

DECISION 19 - 024

Rapenburg 70
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of the Examination Appeals Board of Leiden University
in the matter of the appeal of

[name], appellant

against

The Board of Examiners of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences,
respondent

Course of the proceedings

On 12 December 2018 the appellant requested the respondent for an independent re-grading of the examination (*tentamen*) in Experimental Clinical Psychology. She had not passed that examination.

The respondent rejected the appellant's request in its decision of 24 January 2019.

The appellant sent a letter on 1 February 2019 to lodge an appeal against this decision.

The respondent informed the Examination Appeals Board that it investigated whether an amicable settlement could be reached. However, an amicable settlement between the parties was not reached.

The respondent submitted a letter of defence on 5 March 2019.

The appeal was considered on 6 March 2019 during a public hearing of a chamber of the Examination Appeals Board. The appellant did not appear at the hearing, and had sent notice of absence. [names] appeared at the hearing on behalf of the respondent.

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Contested decision

In its decision of 24 January 2019, the respondent informed the appellant that it saw no reason to have the examination re-graded by an independent examiner.

Grounds for the appeal

The appellant states that there is a discrepancy between the model answer sheet and the grade awarded to the appellant for the examination as regards her answers to the second part of question 1 and question 2 (all of this question). The appellant was awarded 2 x "0" points for these answers.

The appellant takes the view that, according to the answer sheet, she should have received 2 x 5 points for - merely - naming the "validation issues" in questions 1 and 2. The appellant gave the names of the validities correctly, but she did not receive any points for this. According to the appellant, the grading tool shows that 5 points should have been awarded for correctly naming the validities, and an extra 5 points for correct reasoning.

The appellant answered question 2 on the basis of the course material presented in the lecture. In this respect, she refers to the slide presentation in which it was stated that the "internal, external, construct and data evaluation validities are strongly twisted with each other".

Considerations

In accordance with Article 7.61, paragraph two of the Higher Education and Research Act (*Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek; WHW*), the Examination Appeals Board must consider whether the contested decision is in contravention of the law.

At issue in the dispute is whether the respondent decided on correct grounds that there is no reason to have the appellant's examination re-graded by an independent assessor.

Contrary to the appellant's view, it is sufficiently clear from the examination questions that the examiner did not intend to award points in questions 1 and 2 for merely naming the threats, regardless of whether the explanation that was also requested was correct, which is indeed within the examiner's discretion. After all, if the explanation is incorrect, the student shows that he/she does not have sufficient knowledge of the material. It may be expected, particularly from master's students, that they can explain and apply a specific term in the given

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context. Since the appellant did not contest the examiner's opinion that the answer that she gave is incorrect, she was correctly not awarded points for merely naming the threats.

From the copy of the examination that was presented at the hearing, the Examination Appeals Board could see that the examiner indicated for each question, or part of the question, why the appellant had not given the right answer to the question. These remarks amount to the fact that the answer is not relevant to the question. Moreover, according to the examiner, the appellant mentioned irrelevant matters in her answer. The answers given by the appellant demonstrate that she does not have a good understanding of the examined material - or not yet. This is also the explanation that the examiner gave to the appellant in the feedback session after the examination.

The Examination Appeals Board accepts the respondent's standpoint that it has been established that the correct procedure was followed in creating the examination and grading it. This standpoint was presented in the letter of defence and has, furthermore, not been refuted. Consequently, the respondent was correct to see no reason to have the examination re-graded by another examiner.

The decision

The Examination Appeals Board of Leiden University,

holds the appeal **UNFOUNDED**,

in view of Article 7.61 of the Higher Education and Research Act.

Established by a chamber of the Examination Appeals Board, comprised of: O. van Loon, LL.M., (Chair), Dr J.J.G.B. de Frankrijker, J. Nijland, LL.M., M.G.B. Berk, M.Sc. and Z.I. de Vos, LL.B. (Members), in the presence of the Secretary of the Examination Appeals Board, I.L. Schretlen, LL.M.

O. van Loon, LL.M.
Chair

I.L. Schretlen, LL.M.
Secretary

Certified true copy,

Sent on: