



Universiteit Leiden

Course and Examination Regulations

valid as of 1 September 2026

Programme-specific section:

Master's Programme: African Studies

These Course and Examination Regulations (henceforth OER) have been drawn up in accordance with the Higher Education and Research Act [*Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek*; WHW] (henceforth the Act) and the following Leiden University regulations:

- the Leiden Register of Study Programmes Framework Document;
- the Academic Calendar;
- the Regulations for Student Registration, Tuition Fees and Examination Fees;
- the Regulations for Admission to Master's Programmes;
- the Online Proctoring Protocol Leiden University.

The model OER are laid down in Dutch and then translated into English. In the event that there are differences between the two versions, the Dutch version will prevail.

Pursuant to Article 7.14 of the Act, the Faculty Board regularly evaluates the OER and considers, for the purpose of monitoring and adjusting the study load, how much time it takes students to comply. In accordance with Article 9.18 of the Act, the departmental committee is assigned the task of annually assessing the implementation of the OER.

These Course and Examination Regulations consist of two sections:

- a faculty section that is the same for all master's programmes and
- a section that contains information that is specific to a particular programme, what is known as the programme-specific section of the Course and Examination Regulations.

In the text below the relevant articles will refer to this programme-specific section. Other articles are included in the faculty section.

Contents

1. General Provisions
2. Description of the Programme
3. Curriculum
4. Examinations, Final Examination and Further Education
5. Admission to the Programme
6. Student Counselling and Study Advice
7. Evaluation of the Programme
8. Final Provisions

Appendices

Faculty Section:

Appendix A - Master's Thesis Regulations

Appendix B - General Academic Skills

Appendix C - Internship Regulations for Humanities Bachelor's and Master's programmes

Appendix D – Enrolment protocol

Programme-specific Section:

Appendix E – Prospectus (see <https://studiegids.leidenuniv.nl>)

Appendix F – Transitional provisions

Chapter 2 Description of the Programme

Article 2.1 Objectives of the programme

The programme has the following objectives:

1. to enable students to acquire academic knowledge, understanding and skills, and train them in the use of scientific methods in the field of African Studies;
2. to enable students to develop the following academic and professional skills:
 - independent academic reasoning and conduct,
 - the ability to analyse complex problems,
 - the ability to clearly report academic results, both in writing and orally;
3. to prepare students for an academic career and further education;
4. to prepare students for a career outside academia.

Article 2.2 Specialisations

Not applicable.

Article 2.3 Learning outcomes

Graduates of the programme have attained the following learning outcomes, listed according to the Dublin descriptors:

1. Knowledge and understanding

The graduate has:

- Multidisciplinary knowledge of and insight into African societies, including their global connections, at an advanced level.
- A thorough understanding of the societal relevance of African studies.
- General knowledge of and insight into current issues and debates within the overall field and across the main disciplines of African Studies (History, Political Science, Economics, Human Geography, Literature, Linguistics, and Anthropology, insofar as relevant to African Studies).
- Advanced knowledge and understanding of the main theories, key concepts and methodological approaches and techniques of at least two of the following disciplines in relation to African Studies: History, Political Science, Economics, Human Geography, Literature, Linguistics, and Anthropology.

2. Applying knowledge and understanding

The graduate has:

- The ability to apply theoretical insights, key concepts, and research methods of the mentioned disciplines in African Studies to independent research in African Studies.
- The ability to develop a coherent and feasible research proposal and write a Master's thesis.
- The ability to develop, arrange and execute a research project with a professional organization in an Africa-related setting, to liaise with various stakeholders of a different nature, and the ability to work in a cross-cultural environment.
- The technical and cognitive skills to collect, select, analyse and critically evaluate empirical data and academic literature, in order to formulate an answer to research questions.
- The ability to work with a complex body of sources of diverse nature and present one's analysis orally, visually and/or in written form.
- The ability to apply academic knowledge and insights to other professional domains, such as policy, development, business, arts or journalism.

3. Ability to formulate judgements

The graduate is able to:

- Critically assess questions and problems in the field of African Studies, based on information that is available.
- Analyse complex questions, taking into account social, cultural, political, historical, economic, methodological and ethical aspects.
- Critically analyse one's positionality in relation to specific questions/fields within African Studies.

4. Communication

The graduate has:

Oral, audio-visual, digital, and written skills to clearly communicate the outcomes of one's own academic research to professionals as well as the broader public.

5. Learning Skills

The graduate:

- Has the learning skills to continue further study at a professional level or to start in a PhD program, or to develop one's skills further in a professional setting.
- Is able to assess where one's own research/work can contribute to academic or practitioners' fields.

Article 2.5 Study load

The programme has a study load of 60 credits.

Article 2.8 Language of instruction

2.8.1. Subject to the Code of Conduct on the Language of Instruction and Examination¹ the language in which the instruction is given and in which the examinations and final examinations are held is English. Students are expected to have an adequate command of the language of instruction and examination in the programme, in accordance with the requirements stated in Article 5.2.3. As appropriate, the Faculty publishes the OER in English for English-taught programmes.

¹ [Code of Conduct on Language of Instruction](#)

2.8.2. Contrary to Article 2.8.1, in individual cases the Board of Examiners can permit the student to write the final thesis in another language, in accordance with the Guideline on Language Policy.²

Chapter 3 Curriculum

Article 3.1 Compulsory components

3.1.1 The programme includes compulsory components worth a study load of 60 credits. These compulsory components include a period of academic research with a professional organization in an Africa-related setting, the research being relevant for the work of the organization as well as forming the basis for the MA thesis.

Chapter 4 Examinations, Final Examination and Further Education

Article 4.2 Obligatory sequence

4.2.1 Students may only sit examinations and, if indicated, participate in class of the following components once they have passed the examination of the preceding components specified below:

- Embedded Research Project : before the student can undertake an embedded research project with a professional organization in an Africa-related setting the following elements of the course programme should be successfully completed:

- Framing Africa: Approaches and Methods;
- A research proposal that has been approved by the academic supervisor.

Article 4.3 Form of examination

4.3.6 Not applicable.

Chapter 5 Admission to the Programme as of September 2027

Article 5.1 Confirmation of admission

See the faculty section.

Article 5.2 Admission to the programme

5.2.1 Holders of one of the following degrees may be admitted to the programme (Article 7.30b (1) of the Act):

- a. a bachelor's degree from a Dutch research university in the field of African Studies or African Languages and Cultures;

² [Guideline on Language Policy](#)

- b. To be considered as holding a degree sufficiently related to the one specified in 5.2.1a, applicants must meet the following requirements:
- a bachelor's degree from a research university, equivalent to the level of a Dutch academic Bachelor's degree, including the General Academic Skills listed in Appendix B of the Faculty section of these regulations, and
 - the bachelor's degree is in the field of Linguistics, History, Cultural Anthropology, Literature, Sociology, Political Sciences, Public Administration, International Studies, or other studies related to the Humanities or Social Sciences. In addition, students must have sufficient knowledge on (topics related to) Africa, which, as a rule of thumb, is evident by having obtained at least 30 EC on relevant BA courses and/or a thesis.
- c. a bachelor's degree and additionally having passed the prescribed pre-master's/bridging programme pursuant to article 5.4.1. Students may overrun the allotted time for the prescribed pre-masters/bridging programme by one semester (in case of a pre-master's/bridging programme of 30 EC or less) or one study year (in case of a pre-master's/bridging programme of more than 30 EC).

5.2.2 Any person who fails to meet the degree requirements or prescribed pre-master's requirement referred to in 5.2.1 may submit a request to the Board of Admissions. The Board of Admissions assesses whether the applicant may be granted admission to the programme.

To this end, the Board of Admissions assesses whether the applicant possesses sufficient knowledge, understanding and skills at the same level as a bachelor's degree or related bachelor's degree as referred to in 5.2.1, (a) and (b) or whether they meet these conditions after additional requirements have been met.

The Board of Admissions assesses, where relevant, whether the applicant meets the qualitative selection requirements referred to in 5.2.4.

Admission process

Applicants as referred to in Article 5.2.1.b and Article 5.2.2 are requested to provide the Board of Admissions with:

- copies of diploma(s) and transcript(s);
- proof of language proficiency (if applicable, see 5.2.3);
- a filled in 'Questionnaire Master Application' demonstrating that the candidate 1) has gained knowledge, understanding and skills in the field (of the specialisation) of the MA programme and 2) has acquired general academic skills as listed in Appendix B of the Faculty section of these regulations.

The admission process may include an interview with the Board of Admissions, should this be necessary to clarify whether the applicant has the same level of knowledge, understanding and skills as holders of a degree specified in 5.2.1.a.

For further information on the admission procedure and required application documents please see <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/education/admission-and-application/masters>.

Article 5.2.3 **English and Dutch languages**

5.2.3.1 As further clarification of Article 2.8 concerning command of the language of instruction, a student who wishes to be admitted to an English-taught master's programme must have one of the following diplomas, or must meet the criteria of:

- an [International Baccalaureate](#) diploma from a programme taught in English (or an IB diploma with English A);
- a diploma of secondary or higher education completed in Australia, Canada (with the exception of French-taught programmes in Canada), Ireland, Malta, New Zealand, Singapore, the United Kingdom, the United States of America or South-Africa;
- a diploma of an English-taught university degree programme completed at a Dutch research university;
- a diploma of an English-taught higher professional education (hbo) programme of four years completed at a Dutch university of applied sciences;
- a Dutch pre-university education (vwo) diploma.

5.2.3.2 If a student who wishes to be admitted does not meet the requirements in 5.2.3.1, the language level can be demonstrated with one of the following tests:

- English IELTS 6.5; where each separate component score must be at least 6.0
- TOEFL (Internet-based) 90, with at least 4.0 (new 1-6 scale as of 21 January 2026) or 20 (old 0-30 scale) for each separate component.;
- Cambridge English C2 Proficiency, or C1 Advanced with overall score 180, where each separate component score must be at least 169³.

At the time when the student applies for the programme, the test must have been taken no more than two calendar years previously.

5.2.3.3 Not applicable.

5.2.3.4 Not applicable.

For more information on language tests and diplomas which are sufficient with regard to the required command of English please see <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/education/admission-and-application/masters/admission-requirements#language-requirements>.

Article 5.2.4 **Qualitative admission requirements**

5.2.4.1 Not applicable.

Article 5.2.5 **Capacity limitation**

5.2.5.1 Maximum capacity: not applicable.

Article 5.3 **Deficiencies**

See the faculty section.

³ See also the [English test score equivalency table](#) of Leiden University

Article 5.4 **Pre-master's programmes and educational modules**

5.4.1 The programme has established the following pre-master's/bridging programmes (for the following target groups) in order to remedy deficiencies. Pre-master's/bridging programmes must be completed successfully within the prescribed period as specified in sub Article 5.2.1c:

For students with a bachelor's degree at a university of applied sciences in the field of humanities and/or social sciences, equivalent to the level of a Dutch hbo bachelor's degree, and/or students with an academic bachelor's degree from a research university, equivalent to the level of a Dutch WO bachelor's degree, who do not meet the admission requirement of having sufficient African Studies background as stated in article 5.2.1b, the Board of Admissions may impose a pre-master's programme, tailored to the individual background of the prospective student, to be completed before admission into the MA programme. The LDE minor African Dynamics can serve as a pre-master's/bridging programme.

5.4.2 Information on the bridging programme can be requested from the study adviser of the programme.

5.4.3 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.

5.4.4. Educational modules: not applicable.

5.4.5. Educational modules: not applicable.

Chapter 7 **Evaluation of the programme**

Article 7.1 **Evaluation of the programme**

The programme is evaluated as follows:

- course evaluations
- programme evaluation

The Programme Committee advises the Programme Board based on the outcomes of the evaluation.

Appendix F Transitional provisions

1. Students who have successfully completed the course Researching Africa in the 21st Century (5 EC) in 2024-2025 or earlier, will receive a partial exemption of 5 EC for the corresponding parts in the course Framing Africa: Approaches and Methods (10 EC). The course coordinator(s) determine which parts have yet to be completed.
2. Students who have successfully completed the course Intensive Methods Clinic (3 EC) in 2024-2025 or earlier, will receive a partial exemption of 3 EC for the corresponding parts in the course Framing Africa: Approaches and Methods (10 EC). The course coordinator(s) determine which parts have yet to be completed.
3. Students who have successfully completed the course African Postcolonial Theories and Literary Criticism (5 EC) in 2024-2025 or earlier, will receive a partial exemption of 5 EC for the corresponding parts in the course Language, Literature and Communication in Africa (10 EC). The course coordinator(s) determine which parts have yet to be completed.
4. Students who have successfully completed the course Communication in Africa: The Power of Language & Media (5 EC) in 2024-2025 or earlier, will receive a partial exemption of 5 EC for the corresponding parts in the course Language, Literature and Communication in Africa (10 EC). The course coordinator(s) determine which parts have yet to be completed.
5. Students who have successfully completed the course Economy, Geography and Society in Africa (5 EC) in 2024-2025 or earlier, will receive a partial exemption of 5 EC for the corresponding parts in the course African History, Politics, Economy, and Geography (10 EC). The course coordinator(s) determine which parts have yet to be completed.
6. Students who have successfully completed the course History and Politics in Africa (5 EC) in 2024-2025 or earlier, will receive a partial exemption of 5 EC for the corresponding parts in the course African History, Politics, Economy, and Geography (10 EC). The course coordinator(s) determine which parts have yet to be completed.
7. Students who have successfully completed the course Communicating Research (3 EC) in 2023-2024 or earlier, write a MA Thesis African Studies worth 12 EC. The thesis should be accordingly 12,000-16,000 words including notes, bibliography and appendices.