission to appear in these recordings for distribution through the electronic learning platform. The teacher will inform the students that the class will be recorded at the beginning of such classes. Under no circumstances may students distribute or edit these recordings, subject to disciplinary measures as provided for in the Disciplinary Regulations for students of Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

**§3.** Under no circumstances may students reproduce or disseminate study or examination material (exercises, slides, exam questions) with a for-profit aim, without the explicit prior consent of the owner. A student who would nevertheless do so, in person or through a third party, may be sanctioned in accordance with the provisions of the Disciplinary Policy for Students of the VUB.

**§4.** All communication with the student in application of these regulations happen exclusively via the VUB-e-mail address, unless otherwise specified.

#### **Article 6 (access control)**

The use of the access badge is strictly personal. Passing on the access badge to other students or third parties is not allowed; students who do so expose themselves to disciplinary measures as provided for in the Disciplinary Regulations for students of Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

## TITLE II. - Teaching regulations

### Chapter I. - Composition of the academic year

#### Article 7 (Composition of the academic year)

§1. The academic year is divided into two semesters, followed by summer holidays and the second examination period:

Week 1: lecture-free week

Weeks 2-14: lecture weeks

Weeks 15-16: winter break (see further)

Week 17: pre-examination study week

Weeks 18-20: first examination period: first set of examinations

Week 21: lecture-free week

Weeks 22-36: lecture weeks including 2 weeks spring break

Weeks 37-38: two pre-examination study weeks

*Maximum 50% of each pre-examination period can be allocated to examinations, meaning that:*

- 1/2 week (2<sup>nd</sup> half of the pre-examination period (week 17) after the winter break;
- 1 week (the 2<sup>nd</sup> pre-examination week) of the pre-examination period (week 37-38) preceding the second part of the first examination period.

Weeks 39-42: first examination period: second set of examinations and deliberation period  
(a minimum of 3 weeks is reserved for examinations)  
end of the examination period for all faculties

Weeks 43-48: summer holidays

Weeks 49-52: second examination period and period for deliberation,  
(a minimum of 3 weeks is reserved for examinations)

§2. The academic calendar is determined annually by the Academic Council before the start of the academic year and by 1 November at the latest.

§3. Deviations from the academic calendar may be granted by the Academic Council upon reasoned request from the faculty and after advice from the Education Council.

### Chapter II. - Rules concerning the setting-up of programmes

#### Section 1: Structure of the programmes

#### Article 8 (VUB programmes)

§1. The Vrije Universiteit Brussel offers the following programmes:

- academic bachelor's programmes;
- initial master's programmes;
- advanced master's programme;
- postgraduate programmes;
- continuing education;

- bridging and preparatory programmes;
- the teacher training programme;
- doctoral programmes;
- PhDs.

**§2.** Apart from continuing education, the programme is determined and announced before the start of the enrolment period.

**Article 9 (Bachelor's programme)**

A bachelor's programme has a study load of no less than 180 ECTS-credits. The study load is always a multiple of 60 ECTS-credits.

**Article 10 (Master's programme and advanced master's programme)**

A master's programme and an advanced master's programme have a study load of no less than 60 ECTS-credits. The study load is always a multiple of 30 ECTS-credits.

**Article 11 (Postgraduate programmes and continuing education)**

A postgraduate programme has a study load of at least 20 ECTS-credits. If the student successfully completes the postgraduate programme, he receives a postgraduate certificate.

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

**Article 12 (Bridging programme)**

Holders of a profession-oriented bachelor's degree can go on to a master's programme if they enrol for a bridging programme first. This programme aims to teach general scientific competencies and basic scientific-disciplinary knowledge.

A bridging programme has a study load of minimum 45 ECTS-credits and maximum 90 ECTS-credits. Depending on the student's prior education, the study load may be reduced.

**Article 13 (Preparatory programme)**

Holders of an academic bachelor's degree who are not eligible for direct access to a given master's programme may still be admitted, provided they take and pass a preparatory programme. Depending on the student's prior education, the study load may be reduced.

**Article 14 (Teacher training programme)**

The teacher training programme leads to a teacher's degree. The programme contains both a theoretical and a practical component of 30 ECTS-credits each. In a master's programme of 120 ECTS-credits, 30 ECTS-credits of the teacher training programme can be taken up. In a bachelor's

programme preceding an initial master's programme, 15 ECTS-credits of the teacher training programme can be taken up, if the programme allows for this.

## **Section 2: Programme and programme unit**

### **Article 15 (Programme description)**

**§1.** A programme description is drawn up for each programme and includes at least the following information:

1. Degree, qualification and specialisation of the programme;
2. Study load expressed in ECTS-credits;
3. Possible graduation options, profiles and minors;
4. The programme's language of instruction;
5. Content and objectives of the programme, educational training programme, subdivision into programme units;
6. Sequence-rules of the programme units and descriptions of how the studies will progress;
7. Entrance competencies and study outcomes;
8. Organisation of the standard study path and/or individualised study path;
9. If applicable, organisation of a specific educational training path for working students;
10. Connecting programmes and subsequent programmes.

**§2.** The programme description shall be made in Dutch and English.

**§3.** For the programmes leading to the professions of physician, general practitioner, pharmacist, and architect, the educational training programme shall comply with the requirements of European Directive 2005/36/EC. The fact that they comply with the European Directive shall be specified in the teaching regulations.

### **Article 16 (Course unit description)**

**§1.** A course unit description is set-out for each programme unit, which includes at least the following information:

1. Code, responsible faculty and department;
2. Title of the programme unit;
3. Type of programme(s) to which the programme unit primarily belongs;
4. Language of instruction;
5. Semester during which the programme unit is organised or indication that the programme unit spans the entire year;
6. Study load of the programme unit expressed in ECTS-credits;
7. Enrolment requirements, including pre- and co-requisites;
8. Teaching methods associated with the programme unit;
9. The lecturer (responsible) and other teaching staff;
10. The specific organisation of the programme unit that is organised for working students;

11. Indication whether it is possible to enrol with an examination contract and, if so, any specific requirements that are to be met by these students;
12. Study outcomes;
13. Programme unit contents;
14. Examinations: examination method, the way in which the result is determined, an indication of whether or not a second examination opportunity is possible;
15. Programme materials;
16. Any additional costs related to the course.

§2. If a work placement, bachelor's thesis or master's thesis does not qualify for the purposes of a credit contract, this will be indicated on the course unit description, together with the reasons for this.

§3. The programme description shall be made in Dutch and English. If the programme unit concerns the study of a foreign language, the key provisions of the course unit description shall always be formulated in Dutch.

#### **Article 17 (Study load and study time of the programme unit)**

The study load for each programme unit is expressed in full ECTS-credits. The study load of a programme unit equates to at least 3 ECTS-credits. One ECTS-credit corresponds to 25 to 30 hours of teaching and study activities or study time.

#### **Article 18 (Guidelines on curriculum composition)**

Educational training programmes are made in accordance with the guidelines on curriculum composition.

### **Section 3: Principles concerning language of instruction**

#### **Article 19 (Principle of language of administration and language of instruction)**

The language of administration and the language of instruction at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel are Dutch. The principle that the language of instruction is always Dutch may be deviated from in accordance with article 20.

#### **Article 20 (Programme units in another language without a reasoned request)**

In the initial bachelor's and master's programmes for which Dutch is the language of instruction, a different language may be used for the following programme units:

1. programme units of which the subject is a foreign language and which are taught in that language;
2. programme units taught by guest lecturers and visiting professors with a different mother tongue;

3. programme units which are, at the initiative of the student, attended at another higher education institution, with the approval of the university governing body;
4. programme units which can be shown to have added value for the student and the labour market and to enhance the functionality of the programme.

Students have the right to take the examination in Dutch, except in case of programme units of which the subject is a foreign language or if the student attends the programme units at another higher education institution.

#### **Article 21 (Percentage of programme units in another language)**

**§1.** The faculty can ask the Education Council to organise programme units other than those set out in article 20 in a language of instruction other than Dutch, if it demonstrates that this represents added value for the student and enhances the functionality of the programme. For bachelor's programmes, the organisation of programme units in other languages is limited to 18.33% of the programme study load. For the calculation of this percentage, programme units regarding the study of a foreign language and programme units attended at another higher education institute are ignored.

**§2.** For master's programmes, the organisation of programme units in other languages is limited to 50% of the programme study load. For the calculation of this percentage, programme units regarding the study of a foreign language and programme units attended at another higher education institute are ignored. The master's thesis and work placements/internships are considered to be Dutch programme units.

#### **Article 22 (Programmes organised in their entirety in another language of instruction)**

**§1.** Initial bachelor's and master's programmes may be given in their entirety in a language other than Dutch when the programme is specifically designed for foreign students or if it can be adequately shown that it would provide added value for students and the related labour market and for the functionality of the programme, and also provided that a full educational training path in Dutch is provided within the Flemish community.

**§2.** Institutions within the Flemish Community may jointly offer an equivalent in Dutch to the foreign-language initial bachelor's and master's programme. The students must take all programme units of this jointly organised equivalent bachelor's or master's programme in Dutch at a single facility.

**§3.** Notwithstanding § 1, the requirement to set up a Dutch-language equivalent lapses if:

- it concerns a programme for which the Flemish Government has already granted an exemption from the equivalence criterion;
- it concerns a programme which has the status of an International Course Programme (ICP) or which has been selected in accordance with the provisions of a European programme

to foster international cooperation in higher education, and for which multiple or joint degree diplomas are issued;

- the foreign language initial bachelor's or master's programme is organised jointly with an institution outside of the Flemish Community and is endorsed by a joint diploma, provided that the expertise required for the programme units organised outside the Flemish Community is not available within the Flemish Community.

**§4.** The examinations are held in the language of instruction.

**Article 23 (Advanced master's programmes, postgraduate programmes and permanent education)**

For advanced master's programmes, postgraduate programmes, and continuing education, the language of instruction may be determined freely. If the language of instruction is not Dutch, there is no obligation to organise an equivalent in Dutch. Examinations are taken in the language of instruction of the programme or in the language of instruction of the programme unit if the latter differs from the language of instruction of the programme.

**Article 24 (Language coaching arrangements)**

**§1.** Students who follow a foreign language initial bachelor's or master's programme or an initial bachelor's or master's programme with foreign language programme units, may test their knowledge of this foreign language. More information concerning the language tests organised at the VUB can be found on the website of ACTO (<http://www.vub.ac.be/acto/>).

**§2.** The institution's educational training programme includes specific measures in initial bachelor's and master's programmes with foreign language programme units or initial bachelor's and master's programmes taught in a foreign language. These language coaching arrangements may consist of:

1. language teaching programme units (including language programme units) offered as part of the package of core programme units or an essential elective course unit;
2. language coaching arrangements incorporated into foreign language programme units. These language coaching arrangements provide proactive coaching for students and must therefore be easily identified by students in the programme unit.

**§3.** The requirement in § 2 above may be departed from in the case of:

1. a connecting master's programme of which the preceding bachelor's programme included language coaching arrangements;
2. a postgraduate programme not following on immediately from an undergraduate programme but with bridging and preparatory programmes which included language coaching arrangements.

**§4.** The institution provides access to a need-satisfying range of free language courses for Dutch and other languages as well as language coaching arrangements.

### **Chapter III. - Entry requirements**

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

##### **Article 25 (Conditions for enrolment in programmes and programme units)**

**§1.** The following entry requirements are applicable for enrolment in degree programmes, bridging programmes, and preparatory programmes, as well as enrolment in programme units. They apply without prejudice to the specific conditions that may additionally be required and which will be stated in the programme and course unit description for each degree programme, bridging programme, and preparatory programme.

**§2.** A prospective student who wishes to enrol for a programme by means of a diploma contract and who enrolls for the first time for the programme concerned at the VUB, must do so by using the online application website.

**§3.** A prospective student who wishes to enrol under a credit contract for programme units for which he does not meet the entry requirements, should submit a reasoned request to the Dean, who will decide whether the prospective student possesses the relevant competencies.

**§4.** A prospective student who wishes to enrol under an examination contract with a view to obtaining ECTS-credits, should submit a reasoned request to the Dean.

**§5.** An enrolment which conflicts with the study progress monitoring measures taken for a prospective student will be refused.

**§6.** In accordance with article 67 § 3, students who are in arrears with payment of their tuition fees will not be allowed to (re-)enrol.

##### **Article 26 (Time frame for decision on entry requirements)**

Whether a prospective student meets the entry requirements will be decided at the time of enrolment.

#### **Section 2: Bachelor's programme**

##### **Article 27 (Admission to a bachelor's programme)**

**§1.** A prospective student who has obtained one of the following degrees in Flanders will be admitted to a bachelor's programme:

- a certificate of secondary education;
- a diploma of profession-oriented bachelor's studies (tertiary education) (*hoger onderwijs van het korte type met volledig leerplan - HOKT*);



- a diploma of adult post-secondary education for social development purposes (*hoger onderwijs voor sociale promotie*), except for a Teaching Certificate for Secondary and Higher Education (*Getuigschrift Pedagogische Bekwaamheid*);
- a post-secondary ("*gegradueerde*") diploma or a certificate of higher vocational education (*hoger beroepsonderwijs*).

**§2.** A prospective student will also be admitted to a bachelor's programme if he has obtained a degree or other proof of study outside Flanders:

- where the diploma or other proof of study is recognised as being equivalent to one of the diplomas referred to in § 1 above under statutory provisions, European directives or international agreements;
- where the diploma or other proof of study is recognised as being equivalent by the National Academic Recognition Information Centre – Flanders, NARIC Flanders (*Agentschap van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap voor Kwaliteitszorg in Onderwijs en Vorming*).

**§3.** If the prospective student cannot produce a diploma, enrolment is possible only under the exceptional admission procedure set out in article 28.

**§4.** If the prospective student produces a different diploma or other proof of study, enrolment is possible only on the grounds of prior approval which the prospective student must request in accordance with the conditions and procedures provided for in these regulations.

#### **Article 28 (Exceptional admission procedure for those who cannot produce a diploma)**

**§1.** A prospective student who cannot produce any of the diplomas mentioned in the previous articles may be allowed to undergo an aptitude test. For this, the student must cite humanitarian, medical, psychological or social reasons, or his general level of qualifications, merit or competencies. The student must submit a file to Study Guidance containing the information set out below.

**§2.** For enrolment for the first semester, the file can be submitted up to and including 15 August. For enrolment for the second semester, the file can be submitted up to and including 1 December.

**§3.** The prospective student must have reached the age of 21 at the time of enrolment, or reach that age during the calendar year in which he submits his request for admission.

**§4.** An aptitude test can be undertaken only once per academic year.

**§5.** Prospective students who have taken a specific test "*examen d'admission aux études universitaires de premier cycle*" at a university in the French Community and are able to present the corresponding certificate, are exempted from the aptitude test.

## **Article 29 (File to be submitted and further investigation)**

**§1.** A file submitted on humanitarian grounds must include the following documents:

- Proof of identity;
- Proof that the prospective student is a recognised refugee, has the accompanying protected status or has applied for it and that it is still under consideration;
- Declaration that he is not in possession of the requisite diploma;
- Overview of the study path already undertaken, if possible with supporting documentation.

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

- Proof of identity;
- Evidence in support of the stated medical, psychological or social reasons;
- Overview of the study path already completed, with supporting documentation;
- Copy of the most recent diploma or certificate of secondary education.

**§3.** A file submitted on the grounds of general level of qualification, merit or competencies must include the following documents:

- Proof of identity;
- Overview and evidence of work experience;
- Overview of the study path already completed, with supporting documentation;
- Copy of the most recent diploma or certificate of secondary education.

**§4.** The file may be supplemented with recommendations from the University's services such as Study Guidance, medical services, etc.

**§5.** The Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs will decide whether the file is complete. If the decision is positive, the prospective student will be informed that he is eligible for an aptitude test.

## **Article 30 (Admission after the aptitude test)**

**§1.** The Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs will decide if the prospective student may enrol for the degree programme, study programme or programme units for which he wishes to register, after receipt of the outcome of the aptitude test. If the aptitude test shows that, as compared with the average group of secondary school graduates, the prospective student has not reached the required level, he will not be allowed to enrol.

**§2.** The Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs will inform the prospective student of the decision within one month of receipt of the findings of the aptitude test. A positive finding is valid for a period of five years.

**Article 31 (Admission to the medicine programme and the subsequent programme in stomatology and oral-maxillofacial surgery)**

§1. Those who wish to enrol for a bachelor's programme in Medicine or for programme units within this bachelor's programme are by law required to be ranked favourably on the basis of the comparative entrance examination for doctors.

§2. A student who has been enrolled in a dental master's programme, who at the same time wishes to enrol in the basic medical training at VUB with a view to afterwards starting with the subsequent programme in stomatology and oral-maxillofacial surgery, can submit a request to the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy for exemption from the entrance examination for the complementary basic training.

The concrete procedure has been worked out in the supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations.

**Article 32 (admission to the engineering studies programmes: civil engineer and engineering studies: architecture)**

Anyone who wishes to enrol in a bachelor's programme in engineering studies: civil engineer or engineering studies: architecture must have participated in a non-binding admission test ('benchmarking test'), as determined by decree, without prejudice to the terms of admission described in Article 27 and Article 28.

The Dean of the faculty in question will impose a remediation on a student who does not obtain the set pass mark for the non-binding admission test. This remediation may consist of sitting an aptitude test, individual follow-up and/or participation in remedial classes.

**Article 33 (deviation from the mandatory participation in the non-binding admission test)**

In case a non-binding admission test is not participated in, the student may ask the Dean by means of a reasoned request to be admitted to the engineering studies programme: civil engineer or engineering studies: architecture. The student must submit their reasoned request no later than two weeks before the start of the academic year.

In that case, the student will be obliged to participate in an aptitude test before enrolment, and as and when necessary may be subject to a remediation in the first year of the bachelor.

**Section 3. Master's programme**

**Article 34 (Admission to a master's programme: General rule)**

§1. To enrol for a master's programme (initial master's, not an advanced master's programme), the prospective student must hold an academic bachelor's degree.

§2. For each master's programme at least one academic bachelor degree is outlined as the general entry requirement. Admission to a master's programme can be limited to an academic bachelor's programme with specific programme characteristics. For similar bachelor's programmes followed at another educational institution, the master's programme may differ

depending on similarity of content, without the study load being adjusted. A university and one or more university college(s) can, acting as an association, offer joint master's programmes for which the possession of a bachelor's degree in higher professional education applies as the general admission requirement.

**§3.** For someone with a different academic bachelor's degree, admission is possible if he successfully completes the preparatory programme specified for that purpose.

**§4.** For someone with a profession-oriented bachelor's degree, admission is possible if he successfully completes the bridging programme specified for that purpose.

**§5.** Exceptions to this general rule are set out in the articles below.

### **Article 35 (Admission to the master's programme in Medicine for overseas doctors)**

A doctor whose degree was obtained outside of the European Union, and who has only obtained partial equivalence for this degree, may enrol for the programme in Medicine, depending on the result obtained in the inter-university examination organised by the Flemish Inter-University Council.

### **Article 36 (Exceptional admissions procedure for those who cannot produce a diploma)**

**§1.** A prospective student who has obtained an academic bachelor's diploma but cannot produce this due to humanitarian reasons, may be allowed to sit a specific test that assesses the required knowledge of the student based on the basic competencies of the master's programme concerned. This test is prepared by the Study Programme Committee for the master's programme in which the prospective student wishes to enrol. For this, the student must submit a reasoned request to the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs. The student must submit a file containing the information set out below. The Study Programme Committee may decide, on the basis of the student's file, that he may be exempted from the test required for admission set out above. In this regard, the potential student must have shown that he has the necessary basic competencies.

**§2.** For enrolment for the first semester, the file can be submitted up to and including 15 August. For enrolment for the second semester, the file can be submitted up to and including 1 December.

### **Article 37 (File to be submitted and further investigation)**

**§1.** A file submitted must include the following documents:

- Proof of identity;
- Proof that the prospective student is a recognised refugee, has the accompanying protected status now or has applied for it, or is still under consideration;
- Declaration that the student is not in possession of the required diploma;

- Overview of the programme already undertaken, if possible with supporting documentation.

**§2.** University services, such as the Study Guidance, medical services, etc., may, at the request of the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs, invite the student to meet with them so that he can subsequently complete his file.

**§3.** The Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs will inform the prospective student within one month of receipt of the request about the decision taken. If the decision is positive, the prospective student will be informed immediately that he can take the test.

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

**§1.** This test is prepared by the Study Programme Committee for the master's programme for which the prospective student wishes to enrol.

**§2.** The Study Programme Committee may decide, on the basis of the student's file, that he may be exempted from the test set out above.

**§3.** The Study Programme Committee will immediately inform the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs of the decision on exemption, or whether the student passed the specific test.

### **Article 39 (Decision on admission or rejection)**

The Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs will inform the prospective student about the decision taken within one month from receipt of the appraisal by the Study Programme Committee.

### **Article 40 (Admission to an advanced master's programme)**

To enrol in an advanced master's programme, the student must have obtained a master's degree. Furthermore, permission to enrol may be made dependent on a suitability check. Where appropriate, a preparatory programme may be imposed. Admission to an advanced master's programme can be limited to a master's programme with specific programme characteristics. For similar master's programmes followed at another educational institution, the advanced master's programme may differ depending on the degree of content similarity, without the study load being adjusted.

**§2.** Admission to enrolment in the advanced master's programme in specialist medicine depends on a suitability check, in which a quantitative restriction may be determined for each specialisation, based on the available training capacity. The concrete conditions will be laid down in separate regulations.

## **Section 4: Admission to teacher training**

### **Article 41 (Admission to teacher training)**

§1. Enrolment in the University's teacher training programme is allowed for a prospective student who enrolls in a master's programme or has already obtained a master's degree.

§2. Enrolment in the University's teacher training programme is allowed for a prospective student who enrolls in both a master's programme and an academic bachelor's programme or a preparatory programme.

§3. Enrolment in the teacher education training programme is also possible when a prospective student enrolls in a bridging programme.

§4. More specific entry requirements are established, per discipline, by the Interfaculty Department for Teacher Training (IDLO). This is also true for language proficiency requirements. These requirements can be found on the website of Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

§5. A diploma for the teacher training programme can only be awarded if the diploma for the relevant master's programme has been obtained.

## **Section 5: Combination of enrolments**

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

§1. Any student who was enrolled in a bachelor's programme and has not yet obtained the bachelor's degree required for entry into a subsequent master's programme, can simultaneously enrol for this master's programme under the conditions set out below. The restrictions listed in article 59 shall nonetheless apply. Spreading of enrolment is possible under the same conditions. This rule also applies to inter-university, combined enrolments, both domestic and international.

§2. If a student needs fewer than 20 ECTS-credits to obtain his bachelor's degree, he can enrol in a subsequent master's programme or programme units of this master's programme, without prior approval, in accordance with the sequence-rules that apply to the sequential order for enrolment.

§3. If the student needs 20 ECTS-credits or more to obtain his bachelor's degree, he can enrol in a subsequent master's programme or programme units of this master's programme, in accordance with the relevant sequence-rules for enrolment, providing he is granted permission to do so. For this, the student or prospective student must submit a reasoned request to the Dean.

§4. When deciding on the student's request, the Dean will consider, for example, the required knowledge for the programme units in the master's programme, the master's thesis and possible work placement/internship.

§5. The master's degree can only be awarded once the relevant bachelor's degree has been obtained.

### **Article 43 (Other combinations)**

§1. The same rules as outlined in the previous article apply equally to a student enrolled in a bridging or preparatory programme, who has not yet obtained the corresponding ECTS-credits. He can already enrol in the subsequent master's programme, under the conditions set out in the previous article.

§2. The same rules also apply to a student who has not yet obtained a master's degree required for admission to an advanced master's programme.

## **Section 6: Language proficiency**

### **Subsection 1: Requirements in relation to language proficiency**

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

§1. The language of instruction for each programme of study is determined annually. It is indicated on the programme unit description.

§2. The student who enrolls for a degree programme, a study programme, or a programme unit must have a thorough command of the language in which the education is provided, at an academic level. Details of how he can prove his language proficiency are set out in the following sections.

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

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

Students must provide proof of their knowledge of the language of tuition when they enrol.

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

§1. Prospective students can provide proof of sufficient knowledge of Dutch as the language of instruction by meeting one of the following criteria:

1. having a diploma of secondary or higher education where Dutch was the language of instruction;
2. having successfully completed at least one school year of secondary education where Dutch was the language of instruction;
3. having successfully completed programme units in higher education with at least 54 ECTS-credits where Dutch was the language of instruction;
4. having passed the entrance examination for doctors or dentists organised by the Ministry of the Flemish Government;

5. having obtained a certificate of continuing education “hoger onderwijs voor sociale promotie” where Dutch was the language of tuition;
6. having passed the ‘*Nederlands Staatsexamen Nederlands als tweede taal (NT2), Programma II*’ examination;
7. having passed a test set up in accordance with European Union reference level B2, particularly the *Certificaat Nederlands als Vreemde Taal (CNaVT)* – ‘Educatief Startbekwaam’, (Certificate of Dutch as a Foreign Language), (until 2014: the *Profiel taalvaardigheid hoger onderwijs (PTHO)* (Higher education language proficiency certificate)), and the *Interuniversitaire Taaltest Nederlands voor Anderstaligen (ITNA – ERK B2)* (inter-university Dutch language test for non-native speakers).
8. Certificates and other proof of language tests may not pre-date the first enrolment by more than two years.

**§2.** Each faculty may require a higher level of language proficiency for a specific programme. This will be mentioned in the programme description.

**§3.** The Interfaculty Department of Teacher Training can apply specific language requirements to programmes that fall within its responsibility, as outlined in article 41 § 4.

**§4.** Exceptions to language requirements may be granted by the Chairman of the Study Programme Committee on the basis of an overall assessment.

**§5.** Each faculty has the discretion to decide that students do not need to submit proof of their knowledge of the language of tuition when they enrol for a postgraduate or advanced master’s programme. This will be mentioned in the programme description.

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

**§1.** Prospective students can provide proof of sufficient knowledge of English as the language of instruction by meeting one of the following criteria:

1. having a diploma of secondary or higher education where English was the language of instruction;
2. having successfully completed secondary education organised (by an educational establishment accredited) by the Flemish, French-speaking or German-speaking Community;
3. having successfully completed one of the following language proficiency tests corresponding to the Common European Framework of Reference with minimum level B2:



- TOEFL iBT with minimum level: 79;
- IELTS with minimum level: academic module 6.5;
- ITACE with minimum level: B2;
- Cambridge English Qualification Scale with the following minimal level: 170;

Certificates and other proof of language tests may not pre-date the first enrolment by more than five years.

**§2.** Each faculty may require a higher level of language proficiency for a specific programme. This will be mentioned in the programme description.

**§3.** Exceptions to language requirements may be granted by the Chairman of the Study Programme Committee on the basis of an overall assessment.

**§4.** Each faculty has the discretion to decide that students do not need to submit proof of their knowledge of the language of tuition when they enrol for a postgraduate or advanced master's programme. This will be mentioned in the programme description.

#### **Article 48 (Language test)**

**§1.** The Academic Language Centre (*Academisch Centrum voor Taalonderwijs - ACTO*) can test a prospective student who was unable to provide proof of sufficient knowledge of the language, according to the conditions stated on the website of ACTO.

**§2.** A student who changes his enrolment and wants to transfer to a programme that has different language requirements must take a new language test.

#### **Article 49 (Programme units in a different language)**

A prospective student who wishes to enrol only for programme units that are taught in a language that is different from that of the overall programme need not produce evidence of knowledge of the language of instruction of the programme, but must do so for the language of the programme unit, should the faculty so desire.

Proof of knowledge of the language of the programme unit as outlined in article 46 to and including article 48 must be submitted at the time of enrolment.

### **Section 7: Terms of admission regarding study account**

#### **Article 50 (terms of admission regarding study account)**

**§1.** Students may enrol in a bachelor's programme under a diploma contract to the extent that they have a positive study account.

**§2.** Students may enrol in one or several programme units under a credit contract to the extent that they have a positive study account.

**§3.** Contrary to § 1, students enrolled in a bachelor's programme whose study account is lower than or equivalent to zero may be admitted for one academic year in order to complete that bachelor's programme, to the extent that they satisfy the terms of admission and have to complete a maximum of 30 ECTS credits for that bachelor's programme.

**§4.** Students whose study account is lower than or equivalent to zero will also be allowed to start or continue a master's programme with a negative study account to the extent that they satisfy the terms of admission.

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

#### **Chapter IV. - Study contracts and other enrolment regulations**

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

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

###### **Article 51 (General provisions)**

**§1.** The prospective student may enrol for:

- One programme or multiple programmes simultaneously;
- A programme unit;
- Multiple programme units, which are part of one or more programmes;
- A bridging programme;
- A preparatory programme.

**§2.** The student under a diploma contract who is enrolled will subsequently need to register his annual programme.

**§3.** The prospective student who wishes to enrol under an examination contract or a credit contract should submit a reasoned request to the Dean.

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

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

**§1.** The prospective student enters into an agreement with the University upon enrolment. On enrolment the student may choose one of the following contracts:

- Diploma contract, with a view to obtaining a degree;
- Diploma contract, if the student registers for a postgraduate or a bridging programme or preparatory programme;
- Credit contract, with a view to obtaining a credit certificate for one or more programme units;
- Exam contract, with a view to obtaining a diploma;
- Exam contract, with a view to obtaining a credit certificate for one or more programme units.

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

- (i) combining a diploma contract and exam contract with a view to obtaining a diploma;
- (ii) combining a credit contract and exam contract with a view to obtaining ECTS-credits.

### **Article 53 (Permission)**

When signing the enrolment agreement, the student grants permission by agreeing, through Student SelfService, by agreeing with his enrolment and the attached conditions, or by signing the study contract.

### **Article 54 (Exam and credit contracts: characteristics and restrictions)**

**§1.** Those enrolled under an exam contract are not entitled to take part in the educational activities provided for the programme units in which they are enrolled.

**§2.** Whether enrolment under an examination contract is permitted will be stated in the programme unit description. It is possible that enrolment under an examination contract for a programme unit will be allowed provided that the student undertakes substitute activities. In that case, the programme unit description will state which substitute activities are required.

**§3.** It will be indicated in the course unit description, together with the reasons, if a work placement, bachelor's thesis or master's thesis does not qualify for the purposes of a credit contract.

### **Subsection 3: Changes to a study contract**

#### **Article 55 (Change to the type of contract)**

Changes to the chosen study contract are possible throughout the academic year. The student will contact OWSA with a view to the discontinuation of the current study contract and the registration for a new type of study contract.

## **Article 56 (Change of programme)**

§1. In choosing to change their programme, students must de-register for the entire programme of study for which they had enrolled and immediately enrol in a different programme. This change of curriculum may affect the student's study account.

§2. Any such change in programme can only take place under a diploma contract.

§3. In the event of a change, any additional tuition fees which may be due will be claimed according to Article 70.

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

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

§1. A standard study path is determined for all programmes that can be taken under a diploma contract. The standard study path is divided into programme years.

§2. A student follows a standard study path if he follows the path approved by the Education Council and takes up more than 54 and less than 66 ECTS-credits each year.

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

A student follows an individualised study path if he:

- does not take up a package of programme units between 54 and 66 ECTS-credits each year; or,
- deviates from the programme unit sequence as outlined in the standard study path; or,
- deviates from the total study load for the programme.

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

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

§1. Enrolment for a study programme, bridging or preparatory programme is only allowed for maximum 66 ECTS-credits. This maximum also applies to an enrolment in which several types of contracts are combined.

§2. An exception to this rule may be requested under extraordinary circumstances. For this, the student or prospective student must submit a reasoned request to the Dean.

## **Section 2: Enrolment arrangements**

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

#### **Article 60 (Enrolment period)**

§1. The first period to enrol in a study programme starts on 1 July and ends on 8 October. Students who enrol for the first semester must complete their online registration on 8 October,

latest. Enrolment outside the proposed enrolment periods is only possible with the explicit approval of the Dean.

**§2.** The second period to enrol in a study programme, for whoever wishes to start in the second semester, runs until 15 February. Students who enrol for the second semester must complete their online registration by 15 February, latest. Enrolment outside the proposed enrolment periods is only possible with the explicit approval of the Dean.

**§3.** The student wishing to re-enrol, should complete the re-enrolment by 15 February, latest.

**§4.** After enrolling in a study programme, the student must register in accordance with Article 78 his programme units within the following deadlines:

- For first semester programme units and full year programme units, registration is only possible up to and including 15 October.
- For second semester programme units, registration is only possible up to and including 28 February.

The registration of programme units outside these deadlines is only possible upon the explicit approval of the Dean. In order to obtain such approval, students should formulate a reasoned request, in accordance with article 79, § 3 - § 6.

**§5.** Notwithstanding §§ 1-3 a student who intends to enrol in an advanced master's programme in specialist medicine is allowed to enrol during the whole academic year.

Moreover, notwithstanding § 4, a student can be enrolled in an advanced master's programme in specialist medicine without registering for any programme units.

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

**§7.** Notwithstanding § 1 above, students who intend to enrol in a programme with tuition fees to be paid before 1 July and who already have a diploma giving them access to the programme concerned, may enrol from 1 January of the year in which the academic year starts.

## **Article 61 (Enrolment documents)**

**§1.** The prospective student who enrolls for the first time in a (different) programme at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel will be required to present the following documents, insofar the University does not already possess these:

1. identity card or passport;
2. a formal document on which the National Register Number or the INSZ (national registration number (INSZ) is given;
3. for students requiring a visa: a passport with a temporary residence permit for study purposes (visa type D) or valid residence permit;

4. the diploma that allows admission to the programme; a copy of the diploma will not suffice; those who obtained a diploma of secondary education from the Flemish Community after 31 December 2004 will not be required to produce it, unless the diploma cannot be consulted in a database;
5. for prospective medical students:
  - the certificate of successful completion of the entrance examination; or,
  - the certificate of partial equivalence of qualifications as a Doctor of Medicine issued by the Flemish Inter-University Council (VLIR).
6. for prospective students for the engineering studies programmes: civil engineer and engineering studies: architecture: proof of participation in a non-binding admission test.
7. for refugees and asylum seekers for whom an appeal or residence rights procedure is ongoing, the certificate issued by the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons, unless they are in possession of a diploma of secondary education obtained in Belgium;
8. for scholarship students of the Flemish Community in the context of development cooperation, for VLIR- and Enabel- (Belgian development agency) scholarship students and all other scholarships that are awarded for any study programme at the VUB, the certificate of scholarship status;
9. for students who cannot enrol directly without prior approval, the letter of admission signed by the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs;
10. any certificate required to prove that the entry requirements are met;
11. for overseas students, proof of medical insurance that is valid within Belgium, with the exception of students who hold a diplomatic passport, a special identity card or a valid residence permit. Prospective students who have no such medical insurance, can apply for one through the International Relations and Mobility Office (IRMO) of the University.

**§2.** If the above documents cannot be checked in a database of the (Flemish) Government, the student is required to register in person with OWSA. The student shall then present the relevant documents in person.

**§3.** Students wishing to enrol for a permanent graduation or a postgraduate may request permission for remote enrolment in a letter of motivation addressed to the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs. If this enrolment is permitted, the student wishing to enrol for a permanent graduation or a postgraduate, shall provide a certified copy of their diploma and passport/identity card to OWSA in advance.

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

**§1.** Student cards and certificates of enrolment are sent to the students.

**§2.** The enrolment details are sent directly in electronic format, by the Higher Education Database, to the Study Grants Division of the Flemish Community and the Child Benefit Office (*Rijksdienst voor Kinderbijslag*). This means that no document is given directly to the student in this regard.

**§3.** Certificates of enrolment can be obtained from OWSA.

### **Subsection 2: Specific arrangement for enrolment based on a foreign diploma**

#### **Article 63 (Admission based on a foreign diploma)**

**§1.** Enrolment based on a foreign diploma for which these regulations do not grant direct access is only possible if approval is granted by the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs.

**§2.** This rule also applies for diplomas awarded by the French or German-speaking Community and which, under the provisions of these regulations, do not grant direct access.

**§3.** Applications from prospective students can be submitted as of 15 November of the academic year preceding the academic year for which they submit their applications. Applications for enrolment should be submitted to OWSA. The application is submitted by completing the online registration.

To submit an application for admission, the following deadlines apply:

For Bachelor's programmes:

visa requirements	1 April
no visa requirements	1 September

For Master's programmes and the teacher training programme:

visa requirements	1 April
no visa requirements	1 September

Applications for admission to postgraduate programmes should be submitted before 1 September.

**§4.** The Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs will only allow the prospective student admission if the student has obtained a diploma of a corresponding level to the degree that is required by the University as a condition for entry to the programme.

Prospective students may submit their application during the year in which they expect to be awarded their diploma. If the file has been approved and no other conditions on its contents need to be met other than obtaining the diploma, the students can be given a conditional letter of admission.

**§5.** A Chinese prospective student with a Chinese diploma must also produce an APS certificate from the Academic Evaluation Centre (*Akademische Prüfstelle*). A Chinese student who has been awarded a diploma outside of China must produce evidence of authenticity of his diploma issued by the embassy of the country where the diploma was awarded.

**§6.** After consideration of the file by OWSA and the faculty, the prospective student will receive a letter of admission or rejection signed by the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs.

**§7.** Students with a non-Flemish prior education who do not qualify directly for the chosen programme will pay a registration fee of 50 euros for each registration for the assessment of the file.

The university will receive the payment of the registration fee no later than 20 calendar days after the payment invitation was sent. Registrations for which the university receives payment of the registration fee after this period will not be processed anymore.

If the student should afterwards register at VUB on the basis of a letter of admission, the registration fee for the application on the basis of which the student was admitted will be deducted from the tuition fee owed.

Bursary recipients and students from partner institutions will be exempt from this registration fee.

#### **Article 64 (Admission file)**

To obtain the necessary letter of admission, a prospective student must submit a completed online application form and a file, which must include the following documents, at the very least:

- For admission to a bachelor's programme:
  - the diploma (and list of results in case of a request for admission to an accelerated bachelor's programme);
  - a copy of his identity card or passport;
  - a passport photo;
  - a letter of motivation;
  - any document required to prove that the entry requirements are met.
  
- For admission to a master's programme or the teacher training programme:
  - a diploma and list of marks;
  - a copy of his identity card or passport;
  - a passport photo;
  - a letter of motivation;
  - letters of recommendation;
  - any document required to attest that the entry requirements are met.

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

#### **Article 65 (Discontinuation of the programme)**

**§1.** A student who does not wish to continue his study programme at the University must de-register himself by filling in the online discontinuation form and returning it to OWSA.



**§2.** A student requesting a discontinuation of the programme must return his student card. If he does not do so immediately, his request for discontinuation will automatically mean he can no longer use or present the student card or any other related documents.

**§3.** Discontinuation of the programme is not possible from 15 May until the end of the academic year.

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

##### **Article 66 (Calculation of tuition fees)**

**§1.** Tuition fees for enrolment under a diploma contract, credit or examination contract in a bachelor's or initial master's programme consist of:

- a fixed amount; this is only due once per academic year;
- a variable amount, depending on the number of study ECTS-credits for which the student enrolls.

**§2.** The fixed amount is only due once per academic year. For the purposes of calculating the tuition fees, the enrolment of a student for one or several programmes and for one or several programme units under a diploma contract and credit contract will be treated as a single enrolment. All ECTS-credits will therefore be added together.

**§3.** Deviating from the general rule, enrolments in the following programmes will be treated as individual enrolments (and not as additional enrolments):

- enrolment for an advanced master's programme;
- enrolment for a doctorate;
- enrolment for a postgraduate programme;
- enrolment under an examination contract with a view to obtaining ECTS-credits;
- enrolment under the form of an examination contract with a view to obtaining a degree.

The provisions for scholarship and almost-scholarship students do not apply to these enrolments.

**§4.** The student pays the tuition fees established by the ruling of the Academic Council, annually. The tuition fees can be consulted on the VUB website.

**§5.** Students with a bursary from the Belgian Directorate General for Development Cooperation or from the Belgian development agency (Enabel) shall pay the same fees as EEA non-bursary students.

**§6.** Students with a bursary from the Master Mind Scholarship – Fellowship Programme for Excellent Students programme of the Flemish government shall pay the same fee as EEA scholarship students.

**§7.** Detailed rules for calculating the tuition fees will be included in a spreadsheet and the accompanying note, which will be fixed annually by the Academic Council of the University. These rules shall form an integral part of these Teaching and Examination Regulations.

**§8.** Notwithstanding § 1 a student who is enrolled during the whole academic year in an advanced master's programme in specialist medicine without registering for any programme units, will not be charged any tuition fee

#### **Article 67 (Time frame for payment)**

**§1.** Tuition fees become payable upon signing the study contract or the agreement in Student SelfService.

**§2.** Upon signing the contract or upon the agreement in the Student SelfService, the student will receive a request for payment to the amount of the fees outstanding at that moment. He pays immediately. The tuition fees are recalculated upon each change in the student's curriculum. As the case may be, the student will receive a bi-weekly request for payment via his VUB email address.

**§3.** Non-payment will be sanctioned with a suspension of enrolment.

A student who, even after a reminder, fails to pay the full amount of the tuition fees due, including any additional administrative costs, before the set due date, will be suspended administratively. As long as the outstanding tuition fee has not been settled in full, proof of education credits, diplomas and certificates (including any associated diploma and certificate supplements describing the knowledge and skills acquired by the holders and this with respect to each academic year in which the student has been/was enrolled) will be retained. A student who has not paid the tuition fees due by the end of the corresponding academic year is not allowed to (re-)enrol.

The suspension will only be revoked after all the amounts due have been paid.

In no case is the student released from the obligation to pay the amount due, together with the administrative fee.

The university reserves the right to recover the amounts due through legal proceedings.

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

**§1.** Tuition fees may be paid by means of:

- valid training vouchers;
- bank transfer, including the structured communication reference given with the payment request;
- SME portfolio

**§2.** Paid tuition fees can be reimbursed in exchange for training vouchers. After discontinuation of the programme the amount paid with training vouchers cannot be reimbursed.

**§3.** When a scholarship-issuing body deposits the tuition fees of non-EEA scholarship holders (who are not entitled to a reduced tuition fee) into an account reserved for this scholarship project, the holder of this account can issue a voucher.

**Article 69 (Amount to be paid for all programmes)**

**§1.** A student who enrolls, must pay the tuition fees determined annually by the institution, immediately following the payment request.

**§2.** A student who, in his first enrolment at the University, claims that he received an educational grant from the Flemish Community in the previous school or academic year and states that he has applied for a grant or that he intends to do so, shall pay the fee for scholarship students. If his application or renewal is not approved or if no decision is taken on the educational grant before 1 May, he must pay the balance of the tuition fees. If his educational grant is approved later, however, then the University will reimburse the surplus amount paid.

**Article 70 (Payment of tuition fees after changing the chosen programme)**

**§1.** Changing the chosen study programme is possible as set out in article 56 and leads to an obligation to pay tuition fees as follows.

**§2.** If the enrolment is changed before 1 December, the student is not required to pay any additional tuition fees, provided the total number of ECTS-credits for which he is enrolled does not exceed the amount of ECTS-credits he initially enrolled for.

**§3.** If the enrolment is changed before 1 March for students who enrol in the second semester, the student is not required to pay any additional tuition fees, provided the total number of ECTS-credits for which he is enrolled does not exceed the amount of ECTS-credits he initially enrolled for.

**§4.** If the change is not requested in due time, the student will need to pay the full amount required for the new enrolment, without off-setting this against the tuition fee which was payable for the previous enrolment.

**Article 71 (Payment of tuition fees after changing chosen programme units)**

**§1.** Changing chosen programme units is possible, as set out in greater detail in article 79, and leads to an obligation to pay tuition fees as follows.

**§2.** If the total number of ECTS-credits for which the student is enrolled, exceeds the number for which he was originally enrolled as a result of the change, then the tuition fees will be recalculated. The student will pay the additional tuition fees.

**§3.** If the student enrolls for first semester programme units or for the full year programme units before 1 December, no additional tuition fees are paid, provided the total number of ECTS-credits for which he is enrolled does not exceed the number for which he was originally enrolled.

**§4.** If the student enrolls for second semester programme units before 16 March, no additional tuition fees are paid, provided the total number of ECTS-credits for which he is enrolled does not exceed the number for which he was originally enrolled.

**§5.** If the total number of ECTS credits for the curriculum chosen by the student after the change is less than the number of ECTS credits prior to the change, the student will only be entitled to a refund if he/she un-enrolls from the relevant course units before 1 December (for changes regarding first semester programme units) or before 16 March (for changes regarding second semester programme units).

**§6.** For changes after 1 December (for changing first semester programme units and full year programme units) or after 16 March (for changes for second semester programme units), the student must pay tuition fees for the ECTS-credits for all the additional programme units for which he enrolls.

## **Article 72 (Reimbursement of tuition fees after discontinuation of the programme)**

**§1.** At no point shall discontinuation of the course release the student from the obligation to pay the amount due.

**§2.** If discontinuation occurs up to and including 30 November, the student will be reimbursed the tuition fees he has paid, excluding the fixed amount.

**§3.** If discontinuation occurs from 1 December up to and including 15 March, the student will be reimbursed the tuition fees paid for second semester programme units.

**§4.** If discontinuation occurs as of 16 March, the entire amount of the tuition fees remains owed to the University.

## **Section 5. Study account**

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

**§1** The student will be refunded the full study account in case of discontinuation of the study programme before 1 December.

**§2** In case of discontinuation of the study programme between 1 December and 15 March, the student will be refunded the study account of programme units and full-year course units of the second semester.

**§3** If the study programme is discontinued after 15 March, the student will lose the full study account that has been used.

#### **Article 74 (study account and reorienting)**

**§1** A student who wants to switch study programmes must discontinue their study programme and enrol in another study programme. The study account of the discontinued study programme will be refunded in accordance with the provisions of Article 73.

**§2** The student embarking on higher education who switches study programmes between 1 December and the last day before the start of the first set of examinations of the first examination period will be refunded half of the study account of programme units of the first semester, as well as the study account used for programme units and full-year course units of the second semester.

#### **Article 75 (study account and changing the yearly programme)**

**§1.** The student will be refunded the study account used if the student deregisters from the programme units before 1 December. Deregistration from programme units is possible from 16 October onwards, only with the approval of the Dean, in accordance with Article 79.

**§2.** If the student deregisters for programme units between 1 December and 15 March, the student will lose the study account of the programme units of the first semester. The study account of programme units of the second semester and full-year course units will be refunded. Deregistration from programme units is possible only with the approval of the Dean, in accordance with Article 79.

**§3.** If the student deregisters for programme units after 15 March, the student will lose the study account used.

**§4.** In case of deregistration from programme units under credit contract the student loses the study account used, regardless of the time when this occurs.

#### **Article 76 (Adjustment of the study account)**

**§1.** If an administrative legal act leads to the calculation, increase or reduction of the study account due to a material error, the student should request its correction in writing within 10 calendar days of notification of the administrative procedure. To this end, the student must apply to the Dean, who will take a decision within 15 calendar days of receiving the request. The student will then be informed of the decision by registered mail.

**§2.** If an administrative legal act leads to the calculation, increase or reduction of the study account due to an inaccuracy, the student should request its correction in writing within 10 calendar days of notification of the administrative procedure. To this end, the student must apply to the Dean, who will take a decision within 15 calendar days of receiving the request. The reasoned decision will be sent by registered mail.

## **Section 6: Nullification of enrolment**

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

§1. Incorrect or invalid enrolments must be rectified with the institution and annulled in the Higher Education Database.

§2. Enrolment on the basis of incorrect or false though essential information, will be declared invalid by the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs.

## **Chapter V. - Set-up of the student's yearly programme**

### **Section 1: Registration of the programme units**

#### **Article 78 (Determination of the yearly programme)**

§1. For enrolments with a diploma contract, the student must determine his yearly programme each academic year. The student shall do so in accordance with the provisions of the teaching and examination regulations document and the programme-specific provisions as set out in the programme description or the programme unit description.

§2. Programme units must be registered by the student in Student SelfService. Enrolment for an examination contract or credit contract is registered by the faculty administration. The registration for programme units of guest students is also undertaken by the faculty administration.

§3. In compiling his individualised study path, the student can call on the assistance of the study path adviser.

§4. The student can determine his individualised study path for first semester programme units and full year course units up to and including 15 October. Second semester programme units can be determined up to and including 28 February. Enrolment outside the proposed enrolment periods, is only possible with the consent of the Dean, in accordance with article 60. Should the student fail to do so before 15 November and 31 March, respectively, in consultation with the study path adviser, then the student will be considered to have terminated the Enrolment Agreement and will be struck off, administratively. Should this be the case, he shall cease to enjoy the rights of a VUB student.

§5. In putting together their individualised study paths for the academic year, students must limit the number of ECTS-credits derived from foreign-language modules up to 18.33% of the study points for bachelor's programmes and up to 50% of the study load from the ECTS-credits for master's programmes.

## **Article 79 (Changing the yearly programme)**

**§1.** Changes to and de-registration from the choice of programme units within the programme for which the student is enrolled, can be made within the time frames set out below.

This change in curriculum may affect the student's study account.

**§2.** The student may enter changes through Student SelfService, without restriction, up to and including 15 October.

**§3.** From 16 October until 8 January, the student requires the permission of the Dean to register or deregister for programme units of the first semester. The Dean may withhold his approval, among others if the education in this programme unit is already too advanced. The Dean may refuse deregistration, among others if a (partial) result or electronic communication code is connected with the programme unit.

**§4.** From 16 October until 8 January, the student requires the permission of the Dean to register for full-year course units. The Dean may refuse the registration, among others if the education in this programme unit is already too advanced.

**§5.** From 16 October until 15 March, the student requires the permission of the Dean to deregister for full-year course units. The Dean may refuse deregistration, among others if a (partial) result or electronic communication code is connected with the programme unit.

**§6.** For changes to second semester programme units, the student may enter the change through Student SelfService up to and including 28 February. From 1 March, up to and including 3 June, the student requires the Dean's permission to register or deregister. The Dean may refuse the registration, among others if the education in this programme unit is already too advanced. The Dean may refuse deregistration, among others if a (partial) result or electronic communication code is connected with the programme unit.

**§7.** In case of a change to the choice of programme units, additional tuition fees will be payable if the initial number of ECTS-credits is exceeded. The rules applying to the amount claimed are set out in article 71.

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

If changes are made to the curriculum, the student may apply any already acquired study points to the new curriculum. The transitional arrangements taken in this regard must be submitted to the Education Council, together with the changes to the curriculum.

## **Article 81 (Procedure for deviation from sequence-rules)**

If a student wishes to deviate from the sequence-rules of the educational training programme, he must obtain the Dean's permission.

## **Section 2: Exemptions based on previously acquired competencies or previously acquired qualifications**

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

**§1.** If a student thinks he qualifies for an exemption based on previously acquired competencies or previously acquired qualifications, he must file an application in accordance with the procedure specified.

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

- a credit certificate or diploma issued by this or another higher education institution;
- a certificate of aptitude issued by a validating body;
- previously acquired qualifications, other than a credit certificate or diploma, which meet the definition of the Higher Education Code.

**§3.** A person who has not yet enrolled, but intends to include the relevant programme units in his programme in the next academic year, can also apply for an exemption.

### **Article 83 (Transfer of examination results)**

If an exemption is granted, the examination results obtained will not be transferred, unless:

- a) a credit certificate is obtained under a credit contract for a programme unit which is identical to that in a programme for which a diploma contract is later concluded;
- b) a credit certificate is obtained for a programme unit which is common to several programmes followed simultaneously or consecutively.

### **Article 84 (Evaluation criteria)**

**§1.** When an exemption is granted, it is checked if there is a sufficient match, in terms of objectives, contents, and study outcomes, between the programme unit for which the exemption is requested and the programme unit on the basis of which the exemption is requested.

**§2.** Decisions to grant or deny exemptions must be adequately justified. Justification based merely on the title and the study load of the programme unit is not sufficient for granting or denying an exemption.

### **Article 85 (Extent of the exemption)**

**§1.** The exemption may be complete or partial. If a complete exemption is not possible, it must always be checked to what extent a partial exemption is possible.

**§2.** The extent of an exemption is expressed in whole study points.



§3. If a partial exemption is granted, the decision must explicitly state for which parts the student is exempted and for which parts he still needs to sit an examination. The way in which the examination scores are determined must also be stated.

#### **Article 86 (Period of validity)**

A credit certificate, a certificate of aptitude, or other previously acquired qualifications are valid for an indefinite period.

#### **Article 87 (Procedure)**

§1. Decisions on exemptions are taken by the Dean, possibly based on the advice of the lecturer and/or Study Programme Committee. The detailed procedure for requesting and granting of exemptions must be posted on the website of the faculty.

§2. If it is found, based on his previously acquired qualifications and/or a certificate of aptitude, that a person has acquired the domain-specific study outcomes associated with a programme, that person will be awarded the relevant diploma without enrolment being required. An amount of 50 euros is payable as a contribution towards the costs for the award of the diploma.

§3. When a decision is taken to exemptions based on a foreign diploma or a period of study abroad, the provisions and principles of the Treaty of the Council of Europe and UNESCO on the recognition of diplomas of higher education in the European Region, shall apply, provided the country of origin has also ratified the Treaty.

§4. Decisions on granting or denying exemptions must be kept on file. The relevant documents from the file concerned must be retained within the faculty for at least 1 academic year.

### **Section 3: Study progress monitoring**

#### **Article 88 (Imposition of a study progress monitoring measure)**

§1. At the first following re-enrolment for the same programme, a binding condition is imposed on students who are enrolled under a diploma contract and have failed to obtain ECTS-credits for 60% of the ECTS-credits taken up. Students may also be placed under mandatory study guidance. If they re-enrol for the same programme under a diploma contract, these students must obtain ECTS-credits for 75% of the ECTS-credits taken up and need to register and pass every programme unit for which they already enrolled twice, but for which they did not obtain a credit certificate. Should a student fail to comply with this binding condition, the first following re-enrolment for the same programme, or any units in that programme, under any form of contract whatsoever will be refused, barring exceptional circumstances.

At the start of the academic year, the student is entitled to a meeting with a Study Guidance staff member about the student's study progress and possible study advice.

**§2.** Barring exceptional circumstances, students enrolled under a credit or examination contract for the purpose of obtaining ECTS-credits will be rejected for this programme unit if they have enrolled twice for a particular programme unit without having obtained a credit certificate for that programme unit.

**§3.** When a student has not obtained any credits, he will not be allowed to re-enrol for the same programme, nor for course units of that programme under credit contract or exam contract, save in exceptional circumstances. The Examinations Board can make an exception to this rule for students who are enrolled in only one or two course units.

**§4.** For the purposes of this article, students enrolled under an exam contract with a view to obtaining a degree or a diploma of a study programme will follow the regulations that apply to students under a diploma contract.

**§5.** In case of exceptional circumstances a substantiated file can be submitted by the student to the Chairman of the Examinations Board containing at least a factual description of the exceptional circumstances, together with supporting documents. The appeal must be lodged with the faculty's administrative secretariat, and this:

- up to and including the 16<sup>th</sup> of August insofar as the invoked circumstances were known before the start of the second examination period,
- no later than five calendar days before the date of the deliberation (second examination) insofar as the exceptional circumstances occurred during the second examination period.

**§6.** A decision by a partner institute to reject enrolment for a programme organised on an interuniversity level that is subject to the "Examination regulations for interuniversity master's courses involving enrolment at more than one university", shall be recognised by this institute.

**§7.** Any decision to impose a binding condition or to reject enrolment will be communicated through Student SelfService.

**§8.** Following a break in enrolment of at least three academic years for the programme(s) and programme units for which the student was refused access, the student may submit a reasoned file in writing showing that the circumstances have changed. The file must be submitted before 1 June or 1 September, respectively, to the faculty administrative secretariat and will be processed by the competent committee. This committee may impose a binding condition on the student in accordance with § 1 of this article, as applies at the time of the decision.

**§9.** Study progress decisions are taken subject to Article 50.

#### **Section 4: Timetable**

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

The date, time and classroom where the classes (lectures, WPO, ...) are taught will be announced to the student via a timetable before the start of the relevant semester and in the manner

explained in the supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations. Any changes in the timetable will be announced to the students in the same manner.

### **Section 5: Taking programme units at another institution**

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

Under the terms of an agreement concluded between the Flemish universities, students can take programme units organised by other universities as elective course units. The agreement sets out the following conditions/criteria:

- the student is enrolled under a diploma contract or an examination contract for the purpose of obtaining a diploma;
- the programme unit is not organised by the home institution;
- the student does not owe the guest institution any additional tuition fees;
- the examination results are communicated by the guest institution to the home institution;
- the credit certificate is issued by the home institution.

#### **Article 91 (Taking programme units at another higher education institution)**

**§1.** For the purpose of internationalisation/student mobility, faculties of different universities may make arrangements for the exchange and lending/borrowing of programme units.

**§2.** If a student wishes to take (a) programme unit(s) at another institution that is not covered by article 90 and article 91 of these regulations, he must submit a reasoned request to the Dean. The faculty shall incorporate a procedure for this purpose in its faculty teaching and examination regulations.

If the faculty decides favourably on the request, it must clearly specify which programme units can be replaced by external programme units and how the examination results will be converted.

#### **Article 92 (outgoing exchange with a Learning Agreement)**

### **Section 6: Equal opportunities**

#### **Article 93 (Inclusive education)**

**§1.** All educational activities must be open to everyone. Every student must be given equal opportunities. This may call for a reasonable degree of flexibility (in terms of compliance with the criteria for feasibility, acceptability and justifiability) in granting deviations to individual students under specific circumstances. A reasonably flexible deviation is a one that does not involve a disproportionate burden. A reasonably flexible deviation renders education more feasible for the student, remains acceptable to the lecturer and can be justified to fellow students and the educational institution. The student must ask for the opinion of Study Guidance or the Top-tier Sports and Study Department, which in turn will send, based on a professional certificate and an

interview with a Study Guidance student psychologist, a reasoned request to the lecturer, under the responsibility of the Dean. A decision to refuse the requested deviation may be justified on the basis of the institution being of the opinion that the requested deviations would compromise the possibility of achieving the domain-specific study outcomes of the programme or the possibility of roughly achieving other objectives of the educational training programme. As set out in article 154, students with disabilities may lodge an appeal against the refusal of a requested deviation.

**§2.** The aim is always to come to a workable arrangement through dialogue. If problems arise during the dialogue, the faculty ombudsperson may be asked to intervene.

### **Section 7: Flemish training leave (VOV), Paid educational leave (BEV) and leave of absence for training purposes**

#### **Article 94**

**§1.** Students who combine work and study may enrol as working students. The criteria for eligibility, how to enrol and the nature of the special educational activities available to working students are listed here: <https://my.vub.ac.be/en/working-and-studying> and [https://student.vub.be/en/specific-info-for-working-students#\(re-\)enrol](https://student.vub.be/en/specific-info-for-working-students#(re-)enrol)

**§2.** To be entitled to Flemish training leave (VOV) students must transmit their employer a certificate of participation in the final evaluation. In order to make it possible for OWSA to deliver a valid certificate students must submit a copy of their individual overview of points complemented with the exam dates immediately after the electronic communication of the results

- by the last Friday before the start of the new academic year.

**§3.** To be entitled to Flemish training leave (VOV), students must have their attendance lists signed by their respective lecturers after each lecture they have attended. Students must submit their attendance lists on a quarterly basis to OWSA at the latest on:

- the last Friday before the winter break (for first semester programme units);
- the last Friday before the Easter holiday (for second semester programme units and full year programme units);
- 30 June (for second semester programme units and full year programme units).

Students enrolled with a diploma contract and who take paid educational leave for the second examination period must provide their employers with proof that they have actually sat the exams of the second examination period. Since the OWSA can provide valid proof, students must provide OWSA with a copy of the list of their results and the dates of the examinations concerned:

- by the last Friday before the start of the new academic year.

Students enrolled with an examination contract with a view to obtaining a diploma and entitled to paid educational leave (BEV), must provide their employers with proof that they have actually

sat the examinations concerned. Since OWSA can provide valid proof, students must provide OWSA with a copy of the list of their results and the dates of the examinations concerned:

- by the first day on which the lectures in the second semester start (first examination period in January);
- by the last Friday following the closing of the first examination period (first examination period in June);
- by the last Friday before the start of the new academic year (second examination period).

**§ 4.** To be entitled to leave of absence for training purposes, students must have their attendance lists signed by their respective lecturers after each lecture they have attended. Students must submit their attendance lists to OWSA by 30 June.

### **Chapter VI. Student feedback**

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

As students are important stakeholders in education, they are explicitly asked for their opinion on that education. One of the instruments used to do this is the student feedback survey. All bachelor's and master's programmes, as well as the specific teacher training programme and the bridging and preparatory programmes, are evaluated annually by the students by means of this survey.

This survey has several purposes. The results provide insight into the degree to which students are satisfied with the quality of education. The feedback from students can help the lecturers, the Study Programme Committees and the institution to reflect on the quality of education, to detect and correct any problems, and to further optimise the education. Moreover, the quantitative feedback is used by the institution for reporting purposes and quality assurance. The qualitative feedback is initially used by the lecturers with a view to improving quality.

In addition, the results of the survey are among the elements included in the academic file of the ZAP in order to be involved in the evaluation and promotion procedure of the ZAP.

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

The survey is made up of various components:

- a survey for each programme unit, in which the satisfaction of the students is assessed with respect to five aspects: objectives, substance, guidance, study material and forms of evaluation. The satisfaction with each teacher who is associated with the programme unit as a lecturer or fellow lecturer is also surveyed;
- a survey on the experience of the study time;
- a questionnaire that assesses the satisfaction with the study programme, the study programme facilities and the generic competences acquired during the study programme;
- a questionnaire concerning the general satisfaction with the VUB and the central provision of services.

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

The student feedback survey is organised twice a year, following the first or second semester respectively, for the programme units that the students followed in the relevant semester. All programme units are evaluated, including the work placement, bachelor's thesis or master's thesis.

The questionnaire about the study programme will be offered after the second semester to bachelor's degree and master's degree students who complete their study programme, and to students of the teacher training. The general satisfaction survey is offered to all students after the first semester.

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

The survey is organised, coordinated and managed by Educational and Student Affairs, under the supervision of the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs. IT develops and maintains the application.

The survey takes place electronically via a secure intranet page. The students have access via their individual VUB-NetID. Educational and Student Affairs will take the measures that are necessary to safeguard the anonymity of the students.

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

The results of the survey are reported after each survey via the official results site for academic staff and students. This secure intranet page is accessible to students and lecturers via their VUB-NetID.

The students have access to the aggregated results of the survey per programme unit and to the results (excluding the comments) of the other components of the survey.

### **Article 100 (follow-up of signals as a result of the survey per programme unit)**

There is a follow-up signal if at macro level (aggregated by study guide number) for one of the aspects 34% of the participating students answered with less than 5 on a scale of 0-10. In addition, the following participation criteria must have been met (the percentages concern the number of students enrolled in the programme unit that participates in the survey for the same programme unit):

- at least 50% with a group size of [1-15]
- at least 40% with a group size of [15-50]
- at least 30% with a group size of [50-150]
- at least 20% with a group size of 150 and larger

A signal will only be 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 programme unit are referred to as second or third follow-up signals. These follow-up signals must be followed up formally.

### **TITLE III. – Examination regulations**

#### **Chapter I. - Organisation of examinations**

##### **Article 101 (Preliminary examinations)**

§1. Preliminary examinations may only be held for full year programme units which form part of the first year of a full-time standard study path in a bachelor's programme during the first set of examinations of the first examination period.

§2. The faculties shall determine the necessary procedure guidelines in their supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations.

§3. The manner in which the results are incorporated into the end results for the programme unit in question shall be included in the course description.

##### **Article 102 (Number of examination opportunities)**

§1. Students are entitled to two examination opportunities during the academic year to obtain a credit certificate for each programme unit for which they are enrolled. Depending on the nature of a programme unit, the number of examination opportunities (also at the level of any component part of an examination) may be limited to one. This must be indicated in the course unit description.

§2. Under no circumstances may students present themselves more than twice within the same academic year for the same examinations or component parts of an examination.

##### **Article 103 (Partial or continuous assessment)**

§1. As regards programme units which consist of several study activities, every faculty may opt to assess the competencies associated with these activities separately.

The information provided to students shall relate, at the very least, to the following aspects:

- a description of the various study activities;
- the percentage share of the various study activities in the final examination score;
- the types of assessment and when assessment takes place, i.e. assessment (at least partially) outside examination periods;
- the possibility that individual assessment results may be announced to students;
- the possibility that individual assessment results may also be included in the second examination period scores.

§2. The procedures under § 1 shall be announced before the start of the academic year as part of the course descriptions.

#### **Article 104 (Retaking examinations)**

**§1.** Programme unit examinations taken in the first set of examinations of the first examination period may not be retaken until the second examination period.

**§2.** For students who take part in international exchange programmes, the procedures for re-taking 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 programme unit, followed at another foreign institution for higher education, to take an examination in the second examination period of the same academic year at the VUB for the equivalent VUB programme unit.

#### **Article 105 (Scheduling of examinations)**

**§1.** Examinations may not be scheduled on Sundays or public or academic holidays.

**§2.** Except for reflex students, no preliminary or other examinations may be held outside the periods specified in Article 7 § 1. If a public holiday occurs during an examination period, the relevant examination period shall then start on the Saturday of the preceding pre-examinations study week.

**§3.** For international students, students participating in international exchange programmes, as well as for students enrolled in study programmes of an interuniversity nature, any decision to make an exception shall be taken by the competent faculty authorities and set out in the Supplementary Faculty Teaching and Examination Regulations document.

**§4.** In exceptional circumstances, such as those referred to in § 3, teaching activities will not be suspended.

#### **Article 106 (Examination schedule)**

**§1.** The preliminary examination schedule for the first set of examinations of both the first and second examination period is posted at least fourteen weeks before the examinations start on official notice boards and/or communicated by e-mail to students' VUB e-mail addresses. For the second examination period, this time-span is reduced to four weeks.

The above-mentioned provision applies only to programme units for which the Vrije Universiteit Brussel is responsible.

**§2.** In determining the examination schedule, the standard study path is taken as a basis. Students who have multiple examinations at the same time, either by deviating from the model course, or through a combined enrollment, or the optional course, will sit the examination that comes first in the standard study path or the examination for the mandatory programme unit (rather than elective programme units). For the examinations from other programme units, the student can ask whether a new examination time can be arranged within the relevant examination period. The procedure for requesting the rescheduling of an examination is outlined in the faculty regulations. This procedure stipulates that the student has a period of at least 3



calendar days to notify of an overlap in their examination schedule. For the first and second examination periods of the first session, the examination schedule shall be finalised four weeks before the commencement of the relevant examination period. The examination schedule for the second session shall be finalised two weeks before the commencement of the examination period.

In determining the examination schedule based on the study path, attention is paid to spreading out students' efforts. It is recommended that faculties, as much as possible organisationally, spread out examinations to ensure that examinations are not held on consecutive days, unless they concern several assessments associated with one and the same programme unit.

**§3.** The timetable and order in which students must present themselves for an examination is established by the faculty Secretary or by an administrative staff member appointed by the Dean. The faculty ombudsperson may, at his request or following a complaint, be involved in drawing up the definitive examination schedule.

**§4.** Any change to the examination schedule brought about by the institution after it was made public must be communicated personally and without delay to the affected students through their VUB e-mail addresses. Any changes may not result in examinations taking place earlier than previously announced.

**§5.** Implementation of this article falls under the aegis of the faculty Dean.

## **Chapter II. - Equal opportunities**

### **Article 107 (Inclusion)**

**§1.** All educational activities must be open to everyone. Every student must be given equal opportunities. This may call for a reasonable degree of flexibility (in terms of compliance with the criteria for feasibility, acceptability and justifiability) in granting deviations for individual students under specific circumstances. A reasonably flexible deviation is a one that does not involve a disproportionate burden.

A reasonably flexible deviation renders examinations more feasible for the student, remains acceptable to the lecturer and can be justified to fellow students and the educational institution. The student must ask for the opinion of Study Guidance Centre or the Top Sports and Study Department, which in turn sends, based on a professional certificate and an interview with an SBC student psychologist, a duly motivated request to the lecturer, under the responsibility of the Dean. A decision to refuse the requested derogation may be justified on the basis of the institution being of the opinion that the requested derogations would compromise the possibility of achieving the domain-specific learning outcomes of the programme, or the possibility of roughly achieving other objectives of the educational training programme. As set out in article 154, students with disabilities may lodge an appeal against the refusal of a requested derogation.

**§2.** Reflex students address their requests for reasonable flexible deviations by bearing in mind the following deadlines to the SBC:

- first set of examinations, first examination period: 1 December
- second set of examinations, first examination period: 1 May
- second examination period: 15 July.

**§3.** The aim is always to come to a workable arrangement through dialogue. If problems arise during the dialogue, the faculty ombudsperson may be asked to intervene.

### **Chapter III. - Taking examinations**

#### **Article 108 (Taking examinations)**

**§1.** A student will only be allowed to sit examinations if the student has been correctly enrolled for the relevant academic year and if the student has been enrolled in the relevant programme unit via the Student SelfService. The exam list lists the students who are enrolled in the programme unit in question.

**§2.** If the student is not included in the exam list and the student is of the opinion that he should be admitted to the examination, the student will contact the faculty secretariat before the start of the examination at the latest. In exceptional circumstances, the examiner may decide that the student will be admitted to the examination on a conditional basis. If it becomes evident that the student has not been enrolled correctly, the examination will not be valid.

**§3.** Proper enrolment for examinations is entirely dependent upon submission of the requisite certificates at the time of enrolment and full payment of the tuition fees.

**§4.** Until suspension is revoked, the student who is suspended under article 67, § 3 is not entitled to benefit from teaching activities and all examinations taken or to be taken shall be deemed null and void. Any examination scores already awarded shall be invalid.

#### **Article 109 (Taking examinations - faculty criteria)**

**§1.** Without prejudice to the provisions of article 108, the faculties shall determine the conditions under which students are granted admission or refusal to sit examinations. These rules must be announced to students at the beginning of the academic year and be included in the supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations.

#### **Article 110 (Sitting examinations in the second examination period)**

Notwithstanding the provisions of article 108 and article 109, students are automatically registered for the second examination period for all the course units for which they did not obtain credits during the first examination period, except where a deviation is permitted.

### **Chapter IV. - Examination proceedings**

#### **Article 111 (Force majeure)**

**§1.** Students shall strictly observe the timetable and location set for an examination. In the event of circumstances beyond their control, students may ask for an examination to be rescheduled, provided that the necessary proof can be produced. Any *force majeure* event and request to re-schedule an examination, must be reported by the student in writing by e-mail to the faculty secretariat by the date of the examination. To this end, the student must duly and correctly complete the appropriate form. The faculties shall indicate in their faculty teaching and examination regulations where the form can be obtained.

The original documents substantiating the *force majeure* event must be submitted to the faculty secretariat within three calendar days of the date on which the examination took place and, if or where applicable, by the new date for the examination given in the new examination schedule.

**§2.** The examiner shall decide whether a re-scheduled examination is organisationally possible during the same examination period, and in the event of a positive decision shall set a new examination schedule. The new examination schedule may be coupled with a change to the examination method, as decided by the Dean.

**§3.** In exceptional circumstances, the Dean may decide to extend the set of examinations/the examination period.

The decision shall be reported to the student within 3 calendar days of receipt of the request to re-schedule the examination.

**§4.** Examiners shall strictly observe the timetable and location set for an examination. In cases where the examiner is absent and fails to submit notice of that absence, the examination arrangement shall be cancelled after a one-hour waiting period. Students must report these circumstances without delay to the Dean who, without prejudice to the provisions of article 106 § 4 and following consultation with the students concerned, shall draw up a new examination arrangement.

#### **Article 112 (Medical certificates)**

If the substantiating document referred to in article 111 § 1 is a medical certificate, it will not be accepted if it is:

- an incomplete certificate or certificate containing contradictory information;
- a doctor's certificate based on a patient's claim of ill health rather than being based on a medical examination or diagnosis;
- A medical certificate issued later than the first day of an illness or accident.

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

**§1.** An examination is held by the lecturer responsible for a programme unit or by the person who, as a replacement lecturer, has taught the programme unit in question in that year. The examiner shall keep an attendance list of all the students who have taken an examination with by him.

**§2.** In the event of force majeure or a legitimate cause for the absence of the examiner, the Dean will decide on the replacement of the examiner and on the appointment of a replacement examiner. As far as reasonably possible, the examiner may address a reasoned request to the Dean to be wholly or partially relieved of his assignment as an examiner. In the event of *force majeure* and if thoroughly justified, the decision to appoint a replacement examiner may be coupled with a change to the examination method.

The Dean nominates a replacement examiner, being an independent academic staff member ("ZAP") or a doctoral assistant.

**§3.** In the event of a blood relationship or kinship to the fourth degree, or in the case of personal involvement between a student and an examiner, the Dean shall, in consultation with the Chairman of the Examination Board, appoint an alternative examiner. Where this is the case, the examiner must apply to the Dean for a replacement to be appointed before the start of the examination periods.

#### **Article 114 (Public nature of examinations, right to inspect and feedback)**

**§1.** The preliminary and other examinations are held by the lecturers responsible for the programme units in a room belonging to the university. In exceptional circumstances and with the approval by the Dean, a different examination location may be agreed.

**§2.** Every student may request the presence of an observer. A reasoned request to this end must be submitted in writing to the Chairman of the Examination Board two weeks before the date of the oral examination at the latest (expiry date). The role of observer may not be filled by a student who is due to be examined by the examiner concerned in the same academic year, nor by a relative up to the fourth degree of kinship or any person with whom the student in question has a personal relationship. The observer may only take notes.

The examiner can request the Chairman of the Examination Board to appoint a member of the academic staff (ZAP) as an observer during the oral examination of one or more students.

**§3.** The public nature of written preliminary and other examinations is guaranteed by allowing students to inspect copies of the examination papers after each examination period within a period of five days following the announcement of the results in accordance with article 145 of these regulations. The request for an appointment should be given 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 Examinations Regulations document how this right is organised.

The examiner shall retain the copies of the examination, regardless of the format in which the examination took place, up to three months after the end of the academic year in which the examination took place.

**§4.** With a view to obtaining evidence-based educational guidance, the student may ask for a clarification of the results of mid-term and final examinations within the period of five calendar days after the announcement of the results in accordance with Article 145 of these regulations (expiry date).

#### **Article 115 (Examination format)**

**§1.** The course unit description explains in which format the examinations are conducted.

**§2.** An optional oral examination is only possible for programme units that are part of the first year of the full-time standard study path for a bachelor's programme.

#### **Article 116 (Deviation from the examination format)**

**§1.** By the below deadlines at the latest (expiry dates), a student may apply to the Chairman of the Examination Board asking for a from the examination format proposed for one or more programme units, provided there are serious grounds for doing so:

- first set of examinations, first examination period: 1 December
- second set of examinations, first examination period: 1 May
- second examination period: 15 July.

In exceptional circumstances, it may be decided to deviate from this deadline and/or the types of grounds permissible.

**§2.** The Chairman of the Examination Board shall inform the Dean and the lecturer(s) responsible for the programme units concerned if a deviation is granted.

#### **Article 117 (Fill in details)**

The student is responsible for correctly and completely filling in their personal and administrative details relating to the examination. If identification of the student is not possible, the lecturer of the programme unit may decide to record the student as being absent.

#### **Article 118 (Irregularities)**

**§1.** If an academic staff member suspects a student of having committed an irregularity during a preliminary or other examination, or different form of assessment, he reports this to the Dean in writing without delay. When an examiner, or other individual with supervisory authority, notes that a student is involved in irregular activities during an exam, they will inform the student accordingly and may end the ongoing examination of the student in question, and where applicable, confiscate the contested material and previously produced copy.

**§2.** An irregularity is defined as any behaviour by a student in a programme unit which renders, or attempts to render a proper assessment of the student's own knowledge, understanding and/or skills or those of other students partially or wholly impossible.

Any form of fraud which constitutes an infringement of scientific integrity, including simulating or falsifying research results, is also an irregularity in the context of this article.

Holding a mobile phone or a smartphone or any other tool, of which the use is not explicitly allowed during the examination, is also an irregularity in the context of this article

Plagiarism is also an irregularity in the context of this article. Plagiarism means the use of other people's work, adapted or otherwise, without careful acknowledgement of sources. Plagiarism may relate to various forms of works including text, images, music, databases, structure, lines of thought, ideas. More particularly, the following situations are considered to constitute plagiarism:

- The student copies works from other authors, with source references but without using quotation marks where it concerns a literal copy;
- The student copies fragments from other authors, whether or not literally, without source references;
- The student refers to primary source material if the student, whether or not literally, copies the works and source references from secondary sources that have not been listed;
- The student copies fragments from other authors, with or without source references, with minor and/or misleading adjustments.

For the application of these regulations, borrowing one's own works without proper quotation of source is also considered an irregularity.

The VUB reserves the right to check for plagiarism using any means it deems appropriate for this purpose.

**§3.** If the suspicion is substantiated, the (vice-)Dean will decide, possibly after consultation with the Chairman of the Examination Board, whether disciplinary action is to be taken against the student. This decision shall be communicated to the student by registered mail or given by hand with signature for receipt. The student may continue to take examinations pending the (vice-)Dean's decision.

**§4.** The student involved has a right to be heard prior to any decision being taken. The faculty Ombudsperson will be invited to attend. The student has the right to consult his file and may be assisted during the hearing by legal counsel.

**§5.** (A combination of) the following disciplinary sanctions may be taken by the (vice-)Dean:

- awarding zero points for the examination or paper of the given programme unit or part thereof;
- exclusion from the examination period: awarding no points for any examinations in an examination period;
- exclusion from the first and second set of examinations of the first examination period: no points are awarded for any examinations of either examinations of the first examination period;

- rejection: the student can no longer sit examinations during the current academic year. He may not re-enrol until the following academic year at the earliest and loses all scores already obtained in the academic year in dispute;
- exclusion from the institution: termination of the student's enrolment for the current academic year with immediate effect and being prohibited from (re)enrolling for a following academic year;
- prohibition from (re-)enrolling for multiple academic years.

The (vice-)Dean will decide on a case by case basis, taking into account the gravity of the offence, whether the sanction will also be applicable to other programmes for which the student may have enrolled.

**§6.** In determining the gravity of the offence and the punishment imposed, the following aspects, among others, are taken into account:

- the nature and scale of the irregularity/plagiarism committed;
- the student's experience;
- whether or not the deceit was intentional.

**§7.** The student may submit an intern appeal to the Chairman of the appeal body concerned within seven calendar days (deadline which starts from the date after the date of notification of the decision) in accordance with the conditions and procedure described in Article 153.

**§8.** In the event of an appeal, the (vice-)Dean's decision, as specified in § 5 of this article, shall be deferred until the appeal body has reached its decision on the irregularity established.

#### **Article 119 (Work placement termination)**

**§1.** If a student has demonstrated through his conduct that he is ill-suited to exercise the profession to which the training he is taking is directed, the work placement may be terminated early.

**§2.** If this is confirmed by the facts, the Dean shall decide, where appropriate following consultation with the Chairman of the Examination Board, whether or not to terminate the work placement early. The grounds for the decision to terminate the work placement early must be set out in detail. This decision shall be communicated to the student by registered mail. Pending a decision by the Dean, the student may pursue the work placement.

**§3.** The student is entitled to a hearing before the decision is taken. The faculty Ombudsperson will be invited to attend. The student has the right to consult his file and may be assisted during the hearing by legal counsel.

**§4.** The student may submit an appeal to the Chairman of the appeal board concerned within seven calendar days (deadline which starts from the date after the date of notification of the decision) in accordance with the conditions and procedure described in Article 153.

**§5.** If the internship commences before the start of the academic year for which the student has enrolled for the internship, it shall only commence if the student qualifies for (re-) enrolment for the course, and the units thereof, at the start of the academic year.

An internship that is inconsistent with the study progress monitoring measures taken for the student concerned will be stopped immediately.

**§6.** If the student's enrolment is suspended during the internship period, the internship will be stopped immediately. If the suspension is lifted, the student may ask to resume the internship.

### **Chapter V. – Master's thesis**

#### **Article 120 (Subject, supervisor, assessors)**

**§1.** A master's thesis is a compulsory part of any master's programme. Regarding master's theses, individual faculties shall determine, in their supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations document, when students are to provide the Dean with the following:

- the subject of their master's thesis;
- the signature of their master's thesis' supervisor approving the subject;
- an outline of the objective and method, as appropriate.

**§2.** A list of master's theses giving the subjects and supervisors must be submitted for approval before the start of the winter break. The competent body must be designated in the supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations. Apart from the thesis supervisor at least one assessor will be appointed by the faculty; the due date for such appointments will be set out in the supplementary faculty teaching and examinations regulations document.

**§3.** A thesis supervisor must be an independent academic member of staff ("ZAP"), a postdoctoral research assistant or a visiting professor or another member of the academic staff who is the holder of a doctorate. As a general rule, assessors are members of academic staff from within the VUB. The faculty may decide to appoint one external expert as assessor.

#### **Article 121 (Changes)**

**§1.** Subject changes, a change in supervisor at the student's initiative or dereliction of duty on the part of the supervisor must be reported, together with the reasons therefor, to the Dean in writing. This must be accompanied by the reasons given.

**§2.** In accordance with the provisions of article 120, save as regards any deadlines set, a new subject shall be chosen and/or another supervisor appointed.

#### **Article 122 (Supervisor guidance)**



The thesis supervisor shall regularly provide guidance to the student and the student shall regularly inform the supervisor of progress regarding the research. In the event of non-observance, a student or a supervisor may report this circumstance to the Dean in writing.

**Article 123 (Submission date)**

Each year, by 15 August of the calendar year in which the academic year is due to commence, the faculty shall determine the dates for submission of master's theses. A master's thesis must be submitted electronically and on paper in a minimum of three and a maximum of ten copies.

**Article 124 (Submission format)**

**§1.** The master's thesis must be submitted both in paper format and in electronic form. It shall be determined in the supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations whether a master's thesis should be accompanied by a summary, in publishable form, as well as an abstract to be included in the common listings of theses published in Belgian specialist journals.

**§2.** The supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations may stipulate, in extraordinary circumstances, that a master's thesis cannot be published.

**§3.** Responsibility for showing that their research materials are authentic lies with the students.

**Article 125 (Assessment)**

**§1.** Without prejudice to the provisions of § 2, a supervisor and assessors shall discuss and assess a master's thesis.

**§2.** If the regulations do not call for a public oral thesis defence, students are allowed access, on request, to their supervisor's and assessors' reasoned report and the proposed exam mark. On the basis of the report, students may decide to request a public oral defense of their thesis before the supervisor and assessors concerned.

**§3.** On the basis of a reasoned report, a public oral thesis defense may be imposed on the student concerned.

**§4.** If all students are required to conduct a public oral thesis defense, the supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations shall specify whether the student is to receive a qualitative assessment prior to the defense.

**§5.** The supplementary faculty regulations may set out a procedure to deviate from the public nature of the oral defense. The decision to abolish the public nature of the defense must at all times be justified by extraordinary circumstances.

**§6.** The supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations may establish a procedure for replacing a supervisor or assessor who cannot attend the oral defense due to circumstances beyond his control or reason of legal impediment.

**Article 126 (Reports)**

The reports drawn up by supervisors and assessors shall be made available to the members of the Examination Board three calendar days before the day on which the examiners' meeting is due to take place.

**Article 127 (Supervision by several institutions)**

If a master's thesis is supervised jointly by two or more institutions, the procedures governing the joint supervision shall be specified in their co-operation agreement.

**Chapter VI. - Examination board**

**Article 128 (Examination board)**

For all bachelor's and master's courses, bridging and preparatory programmes, the teacher training programme and postgraduate programmes, an Examination Board shall be set up for the programme in its entirety.

**Article 129 (Composition)**

**§1.** Prior to the start of the academic year, the authorised faculty body shall determine the composition of the examination boards *ad nominatim*. It shall also determine whether there are alternates.

**§2.** The composition of an examination board shall be representative and comprise at least six independent academic members of staff ("ZAP") who are qualified to vote, unless the total number of examiners is lower. For a valid decision to be reached about a student, a minimum of half of the board members must take part in the deliberations.

**§3.** Faculty ombudspersons cannot be a member of an examination board with a right to vote. If an ombudsperson would like to participate in the examination board as a voting member, he will have to be replaced by their faculty replacement during the deliberation process. To this end, the faculties shall incorporate appropriate rules in their supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations.

**Article 130 (Chairman and secretary)**

**§1.** Prior to the start of the academic year, the authorised faculty body shall appoint a chairman and a secretary for each examination board, as well as alternates for both positions. The Dean shall announce their names to the faculty ombudsperson.

**§2.** The name of the Chairman of the Examination Board shall be posted on the official notice boards throughout the academic year.

**Article 131 (Participation in an advisory capacity)**

The following persons may participate in the meetings of an Examination Board in an advisory capacity:

- the Dean, who may attend and chair all examination board meetings in his faculty;
- a master's thesis supervisor;
- the faculty ombudsperson;
- the faculty secretary or administrative staff member(s) appointed by the Dean and who are responsible for preparing examiners' meetings, as well as study path advisers.

**Chapter VII. Proceedings at deliberations 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. to issue a non-binding recommendation on whether the student should continue his studies in light of his progress based on his examination results;
2. to alter an examination figure in the event of a material error, a serious irregularity or an apparent irrationality;
3. to determine the programme units which must be retaken;
4. to take a study progress monitoring measure in accordance with Article 88.

**§2.** In exceptional circumstances and notwithstanding Article 143, the Examination Board may declare that a student has successfully passed an entire programme. The justification must show that the objectives of the study programme have been accomplished overall. Each case must be justified separately and specifically.

The fact that a student is declared to have successfully passed overall does not mean that he is eligible for a credit certificate for the programme units which he has not passed.

If the student is declared not to have passed, he must retake all examinations awarded unsatisfactory marks.

**§3.** In exceptional circumstances and notwithstanding article 144, the Examination Board can determine the academic level of distinction awarded for the diploma.

**§4.** The Examination Board which is competent for master's courses in medicine has the additional power to decide whether a student is allowed to continue the clinical internships.

## **Section 2 Proceedings at deliberations**

### **Article 133 (Deliberations)**

Each examination board shall meet at least twice during the academic year. The first meeting will discuss the examination results from the first and second set of examinations of the first examination period. The second meeting will discuss the second examination period. It is only for students in their final year that a deliberation may be held at the end of the first set of examinations in the first examination period, in accordance with the procedures set out in the supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations document. Students who wish to graduate at the end of the first examination period of the first examination session must submit a request to this end via Student SelfService.

### **Article 134 (Deliberation procedure)**

The Examination Board Secretary shall record in the meeting minutes the proceedings of the Examination Board during the examiners' meeting. The minutes, signed by the Chairman and Secretary of the Examination Board, shall be available to the Rector and the faculty Ombudsperson.

### **Article 135 (Attendance)**

Their presence at the deliberation and the signing of the examination sheet is obligatory for all voting members of the Examination Board. Legitimate absence must be reported in advance to the Chairman of the Examination Board or the Dean.

Under exceptional circumstances, a deliberation may be held by electronic means.

### **Article 136 (Voting)**

The Examination Board is a sovereign entity and operates as a collegial body. A decision regarding a given student must be reached by majority vote. In the event of a tied vote, the decision taken shall be in the student's favour. Each member has one vote only, irrespective of the number of programme units examined under his aegis. Members of the Examination Board must refrain from participating in a deliberation when relatives up to the fourth degree of kinship are under discussion.

Every Examination Board member entitled to vote may request a secret vote to be held.

### **Article 137 (Confidentiality)**

The members of the Examination Board and all those present at a deliberation by virtue of their office are bound to guarantee the confidentiality of the discussions.

## **Section 3: Study progress based on examinations**

### **Article 138 (Examination results)**

**§1.** For each programme unit one examination result is awarded. An examination result is expressed as a whole number between 0 and 20 or in the form of a non-numerical score. An examination result is calculated using the method set out in the course description.

**§2.** An examination result calculated as set out in § 1 shall be rounded down if the decimal is < (less than) 0.5 and rounded up if the decimal is  $\geq$  (more than or equal to) 0.5.

**§3.** Absence from a compulsory part of evaluation results into an absent as result code, unless otherwise specified in the course description.

#### **Article 139 (Passing a programme unit)**

**§1.** Students shall be awarded credit certificates for each programme unit passed. The pass mark for a programme unit is 10 out of 20. A credit certificate is supplied only once, at the request of a student. Students may not relinquish a credit certificate once acquired.

**§2.** A credit certificate has unlimited validity for the programme and within the institution where it was acquired.

#### **Article 140 (Study programme percentage)**

**§1.** In order to determine the percentage for the programme in its entirety with a view to obtaining a diploma, all examination results obtained for a given programme unit under a diploma contract or examination contract shall be taken into account.

**§2.** Weighting of programme units shall be based on the maximum ECTS-credits available under the programme unit concerned.

**§3.** The percentage calculated in accordance with §1 and §2 shall be rounded down if the decimal < (less than) 0.5 and rounded up if the decimal is  $\geq$  (more than or equal to) 0.5.

#### **Article 141 (Transferring several parts of the examination)**

**§1.** If the end result for a programme unit is made up of several partial results, then the results of the separate assessments/parts which will not cannot be retaken during the second examination period, will be retained unless the description specifies an alternative examination method or an alternative calculation method of the results for the following examination period.

**§2.** Partial results of separate assessments/parts which can be retaken during the second examination period will not be retained to the second examination period, unless otherwise specified in the course description.

Partial results will not be retained to the following academic year, unless otherwise specified in the course description.

In case the course description allows the retainment of partial results of at least 10/20 or passed with satisfaction, the requirements for retainment will be specified in the course description, in the course description it is also specified if the student can renounce the retainment of the partial result

**Article 142 (Conversion of examination results)**

If a student follows programme units at another institution, in accordance with Article 90 - article 92 of these regulations, the examinations for these programme units shall be taken at the time and place and in accordance with the procedures determined by the other institution. The examination results awarded by the other institution may be converted.

**Chapter VIII. – Awarding a degree or a diploma**

**Article 143 (Passing a programme)**

**§1.** A student is awarded a degree or diploma for a programme if he is declared to have successfully passed the programme as a whole.

A student will automatically be declared to have passed if he has taken all the examinations for the programme and if all those examinations resulted in credit certificates or in scores being awarded at deliberations, as set out in the provisions below.

**§2.** A student who has followed the first year of a full-time standard study path for a bachelor's programme is automatically declared to have successfully passed if he sits the examinations for all the programme units for that first year; and,

1. all the examinations have resulted in a credit certificate; or,
2. if the student achieves an average of 55% and a maximum of 3 points under 10/20, spread over a maximum of 2 programme units and no figure below 8/20.

The student may, during the course of the academic year, use a second examination opportunity to retake any examination awarded an allowed unsatisfactory mark. For this, the student must submit a written request to the Faculty Secretariat within seven calendar days of the day after the results are declared. If the student declares he wants to use the second examination opportunity for an allowed unsatisfactory mark, the original result becomes irrevocably void and the new result obtained will become final. The earlier result awarded in a deliberation is then adjusted.

**Article 144 (Academic level of distinction)**

**§1.** The following levels of distinction shall be awarded with regard to bachelor's, master's and teacher's degrees:

- a student will have passed with merit if the average final result is less than 68%;
- a student will have passed with passed with distinction (*cum laude*) if the average final result is 68% or higher;
- a student will have passed with great distinction (*magna cum laude*) if the average final result is 77% or higher;

- a student will have passed with the greatest distinction (*summa cum laude*) if the average final result is 85% or higher;

**§2.** Levels of distinction may only be awarded if a set minimum number of ECTS-credits have been obtained as part of the programme within the VUB. The minimum number of ECTS-credits in this respect is:

- for a bachelor's programme: 60,
- for a master's programme: at least half of the total study load,
- for the teacher training programme: at least half of the total study load.

### **Chapter IX. - Announcement of results**

#### **Article 145**

**§1.** After each set of exams, the exam results are communicated to the students in accordance with the stipulations of the supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations.

**§2.** The results of preliminary and other exams taken in the first set of examinations of the first examination period shall be announced to students on the first day of the first teaching week of the second semester.

**§3.** The results of the exams taken during the second examination set of the first examination period, and the results of the exams taken during the second examination period, will be communicated to the students following the deliberation by the Examination Board in accordance with the stipulations of Article 146.

The same applies to the results of students who, in accordance with their request under Article 133, at the end of the first set of examinations of the first examination period were the subject of deliberations by the Examination Board.

#### **Article 146**

Following the deliberation, the Chairman of the Examination Board, the Dean or a member of the Examination Board appointed by them, shall announce the Examination Board decision, in accordance with the procedures set out in the supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations document.

#### **Article 147**

An individual overview of points, or an individual list of points giving the examination results per programme unit awarded by the Examination Board, a proclamation code included, shall be made available to each student through Student SelfService.

## TITLE IV. Ombudspersons and appeal options

### Chapter I. - Ombudspersons

#### **Article 148 (Appointment and task description)**

**§1.** Prior to the start of the academic year and following consultation with the Education Council, the Vice-Rector for Educational and Student Affairs shall appoint at least one independent academic member of staff (“ZAP”) for each faculty as an ombudsperson to deal with complaints relating to examinations. Each faculty may use the same procedure to appoint a faculty alternate who may only replace the faculty ombudsperson in deliberations in which the ombudsperson acts as a voting member in accordance with article 129. Simultaneously and by the same procedure, a central ombudsperson shall be appointed, as well as a deputy. The names of the faculty ombudspersons, the central ombudsperson and his deputy shall, *inter alia*, be posted on the VUB website throughout the academic year, along with their contact details and office hours.

**§2.** The powers of a faculty ombudsperson extend to receiving students’ complaints and comments related to how teaching is organised, the examination schedule, examination proceedings, assessment of master’s theses, outcome of Examination Board meetings, announcement of results, monitoring of study progress based on examinations and the award of credit certificates. He is likewise authorised to intervene regarding any appeals lodged in application of article 153 and article 154 of this regulation.

**§3.** The powers of the central ombudsperson extend to receiving and dealing with students’ complaints and comments relating to how teaching is organised, the examination schedule, examination proceedings, assessment of master’s theses, outcome of Examination Board meetings, announcement of results, monitoring of study progress based on examinations and the award of credit certificates, in the event that a faculty ombudsperson is a party involved, thus compromising independence and impartiality, or in the event of absence of the faculty ombudsperson.

**§4.** The ombudsperson concerned (centrally or faculty-appointed) shall, at a student’s request, mediate between the student and the Dean, the Chairman of the Examination Board, members of academic staff and secretaries with a view to achieving as soon as possible an amicable settlement of the complaint.

#### **Article 149 (Reporting)**

Both the central and faculty ombudspersons shall report to the Vice-Rector for Educational and Students Affairs once a year, before 15 November, with details of their activities in the previous academic year.

### Chapter II. - Appeal options

#### **Article 150 (Material mistakes)**



In the event that a material mistake is established following a study progress control measure, this shall be reported formally to the Dean, within ten calendar days after the day on which the decision is taken.

After this period, a material mistake can only be corrected in the following cases:

- if the correction is to the student's benefit,
- if the material mistake implies a breach of legal requirements,
- if the material mistake is demonstrably due to the gross negligence or serious misconduct of the student.

A mistake not resulting in a decision which is detrimental to the student shall be rectified by the Dean. The correction shall be communicated to the student involved and adequately documented within the faculty.

In the event that the decision taken is detrimental to the student, the mistake must be rectified by the body that took the original decision. If necessary, the latter will be convened by the Dean as soon as possible. The correction shall be communicated to the student involved and adequately documented within the faculty.

#### **Article 151 (Decisions which can be appealed)**

Internal - and subsequently external - appeals can be made against the following study progress decisions pursuant to article 153:

- a) examination decision, i.e. any decision, whether or not resulting from an Examination Board meeting, entailing a final qualifying assessment for a programme unit, several programme units or a programme as a whole, in accordance with Article 132 and article 143 - article 132 of these regulations;
- b) disciplinary examination-related decision, i.e. a sanction imposed following an examination incident, as set out in article 118 of these regulations;
- c) granting of an exemption, i.e. relieving a student of the obligation to take an examination in a particular programme unit or part thereof, in accordance with article 87 of these regulations;
- d) decision imposing a bridging and/or preparatory programme and at the same time setting out the study load of that programme;
- e) imposing a study progress monitoring measure, in accordance with Article 88 of these regulations;
- f) refusing to include in the study contract a particular programme unit for which the student in an individual study path has not previously enrolled;
- g) decision with regard to the refusal of enrolment based on an insufficient study account or a study account lower than or equal to 0, if not resulting from a general regulatory requirement.

Students with disabilities may lodge an internal appeal against the refusal of the adjustments requested, pursuant to article 154.

### **Article 152 (Composition of the internal appeal body)**

Per faculty or per programme, an appeal body is established which is authorised to examine all internal appeals lodged against the study progress decisions listed in article 151 within the relevant faculty or programme.

The appeal body shall include at least 3 independent academic members of staff (ZAP). A chairman is appointed from among the members of the appeal body. The administrative secretary, who acts as the committee secretary, acts in an advisory capacity. The following persons, acting in an advisory capacity, shall also be invited: the faculty ombudsperson, the study path adviser, and a representative of the Rector who has expert knowledge of the teaching regulations.

In case of an internal appeal pursuant to article 151, paragraph 2, the members of the appeal body who were directly involved in the decision to refuse the requested deviations shall be replaced by their alternates.

The composition of the appeal body shall be specified in the supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations.

### **Article 153 (Internal appeals procedure, excluding decisions on reasonable changes)**

**§1.** In the event that a student or the person to whom the decision pertains is of the opinion that his rights have been infringed by a particular study progress decision, he may lodge an appeal. The appeal must be lodged within a limitation period of seven calendar days. For appeals against examination decisions, this limitation period starts on the day after the electronic communication of 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 manuscript is planned later than the five calendar days provided for in Article 114 § 3, then the appeal must likewise be lodged within the limitation period. The student shall expressly mention this in the written request and should factually substantiate their complaint within seven calendar days after the limitation period. If they fail to do so, their appeal shall automatically be considered inadmissible, to the extent that there are no other grievances and to the extent that no factual description of the invoked objection was included.

To be admissible, appeals must be filed in the form of a signed and dated application submitted by registered mail to the Chairman of the appeals body concerned.

The application must include, at the very least, the identity of the student concerned, the disputed decision(s) and a factual description and motivation of the objections invoked. To the extent that the student believes he can invoke exceptional circumstances in accordance with Article 132, § 2, the written request should set out the exceptional circumstances and demonstrate that the objectives of the study programme have been accomplished overall.

At the same time, the student shall send by e-mail an identical electronic version of the application for information to the e-mail address indicated in the supplementary faculty teaching and examination regulations document. The date of the appeal is the date of the postmark of the registered mail.

**§2.** The appeal will result in:

- a reasoned dismissal of the appeal on the grounds that it is inadmissible or unauthorised, this decision can be made both by the appeals committee and by the Chairman of the appeals committee;
- a reasoned decision by the appeal body which either confirms or alters the original decision.

During the admissibility phase and the examination of the authorisation, the appeal is treated by written procedure, without hearing the student. The student or the person to whom the decision pertains has a right to be heard by the body of appeal, regarding the contents of the case.

**§3.** The decision taken pursuant to §2 shall be communicated to the student or to the person to whom the decision relates within twenty calendar days starting from the date on which the appeal was filed. Decisions are made available to the central ombudsperson upon his final request.

**§4.** An appeal against the decision taken pursuant to §2 may be brought before the Council for Disputes about Decisions on Study Progress, as set out in article 155.

**§5.** The documents that the student takes note of in the context of the appeal procedure cannot be used for any purposes other than personal purposes. The student will therefore not be allowed to multiply and/or distribute these documents, subject to disciplinary measures as provided for in the Disciplinary Regulations for students of Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

#### **Article 154 (Internal appeal procedure for reasonable changes)**

**§1.** A student is entitled to lodge an internal appeal to the Dean against a decision rejecting reasonable changes for students with a disability that the student considers a breach of rights; the appeal must be filed within seven calendar days of the day after the date of notification of the decision. The following persons, acting in an advisory capacity, shall also be invited: the faculty ombudsperson, the faculty secretary and a student psychologist of Study Guidance.

**§2.** The internal appeal procedure will result in a reasoned decision that is binding for everyone within the institution. The student has the right to be heard regarding the contents of the case.

**§3.** The student shall be informed of the decision in accordance with § 2 within twenty calendar days of the day following the date on which the appeal was filed.

**§4.** The documents that the student takes note of in the context of the appeal procedure cannot be used for any purposes other than personal purposes. The student will therefore not be

allowed to multiply and/or distribute these documents, subject to disciplinary measures as provided for in the Disciplinary Regulations for students of Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

#### **Article 155 (External appeals procedure)**

**§1.** Within seven calendar days after the date of notification of the decision under article 153, a student may lodge an appeal with the Council for Disputes about Decisions on Study Progress (Address: Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap, Departement Onderwijs, Raad voor Betwistingen van Studievoortgangsbepalingen, Hendrik Consciencegebouw, Koning Albert II-laan 15, 1210 Brussels). If the seventh day is a Saturday, Sunday or national holiday, the deadline shall be extended to the first working day on which postal services are resumed.

In the absence of a timely decision within the deadline set in Article 153, the appeal must be lodged with the Council within seven calendar days of the expiry of this deadline, unless the internal appeal body notifies the student, before the expiry of the deadline by which the appeal body must decide, on a later date on which it will issue a decision.

Persons not yet registered can lodge an appeal against a decision on a request to obtain an exemption on the basis of previously acquired qualifications, or a certificate of aptitude, to the Council only once, if they have submitted a request of a similar nature to other institutions within a 4 year period. A second appeal of this nature shall be inadmissible.

**§2.** The Council, as the administrative court, shall rule on the applications submitted to it directly by students to have their study account adjusted because they were the subject of a force majeure event and the institution has not provided a new examination arrangement for them.

**§3.** Appeals must be lodged in the form of an application presenting, at the very least, a factual description and motivation of the objections stated.

The application must be dated and shall be signed by the petitioner or his adviser, or otherwise be declared inadmissible.

**§4.** The application shall include:

- 1° the petitioner's name and address. In the event that the address given is that of the petitioner's adviser, this fact shall be stated in the application;
- 2° the name and seat of the governing body;
- 3° the subject of the appeal;
- 4° a factual description and motivation of the objections stated.

**§5.** The application shall be sent by registered mail to the Council for Disputes about Decisions on Study Progress. At the same time, a copy of the application shall be sent by registered mail to the governing body (for the attention of the faculty secretary). The postmark shall serve as the date of appeal.

**§6.** The petitioner may include in his application any pieces of evidence he considers necessary. Subsequently, the petitioner may only add supplementary pieces of evidence to the case file if these were unknown to him when the application was drawn up. If this is the case, the petitioner

shall provide the governing body with a copy of the supplementary pieces of evidence without delay. The pieces of evidence shall be bound together by the petitioner and listed.

In the course of the appeals procedure with the Council for Disputes about Decisions on Study Progress, the student cannot invoke new objections, unless the basis thereof were not known until during or after the finalisation of the internal appeal procedure, unless if the objection relates to the manner in which the internal appeal has been handled, or unless the objection is of public interest.

**§7.** An application declared inadmissible may be replaced by a new petition during the term of appeal provided it states explicitly that the previous application has been withdrawn.

**§8.** The decision taken by the Council for Disputes about Decisions on Study Progress shall be announced within an indicated time limit of 20 calendar days of the date on which the appeal was entered in the register of incoming appeals. For appeals against a decision on the equivalence of diplomas, the decision shall be issued within an indicative time limit of thirty calendar days.

**§9.** The documents that the student takes note of in the context of the appeal procedure cannot be used for any purposes other than personal purposes. The student will therefore not be allowed to multiply and/or distribute these documents, subject to disciplinary measures as provided for in the Disciplinary Regulations for students of Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

## **TITLE V. - Transitional and final provisions**

### **Article 156 (Additions to and deviations from the central regulations)**

**§1.** The authorised faculty body may suggest special provisions and criteria as stipulated in these regulations and other faculty supplementary provisions on this education and examination regulations. Faculty supplementary regulations are subject to approval by the Education Council.

**§2.** Deviations from the central regulations are possible with regard to Article 7 and Article 120 § 3 of the education and examination regulations, on the proposal of the authorised faculty body. The faculty deviations are approved by the Education Council, and included in the supplementary faculty education and examination regulations. The Education Council always determines the duration of the permitted deviation.

For postgraduate programmes, it may be decided to depart from the provisions herein, in view of the inherent specific nature of the study programme.

**§3.** The Engineering Faculty may request a departure from article 129, article 143 § 1 and article 144 § 1 of the teaching and examination regulations for the BRUFACE master's applying via the procedure described in §1.

**§4.** For students taking part in international mobility programmes, a deviation from the provisions of these regulations may be granted. The cooperation agreements will be submitted to the Education Council for approval.

### **Article 157 (Changes)**

Any changes to these regulations shall be made solely by decision of the Academic Council following consultation with the Education Council.

### **Article 158 (Powers of the Interfaculty Teacher Training Department Faculty)**

With respect to the teacher training programme, the powers assigned, under these regulations, to the Dean, shall fall to the Chairman of the Interfaculty Department for Teacher Training (IDLO). The powers assigned to the faculty secretary in these regulations shall, as far as the teacher training programme is concerned, be exercised by the general coordinator IDLO.

### **Article 159 (integration of academic higher education courses)**

These regulations apply in full to academic higher education course students who transfer to the university in the 2013-2014 academic year.

### **Article 160 (Entry into effect)**

These regulations shall come into force as of the 2019-2020 academic year.