

Examination Appeals Board

DECISION 18 - 053

of the Examination Appeals Board of Leiden University

in the matter of

the appeal by [name] from Anhui, China, appellant

against

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

1. Origin and course of the proceedings

The appellant sent a letter on 17 April 2018 which was received on 20 April 2018, to lodge an appeal against the decision of the respondent of 5 April 2018, rejected the appellant's application for admission to the Master's Programme in Psychology, with a specialisation Child and Adolescent Psychology.

The respondent investigated whether the dispute could be settled amicably, and contacted the appellant to this end. However, this did not result in the appeal being withdrawn.

A letter of defence was submitted on 23 May 2018.

The appeal was considered on 20 June 2018 during a public hearing of a chamber of the Examination Appeals Board. The appellant did not appear and was not represented at the hearing although she had been properly summoned.

[name], Secretary of the Board of Admissions, and [name], appeared on behalf of the respondent.

2. Considerations with regard to admissibility

The appellant lodged a timely appeal against the decision of 5 April 2018 by means of the letter dated 17 April 2018 that was received by the Examination Appeals Board on 20 April 2018. Furthermore, the letter of appeal also meets the requirements as stipulated in the General Administrative Law Act (*Algemene wet bestuursrecht*, "Awb") and the Higher Education and Academic Research Act (*Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek*, "WHW"). Consequently, the administrative appeal is admissible.

3. Relevant legislation

As far as relevant, the Course and Examination Regulations (“OER”) of the Master's Programme in Psychology state the following:

5.2.1 Pursuant to Article 7.30b, (1), of the Act holders of one of the following degrees may be admitted to the programme and one of its specialisations: a Bachelor's degree from the programme BSc in Psychology of Leiden University with the appropriate specialization course for the chosen specialisation.

5.2.2 The Board of Admissions may, on request, admit persons to the programmes who do not meet the requirements specified in 5.2.1 but who can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Board of Admissions that they possess the same level of knowledge, understanding and skills as holders of a degree specified in 5.2.1, possibly under further conditions, without prejudice to the conditions specified in 5.2.4.

5.2.4 Persons with a bachelor's degree or an equivalent degree from a university who possess the skills, understanding and knowledge that are required for earning the bachelor's degree referred to in Article 5.2.1. Alongside the requirements specified in 5.2.1 and 5.2.2, the following qualitative admission requirements apply for the programme pursuant to Article 7.30b (2) of the Act, more specifically the knowledge on university level of the following topics:

- introduction to psychology
- social and organisational psychology
- personality psychology
- cognitive psychology
- neuropsychology and/or psychophysiology and/or biopsychology
- clinical and abnormal psychology
- developmental and educational psychology
- theory or training in interpersonal skills, such as interview, counselling, discussion techniques.
- theory or training in psycho diagnostics
- advanced courses (at least 30 ECs) on a third year Bachelor level on topics pertaining to the preferred master specialisation within the MSc Psychology.
- have sufficient knowledge of Methods and Statistics (at least 20 EC): introductory and more advanced courses in methods and statistics of psychological research (including psychometrics, multivariate data analysis) and the use of SPSS.
- have proof of thorough proficiency in written and spoken English, e.g. by means of an IELTS score of 7 or a TOEFL score of 100/250/600 or equivalent (for non-native speakers of English)) with at least an IELTS score of 6,5 on

partial scales of this test and at least a TOEFL score of 22 (reading), 22 (listening), 22 (speaking) and 25 (writing) on partial scales of this test.

4. Considerations with regard to the dispute

The appeal is against the decision of 5 April 2018 which rejected the appellant's application for admission to the Master's programme in Psychology, with a specialisation in Child and Adolescent Psychology.

In short, the appellant argued that she has completed sufficient course units in the field of methodology and statistics and referred to a number course units.

The appellant pointed out that she studied at the Psychological Department of the Beijing Sport University, where she specialised in Applied Psychology.

She attended a number of course units in the field of psychology at an advanced level. The appellant stated that her average grade is high and that she was awarded a number of honours.

In essence, the respondent's view is that the request for admission has been rejected since the previous education differs materially from the requirements for admission to the master's programme in respect of substance and level.

The Examination Appeals Board has to decide whether the contested decision must be upheld.

It was established that the appellant was awarded a Bachelor's degree in Applied Psychology at Beijing Sport University in China and wants to be admitted to the master's programme in Psychology on that basis.

Article 5.2.1. of the OER states that direct admission to this master's programme is only possible with a Bachelor's diploma in Psychology of Leiden University. Since the appellant does not have this diploma, she does not qualify for direct admission. The request to be admitted must therefore be assessed on the basis of the requirements stipulated by the OER.

The respondent explained in the letter of defence and at the hearing that and why the appellant does not meet the requirements set out in article 5.2.4. of the OER based on her diploma. The respondent substantiated the contested decision with the considerations that the previous education of the appellant differs considerably in terms of substance from the requirements for admission to the Master's Programme. In order to be admitted to the master's programme, the appellant must satisfy the final learning objectives of the bachelor's programme taught at Leiden University, and she must also possess sufficient expertise in the field of her preferred specialisation. In this respect, it is relevant that the Board of Admissions of Leiden University has assessed the appellant's bachelor's diploma

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at the level of a University of Applied Sciences. Graduation from a *University of Applied Sciences* (HBO programme) does not qualify the holder for admission to a *research university*.

Furthermore, the respondent explained that the appellant's curriculum is 30 EC short in course units in the field of the chosen specialisation. The Examination Appeals Board endorses this finding.

Since the Examination Appeals Board has not been informed of any other facts or circumstances that could lead to an alternative decision, the appeal must be held unfounded.

The appeal is against the decision of 5 April 2018 which rejected the appellant's application for admission to the Master's Programme in Psychology, with a specialisation in Child and Adolescent Psychology. This is what the appellant indicated in her letter of appeal.

However, the appellant attached the decision of the respondent of 9 April 2018 to her letter of appeal. This decision pertains to admission to the Master's Programme in Psychology, with a specialisation in Cognitive Psychology. She was also rejected for this programme. The Examination Appeals Board considers, possibly unnecessarily, that an appeal against the decision of 9 April 2018 will also be unlikely to succeed, since the appellant's previous education was held to be insufficient to be admitted to the Master's Programme in Psychology at Leiden University.

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5. The decision

The Examination Appeals Board of Leiden University,
holds the appeal **UNFOUNDED**,

in view of article 7.61 of the Higher Education and Academic Research Act.

Established by a chamber of the Examination Appeals Board, comprised of H.M. Braam, LL.M., M.A. (Chair), Dr K. Beerden, J.J. Hylkema, M.A., Y.D.R. Mandel, and L. Heezen (members), in the presence of the Secretary of the Examination Appeals Board, W.J. de Wit, LL.M.

H.M. Braam, LL.M., M.A.
Chair

W.J. de Wit, LL.M.,
Secretary

Certified true copy,

Sent on: