

Middle Eastern Studies (MA)

Master



Universiteit
Leiden

Discover the world at Leiden University

Leiden University's Master's in Middle Eastern Studies programme is a one-year, full-time Master's programme that is taught completely in English. Building on a tradition of more than four centuries of studying the Middle East, we offer highly relevant and up to date insights into a wide variety of fascinating and inspirational topics.

Why study Middle Eastern Studies at Leiden University?

The MA Middle Eastern Studies at Leiden University offers one of the most interdisciplinary programmes in the Netherlands, stretching the breadth of humanities and social sciences and involving multiple languages of the Middle East. Our research and teaching covers periods from the late antique and medieval to the premodern and contemporary times, and with a regional diversity stretching from North Africa and Central Asia, including the Levant, Asia Minor, the Arabian Peninsula and the Iranian Plateau, and their transnational and global interactions. Courses are offered and faculty members conduct research in a wide range of fields including history, politics, religion, anthropology, political economy, international relations, heritage, material culture, literature, philology and cultural production, among others.

[Learn more about the study programme](#)



MOOC: The Cosmopolitan Medieval Arabic World

In this MOOC by Professor Petra Sijpesteijn, you will learn everything about the fascinating history of the Arabic Medieval World. [Learn more about this course and enroll for free.](#)

Some of the many good reasons to choose this programme

- Leiden University has one of the largest Middle Eastern Studies research and teaching faculties in Europe.
- The MA Middle Eastern Studies is a highly diverse and flexible programme.
- Cutting edge research informs our teaching, and active connections are sought between research and teaching.
- The [Leiden University Library](#) hosts a superb collection of source materials from and about the Middle East.
- Leiden University's Faculty of Humanities is consistently ranked among the top humanities faculties worldwide in the [Times Higher Education \(THE\) World University Ranking](#).

[Check the entry requirements](#)

Study abroad

Thanks to our partnership network we can help you to study at a university or institution in the Middle East, where you can immerse yourself in your chosen language and culture. Language courses taken at our partner institutes in Cairo, Rabat and Istanbul can count in part towards your degree, while other courses taken at one of these institutes may form an extracurricular addition to your MA degree.

Internships

The Middle Eastern Studies programme facilitates and supports extracurricular internships. For an overview of organisations where students have held internships in recent years, check the [About the Programme page](#).

What are your career prospects?

This programme is definitely for you if you want to take a deep dive into the diversity, nuance, beauty and challenges of studying this large, intercultural regional space and its rich history. Not only will you have the opportunity to learn from renowned, internationally-respected academics, you will also follow in the footsteps of alumni who have built careers that require specialist linguistic, cultural, social, and political knowledge of the Middle East in the diplomatic services, cultural institutions, non-profits, NGOs, immigration, international organizations, travel industry, development cooperation, as well as in academia.

[Find out more about your career prospects](#)

Is Middle Eastern Studies the programme for you?

- Leiden University has one of the largest Middle Eastern Studies research and teaching faculties in Europe.
- The MA Middle Eastern Studies is a highly diverse and flexible programme.
- Cutting edge research informs our teaching, and active connections are sought between research and teaching.
- The [Leiden University Library](#) hosts a superb collection of source materials from and about the Middle East.
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[Check the admission requirements](#)





• The University Library's central hall





- Groupwork in the University Library





• The Lipsius building in central Leiden





- Students and lecturers have lunch in Lipsius' cafeteria





• The University Library's entrance

Why Leiden University

Why follow the Middle Eastern Studies programme? Because it will improve your insight, expertise, and understanding of the region, the central debates and issues, and its interconnections with other regions, global issues, and processes. And why at Leiden University? Because thanks to our experts, expertise, facilities and networks, few universities in the world are better positioned to offer this outstanding education.

Thought leadership

You'll be taught and coached by lecturers and researchers who are global leaders in their respective fields. Guest speakers from other universities and organisations regularly come to Leiden to share their work and collaborate with scholars at Leiden. Their talks cover a wide range of topics: from academic work on premodern Middle East societies to hands-on, in-the-field experiences regarding contemporary issues.

Flexible

The programme offers a wide breadth of opportunities for a tailored and specialised education.

Past and present

The programme covers virtually the entire greater Middle East (from North Africa to Central Asia), both in time and in geography. Courses about contemporary global and regional issues in the Middle East are complemented by courses on the region's historical and cultural background.

Be part of a top-ranked faculty

Leiden University's Faculty of Humanities is consistently ranked among the top 30 humanities faculties worldwide in the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Ranking. At Leiden University, the oldest university in the Netherlands, learning incorporates the latest research and resources found nowhere else in the world, such as those of the famous Leiden University Library and its collections of original manuscripts, periodicals, and photos.

Diversity and inclusion

We are convinced that our education can only flourish if everyone within the programme feels supported, respected and empowered to do their best work. We find it important to offer a learning environment that allows for different perspectives and points of view that students bring with them, depending on their ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, health, religion, age or socio-economic background. Every new generation sees the world from a new perspective – and our students are the newest generation. [We look forward to hearing more about your perspective.](#) Leiden University has been pursuing diversity policy since 2014, with the aim of creating a diverse and inclusive learning and working environment for all staff and students.

Study at a world-class university

Leiden University is the oldest university in the Netherlands and enjoys an excellent worldwide reputation built up over more than four centuries. Since 1575 we've provided sound personal education for hundreds of thousands of students. We'll do our utmost to give you the best possible support. And if you can and want to do more, we'll challenge you every step of the way. For many years, we've been among the leaders in Dutch university rankings and we are currently to be found in a variety of [top international rankings](#) too.

[More reasons to choose Leiden University](#)

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About the programme

The MA in Middle Eastern Studies provides intensive and comprehensive training to prepare you for a range of careers requiring specialist language, cultural, or political knowledge.

Programme structure

The one-year (60 EC) programme starts with a common core course of 10 EC, Theories and Methods of Middle Eastern Studies, in the first semester. Next to this course, you can choose courses in historic and contemporary cultures, languages, literatures, and religions, politics and society either covering the Middle East as a whole, or one of the regions of the Middle East in depth. In line with one of the themes in these courses, you write a thesis based on your individual academic research and supervised by one of the members of staff of Middle Eastern Studies.

The programme is concluded with a Master's thesis of 20 EC.

Some examples of Master's theses written by students in this programme:

- The Iran-Russia Nexus (Development of Bilateral Relations 2012-2015)
- Nationality and Ethnicity in the Western Sahara: The Role of Morocco in Shaping Perceptions of Identity
- Subjects of Stability: Understanding the stability of the Qaboos regime through the views and experiences of Omani students
- The "ethnic-split" in contemporary Israeli Politics and the Israel-Palestinian Conflict
- Gender and Feminism in post-2009 Iran - Tracing a Pictorial Discourse in Mana Neyestani's Cartoons
- Who turns the tap? The impact of non-state actors on the hydro-hegemony of Turkey
- Can Kurmanjan Datka unite Kyrgyzstan a second time? The film Kurmanjan Datka and nation building in Kyrgyzstan
- The Warrior in Seclusion (*Khalwat*). A narrative inquiry on two Persian Sufi tales from 13th c. Khurasan and Anatolia
- From Hobby Orientalist to Seeking Prominence: The Life, Collection, and Network of Rudolph Said-Ruete (1869–1946)
- The Power of Feminist Documentaries and the Female Gaze: A Case Study on Palestinian Women
- Towards an Understanding of Qur'n Verse 4:24: On the Role of Vocabulary Choices in English Qur'n Translations

The programme facilitates and supports extra-curricular internships. In recent years students have held internships at:

- Embassies and consulates of the Netherlands in Turkey, the Middle East, and North Africa.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Hague, the Netherlands
- Dialogue for Common Future Association, Istanbul, Turkey
- UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, Beirut, Lebanon
- Greenpeace, The Netherlands
- Nederlands Centrum voor Handelsbevordering, The Hague, The Netherlands
- Leiden University Library
- Museums in the Netherlands and abroad, for example the Museum Volkenkunde Leiden and the Samarkand State Museum of Cultural History in Uzbekistan
- The Textile Research Centre Leiden
- And many more

We also offer a two-years research Middle Eastern Studies programme.

Apart from the contents, there can be other arguments to choose for either a master's or a research master's programme. Have a look at [the table in pdf](#) for a quick overview of the differences. For more details on the contents, also visit the [master's in Middle Eastern Studies \(research\)'s](#) pages.

Course overview

For an overview of all the courses and course descriptions, please check the [Prospectus](#).

Please note that this guide applies to the current academic year, and does not reflect annual changes to the diversity of our curriculum.

Tsolin Nalbantian

Researcher and University Lecturer



“Students of this master's are surrounded by faculty who are as diverse in their backgrounds as they are in their teaching and research interests. This diverse academic environment encourages students to pursue their own interests, all while being exposed to a wide variety of new experiences and ideas.”

Many career paths

“When it comes to the careers of our graduates, the sky is the limit. Our alumni go on to become journalists, NGO workers, teachers, academics, consultants, and diplomats, to name a few of their many career paths.”

Long-term commitment

“We aim to nurture in our students a long-term commitment to the region and its people. The training our students receive at Leiden provides them with the skills to connect with the people, customs, experiences, and history of the Middle East: skills that are of increasing importance in a great many organisations today.”

Admission and Application

Do you want to find out if you are eligible for this Master's Programme?

[Check the entry requirements](#)

Extra-curricular

Get the most out of your studies at Leiden University by taking part in our extracurricular activities.

Special events

The Middle Eastern Studies department and the Leiden University Centre for the Study of Islam and Society (LUCIS) regularly organise events such as *What's New!?* This is a series of lectures that focuses on current research on Islam and the Middle East.

Study abroad

As part of the programme, you have the option of studying abroad at one of our partner universities or institutes in the Middle East. These include the Dutch Institutes in Cairo, Rabat and Istanbul.

Learn a language

While you're at Leiden University you can also learn a new language or improve your existing language skills. This can help you, for example, to communicate more easily with the people in the Middle eastern country you will be visiting.

Leiden Leadership Programme

Are you interested in developing your leadership potential? The [Leiden Leadership Programme](#) (LLP) is an Honours Programme specifically developed for ambitious master's students at Leiden University and the Delft University of Technology who recognise the importance of leadership abilities. The LLP offers in-depth training sessions, assessments, seminars, and the creation of a Personal Leadership Roadmap – a five-year plan for reaching and developing your leadership potential.

Study at the Academy of Creative and Performing Arts

The Academy of the Creative and Performing Arts (ACPA) is a research institute and part of the Faculty of Humanities. The ACPA offers education such as electives, and talent programmes such as the Practicum Artium (PA), which gives you the opportunity to study photography, graphic design or drawing, and the Practicum Musicae at the Royal Conservatoire The Hague, where you can study classical music, singing, early music or jazz.

[Find out more about ACPA.](#)

Career prospects

Where do our graduates work?

After successfully completing the Middle Eastern Studies programme you will have developed and honed a unique set of academic skills that will be highly relevant to a career requiring a specialist language or cultural knowledge of the Middle East.

These skills and competences will serve as a strong foundation for a wide variety of academic-level positions, and will also enable you to furthering your academic education with a PhD programme. You will also follow in the footsteps of alumni who have built careers that require specialist linguistic, cultural, social, and political knowledge of the Middle East in the diplomatic services, cultural institutions, non-profits, NGOs, immigration, international organizations, travel industry, development cooperation, as well as in academia.

Examples of the diverse roles of our graduates include:

- research
- teaching
- governmental and semi-governmental organisations
- non-profit organisations
- business services
- banking

Alexandra Nieweg

Graduated with an MA in Middle Eastern Studies



"I chose the MA in Middle Eastern Studies at Leiden University because I wanted to specialise further in the Turco-Persian world and its Islamic traditions, modern political ideologies and cultural production. In similar studies, these areas tend to receive little attention, but the lecturers in this programme have precisely these areas of expertise."

Researching motives, metaphors, images and narratives

"After completing my MA, I immediately started as a PhD candidate in the *Beyond Sharia: The Role of Sufism in Shaping Islam* project at Utrecht University. Here I investigate antinomian (qalandariyyt) motifs, metaphors, images and narratives that aimed to challenge the religious hierarchy and orthodox Islam, in Persian poetry from the 12th century onwards. More specifically, I analyse how themes in these poems influenced social, political, and religious developments in the subsequent centuries."

Advice and encouragement from lecturers

"The MA in Middle Eastern Studies prepared me for this by stressing the need for independent analysis of primary sources. I was also able to improve my command of the Persian language and I learned a lot about the relationship between politics and Persian literature. This made it possible for me to independently analyse Persian-language primary sources for my thesis. In addition, I was able to count on the advice and encouragement of several of my lecturers during the application process."

Jiayi Zhu

Graduated in Middle Eastern Studies (MA)



The Institution of Area Studies (LIAS) of Leiden University has a high reputation all over the world because of its well-organized curriculums, vibrant research works, knowledgeable teachers, and senior scholar standard. It was a massive challenge for a Chinese student like me who neither was familiar with European education system nor did I have any historical or

political training before to keep pace with the program. With the courage of my teachers and my hardworking, I've finished all my required 75EC of courses and master thesis within one year and graduated in 2019, with which I could say I have a much more comprehensive understanding and constructive analysis of Turkey than one year ago.

Make a more logical course curriculum

I am now continuing my career as a university teacher in the Turkish Language Major, where I am able to make a more logical course curriculum, give clearer related courses, and also try to do some academic researches with the readings I read, the lectures I've listened, and the research skill I've acquired during my MA in Turkish Studies.

In which sector do students find jobs?

- 25 % Communication and marketing
- 13 % Consultancy
- 13 % Culture, sports and research
- 13 % Financial institutions
- 12 % Healthcare and welfare
- 12 % Business services
- 12 % IT

Career preparation

Find out how this programme exactly prepares you for your future career and check our career preparation activities.

The Middle Eastern Studies programme will help you make a clear difference in your chosen career. It will introduce you to the conceptual and academic approaches at play in the region, such as linguistics, history, anthropology and political science. Furthermore, developing your in-depth knowledge in the field and giving you the ability to think critically and analytically are also key goals of the programme.

Do you consider to put your knowledge into practice during your studies? Determine whether an internship could be an option for you. Start orientating your possibilities by visiting an internship information session. This way you can receive information about the internship procedure and listen to tips of former interns. Notice that you will search for an internship yourself to find a place of your interest. Do you need some help with this or the application process? Do not hesitate to contact the [Career Service](#). When you have found an internship, inform us. Then, the internship coordinator advises you how to proceed and provides your internship plan with feedback so it can be submitted for approval to the board of examiners.

Our staff can help you identify both the career that is right for you, and the necessary steps to get you there. Our team at [Humanities Career Service](#) provide all Leiden University humanities students with professional advice and guidance on everything from internships and career planning to job applications. Humanities Career Service also organises regular workshops on topics such as effective interview skills and creating a successful CV.

The Humanities Career Service offers you various (online) workshops, webinars and info sessions. [Check our overview of career activities](#).

The [Leiden University Career Zone](#) is an online career portal that helps you to prepare for the job market. Here you can find information, tools and tips to help you gain more personal insight, learn about the job market, develop your application skills, plan your academic and professional career, find job vacancies and discover what the [Career Service](#) can do for you.

Join the [Mentor Network](#) to contact alumni with experience on the labour market and ask them for advice. More than 1200 alumni are happy to help you!

Jelle on finding an internship via Leiden University's Mentor Network

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Admission and Application

Find out how to apply for Middle Eastern Studies at Leiden University by following our step-by step guide.

Step-by step guide

This guide clearly explains the steps you need to take to apply, and the subsequent admission process.

- Step 1: [Check the admission requirements](#)
- Step 2: [Check the application deadlines](#)
- Step 3: [Collect the required documents](#)
- Step 4: [Start your application](#)
- Step 5: [Pay your tuition fees](#)
- Step 6: [Prepare for your studies at Leiden University](#)

Admission requirements

To be eligible for Middle Eastern Studies at Leiden University, you must meet the following admission requirements.

Diploma requirements

- You are eligible to apply for the MA Middle Eastern Studies if you have: A bachelor's degree from a Dutch research university in Middle Eastern Studies; or

- A bachelor's degree in the field of the specialisation of the relevant programmes BA Arabic Language and Culture, BA Hebrew Language and Culture, BA Turkish Language and Culture, BA Persian Language and Culture, or a BA in another language relevant for the study of the Middle East, such as Syriac; or a BA Religious Studies with a specialisation Islam Studies provided that you have at least 30 EC of courses on the cultures, histories, literatures, politics, and religions of the Middle East;

The Board of Admissions will assess whether your degree and background are sufficiently related to the level and content of a bachelor's degree from a Dutch research university in Middle Eastern Studies on the basis of these requirements.

Applicants with a bachelor's degree from a Dutch research university in **International Studies** who have completed all area courses for the Middle East, and either wrote their BA Thesis on the Middle East or completed optional courses worth 10 EC on the Middle East are considered to have fulfilled the entry requirements.

Students with a Bachelor in Middle Eastern Studies from Leiden University are directly eligible for admission. Students can apply in [Studielink](#). There is no need to submit an application for admission using the online application portal.

If you have a bachelor's degree from a research university that does not meet the requirements specified above, you may be eligible for a 30 EC (in case your degree is in a related field) or 60 EC pre-master's programme. After submitting your application in Studielink, the Board of Admissions will decide whether you can be directly admitted to the master's programme or whether you will first need to complete a pre-master's programme. It is not possible to apply for a pre-master's programme directly. Once you have completed the imposed pre-master's programme, you will be admitted to the relevant specialisation of the Master's programme. [Read more about the pre-master's programme.](#)

The language requirements for a pre-master's programme are identical to the language requirements for the master's programme for which admission has been requested. These requirements must be met before the start of the premaster.

If you have a Bachelor's degree in a related field from a university of applied sciences, equivalent to the level of a Dutch hbo bachelor's degree, the Board of Admissions may impose the 60 EC pre-master's programme. [Read more about the pre-master's programme.](#)

Language requirements

The following requirements apply:

- [IELTS](#) Academic modules only, on paper or on computer: 6.5 overall, with at least 6.0 for each separate component score.
 - We do **not** accept [IELTS Academic online](#).

- We do **not** accept IELTS General Training or IELTS Indicator.
- [TOEFL](#) internet based: 90 overall, with at least 20 for each separate component.
 - We are **not** able to accept The TOEFL IBT Home Edition™, except in the following situations only:
You took the test before 1 Sept 2022 (and it is not more than 2 years old), or you are unable to take an in-person test on location because test centres are inaccessible or closed due to unsafe conditions in a country.
 - We do **not** accept the following types of test: TOEFL My Best™ scores (multiple test scores combined), TOEFL Essentials™ or institutional tests such as ITP.
- [Cambridge English Exam](#) C2 Proficiency, or C1 Advanced (180), with a minimum score of 169 for each separate component.

Note that English test results may **not** be more than two years old.

You do not have to submit an English proficiency test if you have completed your education in the USA, UK, Ireland, New Zealand, Australia, Canada (except French-taught programmes in Canada) Singapore, South-Africa or Malta; or if you have obtained an English-taught International Baccalaureate™; or if you have completed a Dutch VWO diploma or an English-taught bachelor at a Dutch research university.

For detailed information, including exemption criteria and methods of submission, refer to [English language proficiency](#).

Proficiency in other languages

The language requirements per course may consist of one of the requirements below:

A good working knowledge of Modern Standard Arabic (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: listening B1; reading B2; spoken interaction B1; spoken production B1; writing B1)

A good working knowledge of Persian (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: listening B1; reading B2; spoken interaction B1; spoken production B1; writing B1)

An adequate proficiency in reading Turkish (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: reading B2)

A good working knowledge of Modern Hebrew (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: listening B1; reading B2; spoken interaction B1; spoken production B1; writing B1).

Which additional language (and other) requirements apply to which course can be found in the [Prospectus](#).

[>> Go to the next step: Check the application deadlines](#)

Application deadlines

Starting in September

- Applicants who need a visa or residence permit or need to extend their residence permit must apply for admission before **1 April**.
- All other applicants must apply for admission before **15 May**.

Please note: You must submit your application via [Studielink](#) and Leiden University's application system (uSis), before the deadlines mentioned above.

Other deadlines

Leiden University reserves a limited number of rooms each year for international students. However, as the number of housing requests always greatly exceeds the number of rooms available, we strongly recommend that you also look into other housing options at the same time. [Read more about how and when to arrange housing](#). If you want to request accommodation via Leiden University, submit both your application for admission and your housing request well before the deadlines! Accommodation is offered on a first-come first-served basis and is not guaranteed. You don't have to await admission before requesting housing.

If you want to apply for a scholarship, grant or loan, please bear in mind that different deadlines apply, and these deadlines can often be earlier. Deadlines vary per scholarship. Visit the [scholarship website](#) for more details.

[>> Go to the next step: Collect the required documents](#)

Required documents

When you apply for admission, you'll be asked to submit several documents.

Note: If you have a Dutch diploma that grants direct admission, you will generally *not* be asked to submit additional documents.

Required application documents

You'll need to submit the following documents:

Please upload a copy of the page(s) in your passport containing your personal details and photograph. If you are from the EU/EEA, you can submit a copy of your identity card instead. Please upload copies of both sides.

If you are a non-EU/EEA national already living in the Netherlands, upload copies of both sides of your Dutch residence permit.

Your CV (curriculum vitae) must be written in English and should contain your basic personal data, as well as a clear overview of your educational and professional history to date.

You can apply for admission before receiving the results of your English language test. However, a sufficient result will then be a condition of your eventual admission. Of course, if you already have your English language test results, you can upload them directly.

- Digital copies of diplomas and transcripts are initially required. Once you have been admitted, we will inform you how to submit certified copies.
- The documents must be in the original language. If they are not in English, Dutch, German or French, they must be accompanied by official translations into one of these languages.
- If you have not yet completed your current programme, state your expected graduation date and submit copies of all transcripts obtained to date plus a list of subjects still to be completed.

[>> Go to the next step: Step 4: Start your application](#)

Application procedure

The application procedure is broken down into three parts.

Part 1. Application in Studielink

All students applying for a degree programme at Leiden University must start the application process in Studielink, the national online registration system for students wishing to follow a degree programme at a Dutch university. Studielink is open for applications from 1 October in the year preceding the academic year in which you wish to start.

1. Go to [Studielink](#) and enter your details according to the instructions provided. For this step you will need:

- a copy of your valid passport or European ID card, or
- if you are a Dutch resident, your [DigiD](#)

Be aware! If you wish to apply for a specialisation of a master's programme: first select the master's programme in Studielink, then select the specialisation for which you wish to apply in Step 4 (Institutional Questions) in Studielink.

2. Within two days you will receive:

- an email with information on the next steps you'll need to take;
- your university ULCN student account details (unless, of course, you already have a ULCN account)

- the link to Leiden University's online application portal (uSis)

After receiving your ULCN student account details, log into Leiden University's online application portal (uSis), using the link provided. Here you can view the status of your application, which will be one of two possibilities.

1. You can be directly admitted

If your (Dutch) diploma grants you direct admission, Leiden University's online application portal (uSis) will let you know. The portal provides an overview of what you have to do to complete your application, for example arranging housing, scholarships, applying for a visa/residence permit and insurances. Please follow the instructions carefully and proceed to step 3 Student registration.

2. You cannot be directly admitted: additional action is required

If you do not have a (Dutch) diploma that grants you direct admission, we will require additional documents to allow us to decide about your application. The online application portal (uSis) will tell you this and explain how to do so. See also Part 2: Admission to Leiden University.

Part 2. Admission to Leiden University

If you cannot be directly admitted, you must apply for admission via Leiden University's online application portal (uSis). Please follow all steps below.

In our online application portal (uSis) you can finalise your application by uploading the necessary documents and answering a few questions. This portal provides an overview of what you need to do to complete your admission application. Please follow the instructions carefully and make sure to include all the items that are asked for. We strongly recommend that you complete your application well in advance of the application deadline.

All applicants with an international degree must pay a **non-refundable** €100 application fee, which entitles you to apply for up to three programmes/specialisations in the same academic year. We cannot start processing your application until we receive this application fee, so please pay it as soon as possible. The online application system explains how you can pay it.

Can I be exempted from paying the application fee?

You do *not* have to pay the application fee if:

- You are following, or have completed, a bachelor's degree at a Dutch university (of applied sciences).
- You have previously registered as an exchange, bachelor's, master's or pre-master's student at Leiden University.
- You have previously been admitted to **the same** degree programme at Leiden University, but you decided to postpone your studies. This does *not* apply if you are applying for a different study programme or specialisation.
- You have refugee status in the Netherlands (with a residence permit for asylum).

Exemptions cannot be granted for any other reasons.

After you have submitted your application, the online application portal (uSis) will, if applicable, ask you if you want to apply for student housing, a visa/residence permit or a scholarship. Be sure to make a careful note of the relevant deadlines for these options.

After receiving your application fee payment (if applicable), the Admissions Office will check whether all the necessary documents have been uploaded and they will inform you by email whether any further items are required. The Board of Admissions of the faculty will then:

- decide whether you meet the admission requirements for the programme;
- strive to issue a decision on your completed application within four to six weeks of the University receiving it.

Once a decision has been reached you will be informed by email. You can view your admission status in the online application portal (uSis).

There are three possible outcomes:

1. You are admitted

You have met all conditions for admission.

2. You are conditionally admitted

You will be admitted, provided that you meet certain conditions. These conditions will be specified in the online application portal (uSis).

3. You are not admitted

The reason(s) for non-admission will be clearly stated in the online application portal (uSis). If you are informed that you have been (conditionally) admitted, you will have to take a number of additional steps.

If you are (conditionally) admitted, the Admissions Office will ask you to confirm whether you will join the study programme. You can do so in the online application portal (uSis).

1. Go to '[Application study programme](#)' in the online application portal (uSis).
2. Open the 'Confirm' screen. Here you will see three options:

- Yes, I want to study at Leiden University.
- No, I no longer wish to study at Leiden University and hereby withdraw my application.
- Maybe later; I do not wish to start this semester/academic year. I would like to receive further instructions by email.

The sooner the better

Confirm attendance as soon as possible, to avoid missing other important deadlines and information about your study programme.

Changing your mind

You can still change your mind if necessary, either in uSis or by contacting the Admissions Office [master team](#).

Deadline final decision

Do you need a student visa or residence permit? You can only request one after confirming attendance. So make sure to confirm attendance before the [visa/residence permit deadline](#).

If you don't need a visa or residence permit, the latest deadline for confirming attendance is before the start date of your study programme.

Part 3. Student registration

If you've been (conditionally) admitted, follow these steps to register as a student at Leiden University:

Check in the online application portal (uSis) whether you need to submit any documents to meet the conditions of your admission. Instructions on how to do so will be provided in uSis.

Arrange the payment of your [tuition fee](#) before the official start date of your programme. You will receive instructions and information on the available payment methods by email.

If you are an international student, go to the [Prepare your stay](#) page of our website for information about the practical matters you should take care of before and upon arrival. These include, for example, arranging housing, scholarships, applying for a visa/residence permit and insurances.

[>> Go to the next step. Step 5: Pay your tuition fees](#)

Pre-master's

If you have a bachelor's degree from a research university that does not meet the requirements specified above, you may be eligible for a 30 EC (in case your degree is in a related field) or 60 EC pre-master's programme. After submitting your application in Studielink, the Board of Admissions will decide whether you can be directly admitted to the master's programme or whether you will first need to complete a pre-master's programme. It is not possible to apply for a pre-master's programme directly. Once you have completed the imposed pre-master's programme, you will be admitted to the relevant specialisation of the Master's programme. [Read more about the pre-master's programme.](#)

The language requirements for a pre-master's programme are identical to the language requirements for the master's programme for which admission has been requested. These requirements must be met before the start of the premaster.

Tuition fees

Your tuition fee depends on a number of factors, such as your nationality and your previous Dutch higher-education qualifications.

The tuition fees for the academic year **2023-2024** are:

- Dutch, EU/EEA, Swiss and Surinamese students: €2,314 per year
- Non-EU/EEA students €19,300 per year
- Second Dutch master’s programme: €15,400 per year

The tuition fees for the academic year **2024-2025** are:

- Dutch, EU/EEA, Swiss and Surinamese students: €2,530 per year
- Non-EU/EEA students €20,900 per year
- Second Dutch master’s programme: €16,300 per year

More information about tuition fees

The tuition fee for this programme is €2,314 for the academic year 2023-2024 (statutory fee) and €2,530 for the academic year 2024-2025 (statutory fee).

This tuition fee applies if this is your first master’s programme and you are a national of one of the following countries:

Austria	Latvia
Belgium	Liechtenstein
Bulgaria	Lithuania
Croatia	Luxembourg
Cyprus	Malta
Czech Republic	Norway

Denmark	Poland
Estonia	Portugal
Finland	Romania
France	Slovakia
Germany	Slovenia
Greece	Spain
Hungary	Suriname
Iceland	Sweden
Ireland	Switzerland
Italy	

The fee applies for both full-time and part-time study.

The tuition fee for this programme is €19,300 for the academic year 2023-2024 (institutional tuition fee) and €20,900 for the academic year 2024-2025 (institutional tuition fee).

If you are not a national of an EEA country, Suriname or Switzerland, generally speaking you will have to pay an institutional tuition fee. This fee applies for both full-time and part-time study.

However, if, on the basis of your Dutch residence permit, you are eligible for student finance from the Dutch education agency (DUO) you are entitled to pay the statutory tuition fee. Information on qualifying residence permits can be found in the [DUO nationality chart](#).

Only applicable to EU/EEA, Swiss and Surinamese nationals.

The tuition fee for this programme is €15,400 for the academic year 2023-2024 (institutional tuition fee) and €16,300 for the academic year 2024-2025 (institutional tuition fee).

If you are following a second Dutch master's programme you will generally have to pay an institutional tuition fee that is higher than the statutory tuition fee. Some exceptions apply.

Consult the [tuition fee flowchart for second master's programmes](#) to find out how much tuition fee you will have to pay.

Tuition fee if the pre-master's or conversion programme has less than 60 study credits (EC)	2023-2024	2024-2025
	€39,- per EC	€42,- per EC

If the pre-master's or conversion programme has 60 study credits or more, you pay the statutory tuition fee of that college year.

Scholarships, grants and loans

Leiden University offers a wide range of scholarships for students from specific regions of the world, or for specific programmes. Leiden University also offers the Leiden University Excellence Scholarship (LExS), a programme specifically designed for non-EU/EEA students enrolling in a master's programme. [Find out more about scholarships, grants, loans and deadlines](#)

If you are an EU/EEA or Swiss national and under 30, you may be eligible for a [loan from the Dutch government](#) to cover your tuition fees.

[>> Go to the next step. Step 6: Prepare for your studies at Leiden University](#)

Prepare for your studies

You've been accepted! Leiden University looks forward to welcoming you as a new student. Your next step is to prepare for your studies. Below you can find some tips to help you get a head start as you embark on your studies at Leiden University.

For international students

If you are an international student, a wealth of information can be found on the '[Prepare your stay](#)' page of our website. This includes information about visas, housing, financial matters, what to arrange upon arrival, and much more.

For Dutch students

- The '[student website](#)' page on Leiden University's student website contains information about practical aspects, introduction weeks and student associations. It's also a handy source of study-related information and advice.
- For detailed information about courses, schedules and reading materials, check out the [Prospectus](#).

Sign up for the introduction week in [Leiden \(OWL\)](#) or [The Hague \(HOP\)](#)! It's the best way to get acquainted with student life and the student cities of Leiden and The Hague.

Your student card is your proof of registration as a student of Leiden University. You can find your digital student card in the Leiden University app three days after your student registration is finalised. Read more about your student card [here](#).

As soon as you receive notification that your student registration has been finalised you should apply for a Leiden University ID card, or LU-Card. It also serves as your library card, print & copy card and access pass. Read more about applying for an LU-card [here](#).

Student life

Your time at Leiden is about more than just studying. Some of your best experiences will stem from being a part of our lively and diverse student community, as well as from life in the beautiful city of Leiden.

Welcome and orientation programme

In August and February each year, Leiden University hosts the English-language [Orientation Week Leiden \(OWL\)](#), which welcomes both international and Dutch students. The OWL is an excellent way to get to know Leiden University, the city, and other students.

Life in Leiden

Picturesque and the perfect size, Leiden is the ideal place to spend your university days. The Faculty of Humanities is located within the heart of the city, where dozens of cafes, shops and bars line its historic laneways and leafy canals. Small enough to run into familiar faces, but big enough to keep offering surprises – you will treasure your time at Leiden. And for adventures further afield, the major cities of The Hague and Amsterdam are a short train ride away, along with Schiphol Airport, which is just half an hour away by train.

Our study and student associations organise a huge variety of social, cultural, and study events to keep you busy all year round. You can also join the University Sports Centre, which offers scheduled group sports and fitness classes, amongst other activities.

The study associations related to Middle Eastern Studies are:

- [Sheherazade](#) for all specialisations. Contact via sheherazadeleiden@gmail.com
- [TFLS](#) for Islamic Studies. Contact via tfls@tfls.nl

International Student Associations

Leiden has several student organisations that specifically cater for international students. These associations organise regular social events and activities that help create the strong sense of community that exists within our international student body. The main two organisations are:

Erasmus Student Network Leiden (ESN)

[ESN Leiden](#) is an international student organisation which hosts a range of activities and programmes. They also have a buddy programme which provides new students with the right support to assimilate into Leiden and the university.

AEGEE Leiden

[AEGEE](#) is a leading European student association with sister organisations in over 40 countries across Europe. AEGEE organises many activities in Leiden, from dinners and pool nights to boat trips and guest lectures.

For an overview of all of our student associations, please visit our [Student associations page](#).

Humanities Master's Buddy Programme

The Humanities Master's Buddy Programme has been set up by the Faculty of Humanities to help all students who are new to the university to integrate quickly and easily into university life. You will be matched to a buddy who can help you out with your academic and practical questions. Additionally you will be able to attend fun monthly activities and make friends from all over the world.

For more information about the Buddy Programme, please visit the [Humanities Buddy Programme page](#).

Information activities

Get to know us through our online and in-person events for prospective students!



Two speakers at the open day

Are you thinking about joining this Master's programme, and want to determine if it will be the right fit for you? Below, you can browse the events that we have coming up, and sign up to experience Leiden University and the programme for yourself. Alternatively, take a look at the Master Talks videos to find out more about the programme or check out our virtual campus tours!

Upcoming events

Master's Open Days

The next [Master's Open Day](#) will take place on 16 February 2024. You can also still watch the recordings of all the presentations from the last Online Open Days. The videos can be found on the [Master Talks page](#).

Master Talks: Programme videos

On the [Master Talks: programme videos platform](#) you can find videos for each master's programme. This includes a video which gives a short introduction to the programme. You can also find the recording of the Master's Online Open Days of 5-6 October and watch the programme presentation on the platform.

Get to know the campus

Check out our virtual campus tours, filmed in 360 degrees – by dragging the video, you can look around at the surroundings yourself. Below is the video recorded at the Humanities faculty, where most of your lectures will take place; you can also view other 360 campus tours of the various university faculties [here](#).

360 Campus tour: the Humanities faculty

Due to the selected cookie settings, we cannot show this video here.

[Watch the video on the original website or](#)

Accept cookies

Contact

If you have a question, there are various ways to get in touch with us.

This website and our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) are the quickest ways to find an answer to many of your questions.

Questions about the Programme

Coordinator of studies

Ms. Eli van Duijnen

Phone: +31 (0)71 527 3565

Email: stuco-ma-mes@hum.leidenuniv.nl

Questions about the application procedure, tuition fees and scholarships

Student Affairs Front Office

Phone: +31 (0)71 527 80 11

Email: [Contact form](#)

Or visit their [website](#)

Visiting address

Leiden: Plexus Student Centre

Kaiserstraat 25, ground floor

2311 GN Leiden

Monday to Friday between 11.00 and 16.00, Tuesday between 11.00 and 17.30.

To keep up to date with Middle Eastern Studies at Leiden University, check Leiden University Centre for the Study of Islam and Society (LUCIS) on [Facebook](#).

Chat with a student

Do you have a question about studying at Leiden University or student life in Leiden? Do you want more information about the Middle Eastern Studies master's programme? Chat with a current student for answers to your questions!

