

Teaching and Assessment Regulations
Theology and Religious Studies (research)
Research Master's Program 2011-2012
Tilburg University

Section 1. General Provisions

Article 1.1 Applicability of the Regulations

These regulations apply to the educational program and the (preliminary) examinations of the Theology and Religious Studies Research Master's Program [CROHO-code 60827]¹, henceforth to be called 'the Program'.

The program is offered by the Graduate School of the School of Humanities, henceforth to be called 'the School', in collaboration with the School of Theology.

Article 1.2 Definitions

In these regulations, the following definitions apply:

- The law: de Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek (WHW, 'Higher Education and Academic Research Act');
- Student: the person registered at the University to receive instruction and/or take (preliminary) examinations that are part of the Program;
- Course: a unit of study of the Program, in the sense intended by the law;
- Practical: a practical exercise, as referred to in Article 7.13 of the law, in one of the following forms:
 - the writing of a Master's thesis
 - the writing of a paper;
 - participation in any other educational activity that is aimed at acquiring particular skills;
- Examination: the Master's examination of the Program;
- preliminary examination: the examination of a particular course, a particular unit of study;
- Semester: segment of the academic year, starting around 1 September, and around 31 January;
- ECTS-credits: credit points in accordance with the European Credit Transfer System. ECTS (or EC) are to be read as ECTS-credits. 1 ECTS-credit = 28 hours of study;
- Board of Examiners: the Board of Examiners of the Program as referred to in Article 7.12 of the law;

¹ Up to and including 31 August 2011 this program was registered in CROHO as "MA Theology (research)", CROHO-code 60167.

- Examiner: a person appointed by the Board of Examiners to administer examinations;
- Admissions Committee: the Admissions Committee assesses the applications for the research master's program on the basis of the criteria of the Education and Assessment regulations;
- Educational Committee: the Educational Committee advises on the Education and Assessment Regulations, according to Article 7.13 of the law, assesses the execution of these regulations and discusses the teaching evaluations. According to Article 19 structuurregeling WHW, the educational committee consists of two staff members of the Program, and two student members;
- Assigned tutor: A researcher in the field of expertise at which the student is aiming, will be assigned to the student by the Admissions Committee;
- Board of Appeals for Examinations: The student whose interest is directly at stake can appeal a decision, or a refusal to come to a decision in any particular case, to the Examination Appeals Committee (Art. 7.61; address: University Office/Legal Affairs, C 161).

The other terms have the meaning accorded to them by law.

Article 1.3 Objectives of the Program

After completing the Program, the student will have acquired the knowledge, the skills and the insight in the field of theology and religious studies needed to conduct independent academic research independently, to prepare a PhD thesis, or to work in positions in society that require specialist knowledge and the highly developed skills necessary to understand and manage knowledge-intensive activities.

Article 1.4 Final Attainment Level

Having completed the Program successfully, the candidate must meet the following requirements:

- will have acquired and worked with a substantial body of knowledge which, at the very least, includes the principles of international academic practice, and of theory construction, methodology and study in theology and religious studies.
- will be able to communicate effectively the knowledge and the methods pertaining to the discipline of theology and religious studies.
- will have demonstrated his / her ability to apply the academic methods used in the discipline of theology and religious studies, to develop, interpret and implement new knowledge by:
 - carrying out practical research activities and reporting on them. These activities include:
 - academic writing;
 - reflection on the research methods in theology and religious studies;
 - oral presentations;
 - editing a collection of essays;

- compiling a bibliography;
- assisting in the editing of a text.
- writing a solid literature review that demonstrates his/her theoretical and methodological capacities with respect to formulating a future PhD research proposal;
- writing a solid project proposal that can be used in an application procedure for a PhD position, or for a research-oriented profession;
- writing a publishable research paper or a Master's thesis that explores the theoretical and methodological aspects of a potential dissertation proposal;
- writing a publishable article on a specialized topic in accordance with the requirements set by academic journals;
- actively contributing to academic journals by way of co-authorship.

Article 1.5 Form of the Program

The Program is taught on a full-time basis. The Program takes two years.

Article 1.6 Examinations of the Program

The only examination that can be taken in the Program is the Master's examination.

Section 2. Organization of the Program

Article 2.1 Study load

1. The study load is expressed in ECTS-credits.
2. The Program has a study load of 120 ECTS-credits, in which one credit equals 28 hours of study.

Article 2.2 Content of the Program

Each Major consists of four courses of 7.5 ECTS-credits each, followed by a Master's thesis of 30 EC. Students will draw up a plan of study in consultation with the assigned tutor, including the filling up of the elective courses and, in exceptional cases, the replacement of part of the compulsory program by an alternative program. The Board of Examiners decides on the approval of the plan.

FIRST YEAR (60 EC)	
Specific Courses	
Major course 1 + 2	15 EC
Minor course 1 + 2	15 EC
Elective course/Skills	7.5 EC
General Courses (required for all Research Master's students)	
Classical Texts in Theology	7.5 EC
Methodological Skills	7.5 EC
Philosophy of Science	7.5 EC

SECOND YEAR (60 EC)	
Specific Courses	
Major course 3 + 4	15 EC
Elective course/Skills	7.5 EC
General Courses (required for all Research Master's students)	
Master's Colloquium	4.5 EC
Participation in Research Seminars	3 EC
Research Master's Thesis	30 EC

- In addition to the four major courses (that have to be chosen from the table below) and the Master's thesis, the Program consists of:
- A Minor (program) (15 ECTS). The Minor courses are to be taken from the other major.
 - Master's colloquium (4.5 ECTS)
 - Classical Texts in Theology (7.5 ECTS)
 - Methodology (7.5 ECTS)
 - Philosophy of Science (7.5 ECTS)
 - Participation to Research Seminars (3 ECTS)
 - Elective* courses (15 ECTS)

Schematic overview of the Major/Minor courses

Major Theology	Major Religious Studies
Old Testament I & II	Religion & Ritual: Theory, Methods, Sources I & II
New Testament I & II	Religion & Ritual: Religious Diversity I & II
History of Christianity I & II	Religion & Ritual: Artes
Dogmatics I & II	Religion in the Public Domain: Intercultural Ethics
Spirituality	Religion in the Public Domain: Interpretations
Practical Theology	Religion & Ritual: Psychology of Religion
Philosophy I & II	Religion & Ritual: Research in Progress
Moral Theology	Religion in the Public Domain: Research in Progress

* Elective courses have to be chosen from external programs and National Research Schools.

Section 3. (Preliminary) Examinations

Article 3.1 Periods and Frequency of the (Preliminary) Examinations

In principle, all units of study must be completed within the semester in which they are offered. For each course/unit of study, one opportunity for preliminary examinations is set each year; the Board of Examiners determines a detailed time schedule for completion of units of study.

Article 3.2 Form of the (Preliminary) Examinations

1. Subject to the provision in Article 3.1, the (preliminary) examinations of the courses/units of study mentioned in Article 2.2 are written or oral (preliminary) examinations. Oral (preliminary) examinations are conducted on the basis of one or more written papers or drafts submitted in advance.
2. At the request of the student, the Board of Examiners can decide to allow preliminary examinations to be taken in a way different from what is specified in the previous subsection.
3. Students with a functional disorder are given the opportunity to take (preliminary) examinations in a way adapted as much as possible to their individual handicap. If necessary, the Board of Examiners will seek expert advice before taking a decision.

Article 3.3 Oral (Preliminary) Examinations

1. In oral (preliminary) examinations, not more than one person will be tested at the same time, unless the Board of Examiners decides otherwise.
2. An oral (preliminary) examination is a public event, unless, the Board of Examiners or the examiner concerned decides otherwise, or unless the student objects.

Article 3.4 Determination and publication of Preliminary Examination Results

1. The examiner determines the results of a written (preliminary) examination within 10 working days after the day on which the (preliminary) examination was taken, and provides the Administration Department of the School with the necessary data for announcing the results. The results are published on the Tilburg University web pages.
2. The examiner determines the results of an oral (preliminary) examination within one week after the day on which the examination was held, and provides the student with a written statement of these results.
3. For a (preliminary) examination that is neither a written nor an oral exam, the Board of Examiners decides in advance in what way the examinations will be administered,

and the period within which the student receives a written statement specifying the results.

4. The students are made aware of their right of inspection, mentioned in Article 3.6, Subsection 1, and of the possibility of appealing to the Board of Appeals for Examinations.

Article 3.5 Period of Validity

1. In principle, the period of validity of scores for preliminary examinations that have been passed is unlimited.
2. Contrary to the rule defined in Subsection 1, and prior to allowing the student to take the Master's examination, the Board of Examiners can impose an additional or a replacement (preliminary) examination for a course if the (preliminary) examination was passed more than five years before.
3. Subsections 1 and 2 also apply with regard to the period of validity of an exemption for a course.

Article 3.6 Right of Inspection

1. Until six weeks after the results of the written preliminary examinations were announced, students have the right to inspect their examination papers. In addition, at their request, they will be given a copy of their work at cost price. No copy will be provided in case of multiple-choice preliminary examinations.
2. During the period mentioned in Subsection 1, any interested person can inspect the questions and the assignments of the preliminary examination in question, and, if possible, be given the norms on the basis of which assessment has taken place.
3. The Board of Examiners may determine that inspections occur at a fixed place and time. If the student can prove to be, or to have been, unable to come to this fixed place and time due to circumstances beyond his/her control, he or she will be offered another opportunity, preferably within the period mentioned in Subsection 1.

Article 3.7 Exemptions

1. At the student's request, and having heard the examiner concerned, the Board of Examiners can grant a student exemption for a preliminary examination, if the student:
 - has completed a course at a university that is comparable in terms of content, study load, and level;or
 - can show that he / she possesses sufficient knowledge and skills as a result of work or professional experience.

2. The request is to be submitted to the secretary of the Board of Examiners, together with the necessary papers substantiating the student's claim, and must include a specification of the applicant's reasons for making the request.

Article 3.8 Examination

1. The Program is concluded with the Master's thesis, as referred to in Articles 1.2, 1.4 and 2.2. The thesis will be written in English, unless the Board of Examiners allows the student to write the thesis in another language. The Master's thesis is to be defended before a committee of two examiners. The first examiner usually is the supervisor of the thesis. In consultation with the student, the first examiner approaches the second examiner. The second examiner is appointed by the coordinator of the research master's program.
2. The Board of Examiners determines the results of the examination as soon as the student has submitted sufficient proof of the preliminary examinations passed and of the academic skills thus acquired.
3. Before determining the result of the examination, the Board of Examiners can inquire into the student's knowledge with respect to one or more topics or aspects of the Program, if and insofar as the results of the preliminary examinations at issue give the Board cause to do so.

Article 3.9 Degree

1. Those who have passed the examination are granted the title of 'Master of Arts', which can be considered equivalent to the internationally recognized qualification of MPhil (Master of Philosophy). For this, students receive a supplementary qualification in addition to their diploma.
2. The degree conferred is specified on the degree certificate of the examination.

Section 4. Admission / Entrance Requirements

Article 4.1 Admissions Committee

All prospective students must apply for enrolment in the Research Master's Program. An Admissions Committee, appointed by the Board of Examiners of the Program, consisting of two senior academic staff members of Tilburg University, one representing the School of Humanities, one representing the School of Theology, decides about admission of individual students.

Article 4.2 Educational Entrance Requirements and Admission

1. The Program starts twice a year, around 1 September and around 1 February.
2. Eligible for admission to the Program are those students who have successfully completed a Bachelor's or Master's examination in a relevant discipline. If students from outside the Netherlands apply, or students with another examination, the Admissions Committee will assess whether the program completed by the student is comparable to a relevant Bachelor's or Master's program in the Netherlands.
3. Bachelor's students should meet the following requirements:
 - An average score of 7.5 (out of 10) on their preliminary examinations in the second and third years of their completed Bachelor's program and a minimal score of 8 on their final Bachelor's thesis, or equivalent scores for these study units in a non-Dutch higher education system;
 - Sufficient talent, affinity and motivation with respect to doing scientific research, as demonstrated in the Bachelor's thesis (or a comparable essay), or in a dedicated research proposal;
 - Sufficient knowledge of the English language. If a student according to the Admissions Committee cannot show a sufficient command of English he/she has to pass the TOEFL, a language proficiency test, with a score of at least 577 on the paper-based version (IELTS Equivalent 6.5) and a score of 233 (IELTS Equivalent 6.5) on the computer-based version of this test; or a score of at least 90 on the internet-based version. The language proficiency test should be passed no longer than 2 years before starting the program on 1 September or 1 February.
4. Master's students should meet the following requirements:
 - An average score of 7.5 (out of 10) on their preliminary examinations of their completed Master's program and a minimal score of 8 on their final Master's thesis, or equivalent scores for these study units in a former or non-Dutch higher education system;
 - Sufficient talent, affinity and motivation with respect to doing scientific research, as demonstrated in the Master's thesis (or a comparable essay), or in a dedicated research proposal;
 - Sufficient knowledge of the English language. If a student, according to the Admissions Committee cannot show a sufficient command of English he/she has to pass the TOEFL, a language proficiency test, with a score of at least 577 on the paper-based version and a score of 233 on the computer-based version

of this test; or a score of at least 90 on the internet-based version. The language proficiency test should be passed no longer than 2 years before starting the program on 1 September or 1 February.

5. To students who have successfully completed a Master's or a comparable final academic examination in a relevant discipline, the Admissions Committee proposes a reduced Program which, according to the Admissions Committee, warrants successful completion of the Program, with all exemptions from units of study taken into account.
6. The Board of Examiners decides in all cases that are not explicitly provided for in this section.

Article 4.3 Admission Inquiry: Procedure

1. A request to be admitted to the Program must be submitted to the Admissions Committee.
2. In view of admission to the Program, the Admissions Committee inquires into the knowledge, insight, skills and motivation of the candidate. To complement written evidence of the preceding course(s) of study and training program(s) completed by the candidate, the Admissions Committee may decide to have certain skills and knowledge tested by experts within or outside the University.
3. Within six weeks after the application deadline, the Admissions Committee will come to a decision and communicate it to the candidate.
4. Admission is granted subject to the condition that, at the latest on the starting date of the Program, the candidate meets the requirements with respect to knowledge and skills evidenced by certificates of the training programs completed successfully.
5. In the written statement with respect to admission, the student is alerted to the possibility of appealing to the Board of Appeals for Examinations.

Section 5. Counseling and Monitoring Students' Progress

Article 5.1 Monitoring Students' Progress

1. The Centrale Studentenadministratie (DEA-SA, 'Central Student Administration') registers the student's individual course results.
2. The Centrale Studentenadministratie (DEA-SA) is responsible for the accessibility of the student's progress data on the Internet, as well as for information on this.

Article 5.2 Counseling

1. As part of the admission procedure, the School will make an arrangement with the student about the individual organization of the program he or she is taking.
2. The School sees to it that every student receives sufficient supervision and coaching during his or her studies.

Section 6. Final Provisions

Article 6.1 Changes

1. The Dean decides on changes to these regulations, after hearing the Educational Committee and after consulting the Faculty Council.
2. Changes to these regulations will only take effect in the academic year following that in which they have been decided upon, unless it can be reasonably argued that postponing entry in the force of such changes would be detrimental to the interests of students.
3. Additionally, no changes to these regulations may adversely affect an earlier decision by the Board of Examiners concerning a student, if this decision was taken by virtue of this regulation, and if the changes are detrimental to the student.

Article 6.2 Publication

1. The Dean sees to the fitting publication of these regulations, of the rules and guidelines laid down by the Board of Examiners, and of the changes to these documents.
2. Any interested person can obtain a copy of the documents referred to in Subsection 1 from the Faculty Office.

Article 6.3 Date of Entry into Effect

These regulations shall enter into effect on September 1, 2011.

Adopted by the Dean on 16 June, 2011.