



Universiteit Leiden

Course and Examination Regulations

valid as of 1 September 2026

Programme-specific section:

Master's Programme: Philosophy (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 philosophy;
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:

- Global and Comparative Philosophy
- Modern European Philosophy
- Moral and Political Philosophy
- Philosophical Perspectives on Politics and the Economy

Theoretical Philosophy 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. knowledge and understanding in the field of systematic philosophy and its history, as well as of developments in contemporary philosophy, surpassing that of the bachelor's programme, that form the basis of the independent development and application of original ideas, understanding and analyses;
 - b. knowledge and understanding of recent developments per specialisation:
 - *Global and Comparative Philosophy*
knowledge and understanding of one or more non-Western philosophical traditions, their history, and their reception and their intercultural dimensions, surpassing that of the bachelor's specialisation Global and Comparative Perspectives;
 - *Modern European Philosophy*
knowledge and understanding of the history of Western philosophy, in particular the German and French traditions of the 19th and 20th century, and their reception, as well as contemporary

developments in this field, surpassing that of the bachelor's specialisation *Continentale filosofie* [Continental Philosophy] ;

- *Moral and Political Philosophy*

knowledge and understanding of theoretical ethics, metaethics, methods of normative philosophy and the history of moral and political philosophy, as well as contemporary developments in this field, surpassing that of the bachelor's specialisation *Ethiek en politieke filosofie* [Ethics and Political Philosophy];

- *Theoretical Philosophy*

knowledge and understanding of theoretical philosophy, in particular, epistemology, metaphysics, logic, and the philosophy of science, their history, as well as contemporary developments in this field, surpassing that of the bachelor's specialisation *Theoretische filosofie* [Theoretical Philosophy];

- *Philosophical Perspective on Politics and the Economy*

knowledge and understanding of the normative and systematic philosophical foundations of political and economic systems, theories and debates within applied philosophy and contemporary political philosophy.

2. Applying knowledge and understanding

- a. the ability, on the basis of the knowledge and understanding of philosophy they have acquired, to contribute to current discussions in philosophy and related areas;
- b. the ability to demonstrate specific and transferable skills in an academic and/or a professional environment;
- c. the ability to develop a personal and professional profile for employability in a future career.

3. Judgement

- a. the ability, on the basis of the sound knowledge of philosophy acquired during the programme, to analyse complex philosophical problems;
- b. the ability to judge the reliability of different kinds of sources;
- c. the ability to form judgements based on different kinds of sources;
- d. a realistic view of the reliability of their conclusions;
- e. the ability to integrate different approaches to philosophical questions and compare these with each other.

4. Communication

- a. the ability to give a clear presentation of philosophical problems, ideas, theories, interpretations and arguments, for specialist audiences as well as for a general audience;
- b. the ability to write philosophical papers at an academic level.

5. Learning skills

the possession of learning skills that allow graduates to continue their study of philosophy and to formulate a research proposal for a PhD.

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,

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

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 of components from which a student is obliged to choose.

Article 3.4.1 Taking part in programme components

Chapter 4 Examinations, Final Examination and Further Education

Article 4.2 Obligatory sequence

4.2.1 Students are required to have obtained 20 EC within their specialisation (for students with two or more specialisations, within each of the specialisations) of the Master's programme prior to starting their MA thesis and enrolling in the MA thesis seminar. For students with a deficiency or who enter with a pre-masters programme, the course Philosophical Skills must be completed prior to starting the thesis.

Article 4.3 Forms of examination

4.3.6 The final part of the completion and assessment of the MA thesis is the oral MA examination, which consists of an interview with the candidate on the subject of the thesis conducted by a graduation committee, appointed by the Board of Examiners. The candidate's performance during the interview will be taken into account for the determination of the final grade of the thesis.

Article 4.6 Assessment

4.6.4 The examination results are expressed as a half number between 1.0 and 10.0, including both limits.

² [Guideline on Language Policy](#)

Chapter 5 Admission to the Programme as of September 2027 or February 2028

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 specialisation) in:

<i>Specialisation master</i>	<i>Admission on the basis of bachelor programme, with specialisation</i>
Global and Comparative Philosophy	Philosophy: Global and Comparative Perspectives
Modern European Philosophy	Philosophy
Moral and Political Philosophy	Philosophy
Philosophical Perspectives on Politics and the Economy	Philosophy
Theoretical Philosophy (effective September 2026)	Philosophy

- 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, and
 - possess the General Academic Skills listed in Appendix B of the Faculty section of these regulations, and
 - the ability to formulate a clear philosophical research question, to develop and formulate a critical view on that question, and to support this view by means of argument and analysis, to be determined on the basis of a writing sample.

In addition, the applicant must also meet the following specific requirements depending on the chosen specialisation:

- *Global and Comparative Philosophy*
relevant knowledge of intercultural traditions in philosophy and their history, equivalent to the knowledge obtained in the pre-master's programme for Global and Comparative Philosophy, as specified in Article 5.4; or
a bachelor's degree in Philosophy from a Dutch research university, provided the student has completed courses in the field of global and comparative philosophy with a total course load of at least 15 EC;
- *Modern European Philosophy*
relevant knowledge of the history of Western philosophy, especially the German and French traditions of the 19th and 20th centuries, equivalent to the knowledge obtained in the pre-master's programme for Modern European Philosophy, as specified in Article 5.4;
- *Moral and Political Philosophy*

relevant knowledge of ethics and political philosophy and their history, equivalent to the knowledge obtained in the pre-master's programme for Moral and Political Philosophy, as specified in Article 5.4;

- *Philosophical Perspectives on Politics and the Economy*
relevant knowledge of contemporary ethics, political philosophy and/or political theory, equivalent to the knowledge obtained in the pre-master's programme for Philosophical Perspectives on Politics and the Economy, as specified in Article 5.4;
Applicants with a bachelor's degree in International Studies or in Liberal Arts or a comparative degree from a research university and who completed courses in philosophy with a total course load of at least 35 credits are admitted to Philosophical Perspectives on Politics and the Economy on the basis of Article 5.3. Depending on the contents of the completed courses, the Board of Admissions will determine an additional catch-up programme as referred to in Article 5.3.3.

Applicants who are in possession of a bachelor's degree in Political Science or in Public Administration from a Dutch research university are admitted to Philosophical Perspectives on Politics and the Economy on the basis of Article 5.3. The Board of Admissions has determined a catch-up programme, as referred to in Article 5.3.3, for 15 ECTS credits of deficiencies, consisting of the following bachelor's courses: Philosophical Skills (5 EC), Ethics (5 EC), and Political Philosophy (5 EC).

- *Theoretical Philosophy*
relevant knowledge of theoretical philosophy and its history, equivalent to the knowledge obtained in the pre-master's programme for Theoretical Philosophy, as specified in Article 5.4.
- 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).

A degree from a Dutch University of Applied Sciences (hbo) does not render the applicant admissible to either the MA programme or to the pre-masters.

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.

- Applicants may be asked to submit a writing sample, proving the aforementioned qualities in the field of knowledge, understanding and skills.

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 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 Exam 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

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

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.

Article 5.4 Pre-master's Programmes and educational modules

5.4.1 The Programme has developed pre-master's programmes (for the following target groups) in order to remove deficiencies. Pre-master's programmes must be completed successfully within the prescribed period as specified in sub Article 5.2.1c.

This pre-master's programme is intended for applicants with a bachelor's degree from a research university, equivalent to the level of a Dutch academic bachelor's degree, who do not fulfil the entry requirements regarding the knowledge, understanding and skills in the field of philosophy, as specified in article 5.2.2. Students who successfully complete this pre-master programme of 40 EC will be admitted to the relevant specialisation of the Master's programme.

The pre-master's programme has a course load of 40 EC and consists of:

- compulsory introductory courses of 5 EC each,
- the second-year core course for the relevant specialisation,
- one advanced seminar at third-year BA level of 10 EC,

as specified in the table below. The choice of components depends on the chosen specialisation in the Master's programme in Philosophy (60 EC).

For candidates who can demonstrate to have relevant knowledge and skills related to one or more of the components of the pre-master's programme described below, the pre-master's programme may be tailored to their individual backgrounds (resulting in programmes smaller than 40 EC).

Students entering the Global and Comparative Philosophy specialisation with a BA in Philosophy from a Dutch research university or equivalent, but who are lacking in 15 EC of global and comparative philosophy courses may compensate for this deficiency through taking coursework from Pack D of the premaster, not including Philosophy of Culture, WP: Greek and Roman, or WP: Modern Europe.

Abbreviations:

GCP	Global and Comparative Philosophy
MEP	Modern European Philosophy
MPP	Moral and Political Philosophy
3PE	Philosophical Perspectives on Politics and the Economy
TP	Theoretical Philosophy

Semester	Course unit title	Level	Credits
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	Compulsory introductory courses, selected for the chosen master's specialisation):			GCP (Pack D)	MEP (Pack A)	MPP (Pack B)	3PE (Pack B)	TP (Pack C)
I	World Philosophies: Greek and Roman Antiquity	100	5	X*	X			
I	Ethics	100	5			X	X	
I	Political Philosophy	200	5			X	X	
I	Metaphysics	100	5					X
I	Logic	200	5					X
I	Science and Knowledge	200	5			X	X	X
I	Philosophy of Culture	100	5	X	X			
I	World Philosophies: China	100	5	X*				
I	World Philosophies: Africa	200	5	X*				
II	World Philosophies: Modern Europe	200	5	X*	X	X	X	X
II	World Philosophies: India	100	5	X*				
II	World Philosophies: Middle East	200	5	X*				
II	Continental Philosophy from a Global Perspective	200	5		X			
I	Philosophical Skills (pre-master)	100	5	X	X	X	X	X
II	Core Course: The World as Problem	200			X			
II	Core Course: Advanced Moral and Political Philosophy	200				X	X	
II	Core Course: Naming and Necessity	200						X
II	Core Course: Intercultural Philosophical Hermeneutics	200		X				
	* In package D: students take 3 out of 6 of the World Philosophies courses							
				30	30	30	30	30
	Select one advanced seminar from the courses relevant for the chosen specialisation.			GCP (Pack D)	MEP (Pack A)	MPP (Pack B)	3PE (Pack B)	TP (Pack C)
I / II	BA3 course relevant to the specialisation Continentale Filosofie	300 / 400	10		X			
I / II	BA3 course relevant to the specialisation Ethiek en politieke filosofie	300 / 400	10			X	X	
I / II	BA3 course relevant to the specialisation Theoretische filosofie	300 / 400	10					X
I / II	BA3 course relevant to the specialisation Global and Comparative Perspectives	300 / 400	10	X				
				10	10	10	10	10

Students who enter in February may replace the Philosophical Skills (pre-master) course in the first semester with the BA Philosophical Skills course in the second semester.

Entering students who can take courses in Dutch may replace any of these courses with corresponding Dutch courses as follows:

- Continental Philosophy from a Global Perspective (5 EC): Continentale filosofie (5 EC) or Geschiedenis van de moderne filosofie II (5 EC)
- World Philosophies: Greek and Roman Antiquity (5 EC): Griekse en Romeinse filosofie (5 EC)
- World Philosophies: Modern Europe (5 EC): Geschiedenis van de moderne filosofie I (5 EC)
- Ethics (5 EC): Ethiek (5 EC)
- Philosophy of Science and Knowledge (5 EC): Epistemologie (5 EC) or Wetenschapsfilosofie (5 EC)
- Philosophy of Culture (5 EC): Cultuurfilosofie (5 EC)
- Philosophical Skills (5 EC): Filosofische vaardigheden (5 EC)
- Logic (5 EC): Logica (5 EC)

5.4.2 Information regarding the bridging programmes can be requested from the study advisor 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

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

Appendix F - Transitional provisions

[As of 1 September 2026 the specialisations of the MA Philosophy \(60 EC\) have been changed.](#)

MA Philosophy (60 EC) before September 2026	MA Philosophy (60 EC) starting September 2026
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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.

<u>Specialisations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Global and Comparative Philosophy - Modern European Philosophy - Moral and Political Philosophy - Philosophical Perspectives on Politics and the Economy - Philosophy of Knowledge 	<u>Specialisations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Global and Comparative Philosophy - Modern European Philosophy - Moral and Political Philosophy - Philosophical Perspectives on Politics and the Economy - Theoretical Philosophy
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The specialisation *Philosophy of Knowledge* has been converted to the specialisation *Theoretical Philosophy*.

Students that started *Philosophy of Knowledge* on or before February 1, 2026, will be able to finish their programme and graduate with this specialisation by following the structure of the new *Theoretical Philosophy* specialisation. Students who do not finish their specialisation by 31 January, 2028, will be transferred to the new *Theoretical Philosophy* specialisation.

Students who started the MA Philosophy 60 EC before 1 September 2026 and have a BA in Philosophy from Leiden University are allowed to take two optional courses from another specialization (see table below) instead of one, as noted in the prospectus of 2025-2026 and before. Students starting on 1 September 2026 or later are allowed to take one course from another specialisation.

Specialisations:	Electives allowed from other specialisations:
Global and Comparative Philosophy	Modern European Philosophy Moral and Political Philosophy Theoretical Philosophy
Modern European Philosophy	Moral and Political Philosophy Theoretical Philosophy
Moral and Political Philosophy	Modern European Philosophy Theoretical Philosophy
Philosophical Perspectives on Politics and the Economy	None
Theoretical Philosophy	Modern European Philosophy Moral and Political Philosophy

Exceptions to these transitional provisions can only be granted by the Board of Examiners.