



Universiteit Leiden

Course and Examination Regulations

valid as of 1 September 2026

Programme-specific section:

Master's Programme: Asian Studies (60 EC)

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.

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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 Asian 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

The programme has the following specialisations:

- East Asian Studies
- Global Asian Studies
- South Asian Studies
- Southeast Asian Studies

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
 - a. foundational knowledge of the history and development of Asian studies;
 - b. knowledge of research in social sciences and humanities disciplines that is grounded in Asian studies;
 - c. understanding of the concepts, terminology and approaches relevant to the regional and disciplinary specialisation of the student, and their application in original research;
 - d. understanding of aspects and/or countries in Asia in the context of Asia as a whole.
2. Applying knowledge and understanding
 - a. knowledge of the main humanities and social science research methods and techniques and their application in Asian studies;
 - b. skills in locating, retrieving, assessing and using sources and specialist secondary literature for the purposes of original research;
 - c. the ability to independently design, conduct and complete original research on an aspect of Asian studies.
3. Judgement

- a. the ability to form a judgement on the basis of incomplete or limited information, whilst also taking into account the social and ethical responsibilities that come with the application of knowledge and assessments.
4. Communication
- a. the ability to interpret and comment on aspects and/or countries of East, South or Southeast Asia for specialist and non-specialist audiences, and to act as cultural intermediary;
 - b. the ability to report, debate and discuss in a professional setting, both orally and in writing.
5. Learning skills
- a. the learning skills required to be able to follow post-master's professional training or a PhD training of largely self-determined or autonomous nature.

In addition, the following achievement levels apply to the specific specialisations:

Specialisation: East Asian Studies

6. Knowledge and understanding
- a. excellent command of modern Chinese, Japanese or Korean;
 - b. broad knowledge of China, Japan or Korea, including their internal and external dynamics;
 - c. knowledge of history, development and current trends in Chinese Studies, Japanese Studies or Korean Studies.
- For students specialising in premodern studies of one of these area's:
- d. excellent command of classical Chinese, classical Japanese or classical Korean.
7. Applying knowledge and understanding
- a. the ability to locate, assess and use original sources in modern or classical Chinese, modern or classical Japanese, or modern or classical Korean.

Specialisation: South Asian Studies

8. Knowledge and understanding
- a. broad knowledge of South Asia, including its internal and external dynamics;
 - b. knowledge of history, development and current trends in South Asian Studies.
- For students who have completed language electives:
- c. beginners, intermediary, or excellent command of Hindi, Sanskrit, or Classical Tibetan.
9. Applying knowledge and understanding
- For students who have completed intermediate or advanced language electives:
- a. the ability to locate, assess and use original sources in Hindi, Sanskrit or Classical Tibetan.

Specialisation: Southeast Asian Studies

10. Knowledge and understanding
- a. broad knowledge of Southeast Asia, including its internal and external dynamics;
 - b. knowledge of history, development and current trends in Southeast Asian Studies.
- For students who have completed language electives:
- c. beginners, intermediary, or excellent command of Malay/Indonesian.

11. Applying knowledge and understanding

For students who have completed intermediate or advanced language electives:

- a. the ability to locate, assess and use original sources in Malay/Indonesian.

Specialisation: Global Asian Studies

13. Knowledge and understanding

- a. broad knowledge of one or more regions in Asia, including their internal and external dynamics;
- b. knowledge of history, development and current trends in Asia, in particular aspects which connect the region;
- c. familiarity with disciplinary theories and methods associated with the study of Asia in the Humanities and Social Sciences.

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.

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 total study load of 60 credits. These compulsory components include the set components from which a student is obliged to choose.

Article 3.4.1 **Taking part in programme components**

3.4.1.6. Scheduled programme components in the free or bound elective space of the programme may be cancelled if too few students have registered for them. Cancellation in such cases is only possible if:

- there are sufficient alternative courses to choose from, for which students can still register; and
- the Prospectus clearly states:
 - which courses could be cancelled in case of too few registrations; and
 - at how many registrations the course will go ahead; and
 - on what date the student will be informed whether or not the course will go ahead; and

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

² [Guideline on Language Policy](#)

- that, if a course that was offered in the previous year is unexpectedly cancelled because of too few registrations, two examination opportunities (resits) will still be offered, in accordance with article 4.1.1.

Chapter 4 Examinations, Final Examination and Further Education

Article 4.2 Obligatory sequence

4.2.1

Component:	Participation in class and examination after passing:
<i>Advanced Mandarin 2</i>	Advanced Mandarin 1
<i>Advanced Japanese 2 (60 EC)</i>	Advanced Japanese 1 (60EC)
Topical Readings in Korean	Advanced Korean

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. bachelor's degree from a Dutch research university (in the specialisation):

<i>Specialisation Master</i>	<i>Admission on the basis of Bachelor programme, with specialisation</i>
East Asian Studies	Chinese Studies Japanese Studies Korean Studies
Global Asian Studies	Chinese Studies Japanese Studies Korean Studies of South and Southeast Asian Studies
South Asian Studies	South and Southeast Asian Studies
Southeast Asian Studies	South and Southeast Asian Studies

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 humanities or social sciences, and
- applicants have knowledge of the nature and role of as well as the ability to analyse and report on academic inquiry in the humanities or social sciences.

In addition, applicant must also meet the following specific requirements per specialisation:

Specialisation East Asian Studies

- completed components at the bachelor's level (which may include the thesis) equivalent to at least 30 credits on the history, art, culture, politics, society and/or economy of one or more East Asian countries or regions.
sufficient command of Chinese, at level 4 (HSK) or level 3 (TOCFL).
- sufficient command of Japanese, at JLPT 2 level, with a maximum of level JLPT 1.
- sufficient command of Korean, at level TOPIK 4.

Please note that because an important distinguishing aspect of the programme is advanced language acquisition, this specialisation is not suitable for native speakers or for persons with a proficiency level above level 6 (HSK) or equivalent level 6 (TOCFL), a higher TOPIK level or near native fluency and a BA or MA degree from a Japanese University.

Specialisation Global Asian Studies

- completed components at the bachelor's level (which may include the thesis) equivalent to at least 30 credits on the history, art, culture, politics, society or economy of one or more East, South or Southeast Asian countries or regions.

Applicants with a Bachelor's degree in International Studies who

- have completed all area courses for either East Asia or South and Southeast Asia, and
- wrote their BA Thesis and/or completed optional courses worth 10 credits on either East Asia or South and Southeast Asia

are considered to have fulfilled all entry requirements.

Specialisation South Asian Studies

- completed components at the bachelor's level (which may include the thesis) equivalent to at least 30 credits on the history, art, culture, politics, society and/or economy of one or more South Asian countries or regions.

Applicants with a Bachelor's degree in International Studies who

- have completed all area courses for South and Southeast Asia, and
- wrote their BA Thesis and/or completed optional courses worth 10 credits on South and Southeast Asia

are considered to have fulfilled all entry requirements.

Specialisation Southeast Asian Studies

- completed components at the bachelor's level (which may include the thesis) equivalent to at least 30 credits on the history, art, culture, politics, society and/or economy of one or more Southeast Asian countries or regions.

Applicants with a Bachelor's degree in International Studies who

- have completed all area courses for South and Southeast Asia, and
- wrote their BA Thesis and/or completed optional courses worth 10 credits on South and Southeast Asia are considered to have fulfilled all entry requirements.

are considered to have fulfilled all entry requirements.

- 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>.

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.

5.2.3.5 The following language requirements for East Asian Studies applies:

Sufficient command of either Chinese, Japanese or Korean:

- sufficient command of Chinese, at level 4 (HSK) or level 3 (TOCFL). Please note that because an important distinguishing aspect of the programme is advanced language acquisition in Chinese, this specialisation is not suitable for native speakers, or for persons with a level 6 (HSK) or equivalent level 6 (TOCFL).
- sufficient command of Japanese, at JLTP 2 level, with a maximum of level JLTP 1. Please note that because an important distinguishing aspect of the programme is advanced language acquisition in Japanese, this specialisation is not suitable for native speakers, and persons with near-native fluency and a BA or MA degree from a Japanese university.
- sufficient command of Korean, at level TOPIK 4. Please note that because an important distinguishing aspect of the programme is advanced language acquisition in Korean; this specialisation is not suitable for native speakers, and for students with a higher TOPIK level.

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>.

5.2.4 Qualitative admission requirements

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

5.2.4.1 Not applicable.

5.2.5 **Maximum capacity**

5.2.5.1 Not applicable.

Article 5.3 **Deficiencies**

See the faculty section.

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

5.4.1 For 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 requirements as specified 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.

Students holding a Bachelor's degree from a university of applied sciences [*HBO*] relevant to Asian Studies can be admitted after completing an individual bridging programme of 60 EC. This programme always includes a course in *Academic Skills* (5 EC) and a *pre-master final assignment* (10 EC). From fall 2026, this will include the BA1 required courses on history and contemporary society of a region or country of choice.

Pre-master's/bridging programmes must be completed successfully within the prescribed period as specified in sub Article 5.2.1c.

5.4.2 Information regarding the bridging programmes 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. Students who have obtained a university's bachelor's or master's degree, and who meet the requirements set for sufficiently related subjects, may be enrolled for the exclusive purpose of following and completing an educational module in order to obtain a 'limited level-two' teaching qualification⁴.

5.4.5. The educational modules are the responsibility of the ICLON Board of Examiners.

Chapter 7 Evaluation of the Programme

Article 7.1 **Evaluation of the programme**

The programme is evaluated as follows:

- course evaluations
- programme evaluation

⁴ In Leiden, this concerns a teaching qualification in one of the following relevant school subjects: *Chinese Taal en Cultuur, Duits, Engels, Filosofie, Frans, Geschiedenis en Staatsinrichting, Godsdienst en Levensbeschouwing, Griekse en Latijnse Taal en Cultuur, Nederlands or Spaans*. During registration, students in an educational module are subject to the ICLON Course and Examination Regulations and the ICLON Board of Examiners.

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

Transitional arrangements

Specialisations Politics, Society and Economy, and History, Arts and Culture

The specialisations Politics, Society and Economy, and History, Arts and Culture will be discontinued in 2026-2027. The same course packages can however be followed in the Global Asian studies specialization.

Students who started the program before 2026-2027 can graduate with the specializations Politics, Society and Economy or History, Arts and Culture.

Language courses can no longer be followed as part of the Global Asian studies specialization. Students who followed language courses prior to 2026-2027 can count them toward their degree in Politics, Society and Economy or History, Arts and Culture.

Proseminar Asian studies

Students following the Global Asian, South Asian and Southeast Asian Studies specialization are required to complete the *Proseminar Asian studies* from 2026-2027. For students who enrolled in the programme prior to 2026-2027, following the course is optional.

Core curriculum: Asian studies: Perspectives and Debates

The core curriculum Introduction to Asian studies will be replaced by the core curriculum: Asian studies: Perspectives and Debates. Students who followed Introduction to Asian studies before 2026-2027 graduate with the previous version of the course on their diploma.