Teachers' Handbook 2021-2022

1. Appointment of examiners

At the commencement of each academic year, the Board of Examiners determines which lecturers meet the requirements to qualify for signatory authority. These are the **examiners**. This authority is linked to the course they are responsible for. The Board of Examiners generally expects the lecturer to have a PhD. However, that is not always the case, therefore exemptions must be defined and registered.

External lecturers do **not** have signatory authority, instead the authority to sign is assigned to the programme director. Other than the programme directors, the educational director and the members of the Board of Examiners have signatory authority.

The list of lecturers with signatory authority can be altered or expanded if necessary, for instance in cases of personal mutations. The most recent lists of examiners are published at the website of the Board of Examiners. If mutations are relevant for the ongoing academic year, they should be passed along to the secretary of the Board of Examiners.

Members of the Board of Examiners are authorised to sign BSc and MSc diplomas.

2. Exams

The first page of each (written) exam should contain the header that has been designed for the exams. Each exam section should be provided with the maximum amount of points that can be obtained from it. If necessary, the calculation of the exam grade can be provided in the information section of the exam.

The header for the exams can be found here:
https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/science/computer-science/organisationfolder/board-of-examiners

This list is archived with the exam. The list and exam answers will be destroyed after a period of 2 years.

2.1. Oral exam

It is possible to take an oral exam instead of a written exam. The examiner/lecturer can agree with this in consultation with the Board of Examiners - in some cases the examiner/lecturer will be asked by the Board of Examiners to issue an additional (oral) exam. The examiner/lecturer is not obliged to grant this request, however a motivation for the decision will be demanded.

An oral exam is taken by the examiner and an assistant, a PhD student or another colleague. The presence of a second person is mandatory when taking an oral exam. The assistant will write a brief report of the exam; i.e. date, place, name of the assistant and a brief elaboration on the questions asked and the answers given. Like a regular exam, this report should be archived with the assessment. The examiner will pass the grade along to the Science Student Administration.

2.2. Calamities and irregularities during the exams

In case of a calamity during the exam (vacation due to a fire alarm) the following procedure should be followed (for an exam of 3 hrs):

If the fire alarm rings during the first hour of the exam, the exam will automatically be cancelled. All exams should be left at the tables and cannot be taken along. If the fire alarm rings during or after the second hour of the exam, the exam is also cancelled. However, the submitted exams will be assessed. For the students who had not submitted their exams, an additional resit will be scheduled. Students will have to be informed about the new date of their exam, and it should be included in the invigilation regulations. Other irregularities during exams should be reported to the Board of Examiners, to find an appropriate solution.

2.3. Publication of final results (grades)

As of 25 May 2018, the GDPR has been implemented for Leiden University. Therefore, results can no longer be published in public. The typical manner to communicate (partial) grades to the students is BrightSpace. In this educational system, there is a grade-module available that makes it possible to communicate the grades to each student individually.

2.4. Archiving exams

The institute provides a facility to store or archive exams and accompanying documents.

3. Thesis project supervision and grading

3.1. Supervision

Bachelor thesis

Supervision for a BSc thesis project should be assigned in consultation with the coordinators of the Bachelor-class. For the final assessment of the thesis project two supervisors are necessary. The first and ultimately responsible supervisor of the BSc thesis should have PhD and should be a staff member of LIACS. This requirement does not apply to the second supervisor. Therefore, a second supervisor can be an PhD student or an external supervisor. The first supervisor should be registered as authorized to sign. The names of all those involved with the thesis assessment should be mentioned on the assessment form. The names of the first and second supervisor should be entered in the designated areas on the form.

Master thesis

An MSc thesis must be supervised by at least two supervisors. The first and ultimately responsible supervisor is a member of the scientific staff (UD, UHD, HL) of LIACS; or is an examiner in a specific LIACS curriculum and as such appointed by the BoE and thereby allowed supervision of students within that specific curriculum. In addition to the members of the scientific staff, it is possible to have an external first supervisor. In case this might be at hand, please consult your study coordinator for the possibilities. The general rule is that both supervisors have a PhD. In exceptional cases it is possible to deviate from this requirement, dispensation can only be granted by the Board of Examiners. The first supervisor should be registered as authorized to sign, i.e., appointed as examiner by the BoE. Other assessors can be involved in the (regular) assessment. The names of all involved assessors of the thesis must be mentioned on the assessment form

Procedure Assessment Thesis projects

Specially designed assessment forms should be used to assess the thesis projects. The first supervisor is responsible for the clear and insightful completion of the form. The relative weight of grades is

documented in the form and must be followed. A motivation should argue why a grade is issued. Both supervisors need to sign the form.

The forms are available on the website of the Board of Examiners and are arranged per curriculum: https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/science/computer-science/organisationfolder/board-of-examiners

A correctly completed assessment form, signed by both supervisors, is required for the graduation of a study/curriculum. When this form is not available the diploma cannot be signed.

The final grade for a thesis (BSc, MSc) must be passed along to the Science Student Administration (cijfersliacs@science.leidenuniv.nl) by means of a grade submission letter with a cc to the coordinator of the curriculum. These letters are available on the website mentioned above. The grade submission letter should be signed by a supervisor who has signatory authority. For the grade 9.0 and higher as well as for a grade 6.0 (or lower), a strict policy should be followed. See below for the explanation with respect to these policies for a BSc- or MSc thesis. Supervisors should submit all information (as indicated in the schedule below) about their intention to grade a 9.0 and higher as well as a 6.0 (or lower) to the Board of Examiners at least 6 weeks before the graduation of the student.

3.2. Thesis Title Page

The first and second supervisor are mentioned on the title page of the thesis and must be the same as on the assessment form. It is recommended to mention further supervisors; i.e., external supervisors.

3.3. Grading

Bachelor thesis

Before assessment can take place, a plagiarism check should be carried out. The assessment should be done according to the regulations. For a grading of 9 or higher, it is expected that the student conducted excellent, independent and well-structured research. This is reflected by an adequate problem definition, approach, literature revision, design and implementation of experimentation, software, mathematical theory as well as interpretation of the obtained results. These aspects are clearly presented in the thesis. Original results, which have potential to be published, can be a sign of an excellent thesis.

When the thesis has been a collaboration between two or more students, it should be clear form the report which student is responsible for which part of the thesis. The total thesis work should be more extensive to justify the activities of two or more BSc graduate students.

Master thesis

Before assessment can take place, a plagiarism check should be carried out. The assessment should be done according to the regulations. For a rating of 9 or higher it is expected that, in addition to the criteria for a bachelor's thesis, the master's thesis project is of sufficient originality and quality for a scientific publication, that is, it is suitable for the proceedings of a peer-reviewed scientific journal, conference or workshop. In the assessment form, a clear commitment to submit a publication, including the time of submission, is given. A draft publication strengthens this commitment and it is recommended to add such a draft to the assessment. It is considered good practice that, once the publication has been submitted with the student as author, the Board of Examiners is notified.

Reviewing

The process of the assessment requires extra monitoring in case of a grade $>= 9$ or $<= 6.0$. This monitoring takes into account the following documents: (1) the assessment form, (2) the thesis

manuscript and (3) the (concept) publication that has resulted from the thesis (in case of $>=$ 9). In addition, the grade letter, signed by the supervisor, is sent to the Board of Examiners. Once the procedure is completed, and the grade is accepted, the Board of Examiners will countersign the grade letter, authenticate it with a stamp it and send it to the student administration for further processing. The monitoring is performed by an independent third assessor with appropriate knowledge. This person is appointed by the Board of Examiners. The assessment from this third party concerns an assessment of the quality requirements as outlined above. The third assessor reports directly to the Board of Examiners. In case of a grade $>=$ 9 or <= 6.0, the assessment form and the grade submission form are merely valid when signed by a member of the Board of Examiners, and/or are provided with a stamp and the signature of a member of the Board of Examiners. The grade will not be processed by the Education Office of the Faculty of Science without proper signatures/stamp. The student can only be informed of the final grade after the Board of Examiners has received and agreed with the report of the third assessor.

The flow for the submission of the thesis grade is depicted in Figure 1 at the end of this document.

Sufficient assessment thesis (BSc/MSc)

The regulations of the thesis assessment state that the work of a student is sufficient when graded with a 6.0. If a grade 6.0 is to be issued, the supervisor notifies the Board of Examiners. The reviewing process outlined above applies.

3.4. Results thesis projects (BSc/MSc)

It should be noted on the assessment form that the results of the (thesis) projects are archived. To archive the code, Gitlab of LIACS should be used. Measurement results should be archived in consultation with the supervisors. The results are an integral part of the student's work and should be retrievable. A plagiarism control is always part of the assessment procedure.

3.5. Research project

For the research project the final presentation is optional. The second supervisor can be a PhD student if the PhD student was appointed the daily supervisor of the research project.

Before assessment can take place, a plagiarism check should be carried out. The assessment should be done according to the regulations. For a rating of 9 or higher, it is expected that the student conducted excellent and well-structured research. This is reflected by an adequate problem definition, approach, literature revision, design and implementation of experiments, software, mathematical theory etc., as well as interpretation of the obtained results. These aspects are clearly presented in the report. Original results, which have potential to be published, can be a sign of an excellent project.

For the assessment of the research project the specially designed assessment forms should be used. The grade should be documented on a grade submission form. The relative weight of the grades is pre-documented on the forms and should be applied.

The results of the research project can be presented. The decision to do so is for the supervisor and student to make - the presentation is not compulsory. The report and results are handled in the same manner as the thesis project.

3.6. SBB internship report

For the SBB internship (30 EC), the assessment of the report requires extra monitoring in case of a grade >= 9 or <= 6.0. This monitoring takes into account the following documents: (1) the assessment form, (2) the internship report. In addition, the grade letter, signed by the supervisor, is sent to the Board of Examiners. Once the procedure is completed, and the grade is accepted, the Board of

Examiners will countersign the grade letter, authenticate it with a stamp it and send it to the student administration for further processing. The monitoring is performed by an independent third assessor with appropriate knowledge. This person is appointed by the Board of Examiners. The assessment from this third party concerns an assessment of the quality requirements as outlined above. The third assessor reports directly to the Board of Examiners. In case of a grade $>= 9$ or $<= 6.0$, the assessment form and the grade submission form are merely valid when signed by a member of the Board of Examiners, and/or are provided with a stamp and the signature of a member of the Board of Examiners. The grade will not be processed by the Education Office of the Faculty of Science without proper signatures/stamp. The student can only be informed of the final grade after the Board of Examiners has received and agreed with the report of the third assessor.

4. Plagiarism

The examiner of each course will elaborate in the beginning of the course or per assignment what plagiarism is (e.g. to what extent originality of code is a criterion) and what the consequences of plagiarism are. This is a repetition/specification of the information provided for the different curricula in the institute by the Board of Examiners.

When the examiner has a suspicion of plagiarism in an assignment, report, code, or exam, they should take the following steps:

1. The examiner informs the students about the suspicion and asks for a response (preferably by email so that we can include it as a 'rebuttal'; a template email can be found at the end of this document). The grades for these students are not registered yet
2. The examiner sends all information to BoardOfExamers@liacs.leidenuniv.nl: what the assignment was, what the student submitted, any evidence such as Turnitin or MOSS output, the teacher's explanation of why they think it is plagiarism, and how serious they think it is, and the reaction of the student.
3. The BoE assesses the report. The BoE will consult with the examiner about the sanction
4. The BoE either sends a letter with the warning or sanction to the student or decides it is not a case of proven plagiarism.

The document 'Rules and Regulations set by the Boards of Examiners' has a list of possible sanctions (article 6.4). The sanction might be heavier if the student has repeatedly plagiarized. The Board of Examiners will register the name of each student who has plagiarized and, at graduation verifies whether the student qualifies for cum laude. The registration of plagiarism excludes the student from cum laude.

5. Fraud

If one student or a group of students committed fraud, or when there is reasonable suspicion for this, it must immediately be brought to the attention of the Board of Examiners. The Board of Examiners will, thereupon, investigate the case. If fraud is established, a sanction will be imposed that is proportional to the nature of the fraud. In certain cases, the sanction will be decided on in consultation with the legal counsellors at Administration and Central Services of the university. In this case a sanction may concern exclusion of exams or elimination of a student from the university.

Appendix. Template for informing students on plagiarism

Beste …,

Onlangs heb je opdracht X gemaakt en ingeleverd. Deze opdracht is nagekeken, maar helaas hebben wij het vermoeden dat je wellicht plagiaat hebt gepleegd.

Dit is tegen de richtlijnen van de universiteit en als blijkt dat je inderdaad plagiaat hebt gepleegd zal ik dat moeten melden aan de examencommissie. Je hebt nu echter wel de mogelijkheid om jezelf te verantwoorden en uit te leggen wat er precies gebeurd is. Aan de hand van deze verklaring zal ik je alsnog je cijfer voor deze opdracht toekennen, of dit melden bij de examencommissie. In dat laatste geval stuur ik uiteraard je eigen verklaring mee.

Mocht dit de eerste keer zijn dat je in contact komt met de examencommissie, maak je dan niet meteen al te grote zorgen. In de [Regels & Richtlijnen van onze faculteit](#) (artikel 6.4) kun je meer informatie vinden over hoe de examencommissie te werk gaat en wat eventuele gevolgen/sancties zijn.

Ik hoor graag van je.

Met vriendelijke groeten, …

Dear ...,

Recently you made assignment X and handed that in. We have checked your assignment, but unfortunately we believe that you may have committed plagiarism.

This is against the rules of the university and if you did indeed commit plagiarism, then I need to contact the board of examiners about that. You have, however, now the opportunity to explain yourself what happened. With this explanation I will then decide to grade your assignment or send it to the board of examiners. In that last case I will send your explanation as an attachment.

If this is the first time that you need to come forward by the board of examiners, then you should not directly panic. In the [Rules & Regulations of our faculty](#) (article 6.4) you can find more information on the board of examiners and what the consequences of plagiarism may be.
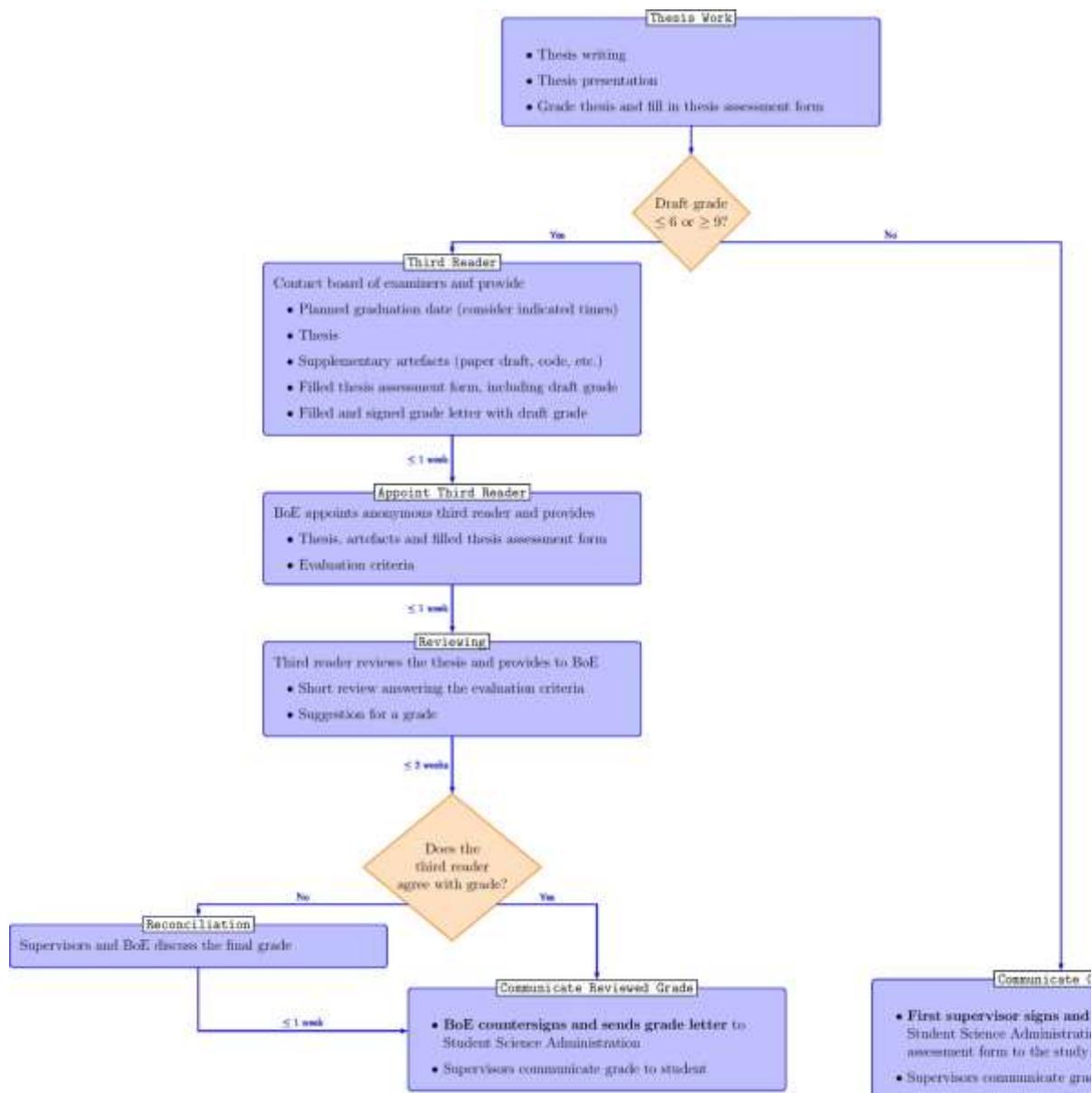
I hope to hear from you.

Sincerely, …

Figure 1 Flow for submission of a thesis grade.