rijksuniversiteit groningen / faculteit der letteren

Academic year 2025/2026

Assessment Plan

Master International Relations

1 / Vision of teaching and assessment

https://myuniversity.rug.nl/infonet/medewerkers/let/onderwijs/vision-for-education

2 / How to follow the assessment cycle (from design to evaluation and optimization)

3 / Assessment dossier

a. The assessment dossier

The requirements of the assessment dossier are set out in §4 of the 'Protocol for Quality Assurance in the Assessment of Course Units' drawn up by the Board of Examiners.

All the examiners of a degree programme must provide the Board of Examiners with an 'assessment dossier' containing the following:

- The course guide
- For exams:
  - Questions
  - Distribution of points across exam questions
  - Model answers; in case of essay questions in the exam: two filled-in assessment forms, or, if no such forms are used, two assessments (e.g. comments on the margin or any other justification of assigned points). These two examples should include one with a stronger and one with a weaker result.
  - Document confirming peer review with the names of (at least) two examiners from within the department
  - If available: statistical analysis of exam (usually provided by ESI) and info on any adjustments to the exam in light this analysis (e.g. multiple choice question that was not counted).
- For assessments other than exams (in particular papers and presentations):
  - Any instructions and assessment criteria not mentioned in the course guide that have been communicated to students separately
  - Two filled-in assessment forms, or, if no such forms are used, two assessments (e.g. margin comments or any

other justification of assigned grade). These two examples should include one with a stronger and one with a weaker result.

- The list of all partial and final grades
- Any other documents requested by the Board of Examiners/Expertiseteam International Studies.

b. Parties involved

The following parties are involved in fulfilling duties related to the assessment dossier:

- Examiners: provide the Board of Examiners with the assessment dossiers.
- Secretariat: collects and manages assessment dossiers.
- Board of Examiners: oversees assessment dossiers.

4 / Assessment timetable

Overview of learning outcomes of the degree programme + matrix	Appendix 1
Schematic overview of time periods intended for assessment, modes of assessment used and, if relevant, learning pathways	Appendix 2
Overview of the intended learning outcomes of the course units and their modes of assessment	Appendix 3
Additional regulations for the graduation dossier	Appendix 4

The objectives of the degree programme, set out in the learning outcomes of the degree programme (Appendix 1), form the guiding principles. All course units together fulfil a role in working towards these learning outcomes. This is reflected in a coherent curriculum with a transparent structure. The matrix of learning outcomes (Appendix 1) defines the course units that include summative assessments and distinguishes between a) course units with assessments that *lead up to* the attainment level set out in the programme-level learning outcomes and b) course units with assessments *at this attainment level* (in the latter case the learning outcomes of the course unit are thus identical to the programme-level learning outcomes of the degree programme). This distinction is expressed as follows:

‘x’, i.e. underlined, is used for summative[1] assessments at the level specified in the programme-level learning outcomes
‘x’ for summative assessments at lower performance levels
‘fx’ for formative[2] evaluations at lower performance levels

In parallel with the curriculum, the assessment programme (Appendix 2) offers a balanced, well-structured overview of modes of assessment and exam periods. Course units taught within one learning pathway may be given matching visual markings in the overview.
In order to gain insight at the programme level into whether the chosen modes of assessment tie in with the learning outcomes of the course units and create a balanced mix in the run-up to the programme-level learning outcomes of the degree programme, the intended learning outcomes of the course units are related to their modes of assessment (Appendix 3).
Specific rules may apply to certain components of the graduation dossier (e.g. for the thesis: approval of the thesis proposal, amount of supervision, resit). These rules are set out in Appendix 4.

5 / Safeguarding of assessment quality by the Board of Examiners

The Board of Examiners is responsible for safeguarding the quality of assessment at both the degree programme level and the level of individual course units.

a. Safeguarding of assessment quality at degree programme level

The Board of Examiners annually issues advice on each degree programme’s draft assessment plan for the coming academic year.

b. Safeguarding of assessment quality at course unit level

The Board of Examiners has a procedure for the assesments of all course units in a degree programme , bearing in mind the position of the course unit in the curriculum and in a specific learning pathway. In addition, a substantiated selection of theses is also evaluated.

6 / Archiving

Assessment dossiers are stored on the course’s Brightspace page.

[1] Summative assessment aims to assess a student’s knowledge and skills. Such assessments are usually awarded a mark, accompanied by a justification of the mark (adapted from *Toetsen in het hoger onderwijs* (2017)).
[2] Formative evaluation relates to the process of searching, aggregating and interpreting information, which students and lecturers can then use to determine how students are doing in their learning process, what they should work towards and how this can be most effectively done (adapted from *Toetsen in het hoger onderwijs* (2017)).

7 / List of documents relevant to assessment

Faculty vision of teaching and assessment – see https://myuniversity.rug.nl/infonet/medewerkers/let/onderwijs/vision-for-education.

Rules and Regulations – the internal regulations of the Board of Examiners.

Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER = OER; *Onderwijs- en examenregeling*) – a legally binding document that applies to the entire cohort of students who start a degree programme in a certain academic year. The TER may also contain transitional arrangements for previous cohorts.

Matrix of learning outcomes – an appendix to the Assessment Plan that specifies the course units with *summative* assessment leading up to or at the level specified in the programme-level learning outcomes and the course units with formative assessment.

Placement manual – a manual for the placement course unit.

Syllabus – a document that sets out the details of the TER and the Assessment Plan at course unit level in accordance with the information in Ocasys.

Assessment programme – the implementation of the TER, Part A, Section 4.16

Appendix 1. Learning outcomes of the degree programme + Matrix of learning outcomes

Dublin Descriptors	A Master's graduate has…
Knowledge and understanding 1. Students have demonstrated knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances that typically associated with Bachelor's level, and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context.	1.1 Advanced knowledge and understanding of key concepts and concept structures in the study of international political phenomena at an advanced level 1.2 Advanced knowledge and understanding of the theories, models and approaches in the analysis of international relations and the role of international organizations and other actors 1.3 Specialized knowledge and understanding of, and the ability to take a position in, the major debates in one of the specialization tracks of the degree programme: - track International Security: the latest developments in the field of international security studies, theory and methodology of social-scientific analysis of political actors in terms of mutual threats, vulnerabilities, as well as methods to translate social-scientific security analysis into security policy; - track Geopolitics & Connectivity: The complexity and functioning of sovereignty, territory, order and space globally and internationally, with connectivity as an active resultant of the relationship between space and power, taking place in current and past political contexts through localisation, territorialisation, strategisation and logisticisation of space; - track International Political Economy: the complexity and functioning of interwoven markets and their consequences for states and societies in terms of steering

	and influence, paying attention from an institutional perspective to the dynamics of the three pillars of market, state and society, in particular processes of institutional convergence as a result of increasing globalization; - track European Politics in a Global Perspective: the phenomenon of European collaboration and integration in past and present, its implications to the citizens of Europe and the rest of the world, as well as the functioning of the multi-layered administration and decision-making forces within the European Union and in the work of transnational and transgovernmental groups (including interest groups); - track East Asian Studies: backgrounds to and meaning of the contemporary international relations of East Asia - especially, but not exclusively, of China, Japan and Korea - in which national and international administrative and political, social and economic developments, are approached from a regional, global and historical perspective; - track International Relations & International Organization: backgrounds to and meaning of global changes in various fields, such as defence, administration, politics and economics, the changing relationship between international, regional and national politics, and the changing role of various non-state actors therein.

Applying knowledge and understanding 2. Students can apply their knowledge and understanding, and problem solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study.	2.1 Mastery of the methods and techniques of academic research specific to the specialization 2.2 Ability to independently design, implement and reproduce theoretical or socially relevant research into international-political developments and phenomena, and to apply this in new or unknown situations 2.3 Ability to analyse the various aspects of an academic problem and their mutual relationships
Making judgements 3. Students have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements with incomplete or limited information, but that include reflecting on ethical, intercultural and social responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgements.	3.1 Ability to deal systematically and creatively with complex issues and to form grounded judgements, bearing in mind ethical, intercultural and social responsibilities 3.2 Ability to judge academic research in the field of international relations adequately, independently, critically and logically 3.3 A critical and open scholarly attitude
Communication 4. Students can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously.	4.1 Ability to report on research in an academically sound way both orally and in written form 4.2 Ability to present opinions clearly to an international audience of both colleagues and non-specialists
Learning skills 5. Students have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous.	5.1 The ability to independently integrate new knowledge and understanding from the field of IR into existing expertise in an effort to continuous learning. 5.2 Ability to read and comprehend English at a level such that an academic debate in that language can be followed

	5.3 Ability to understand the international labour market, to conduct work of academic quality in a specialized professional environment and to contribute constructively to collective efforts in a structured group 5.4 Ability to plan and implement activities independently, to learn effectively, to organize the time available and to keep deadlines 5.5 Ability to effectively and efficiently use IT as a study tool.

	Advanced Theory and Research Practice in International Relations	Capita (IS, G&C, IPE, EPGP, EAS or IRIO)	Research Seminar	Placement *or* Professionalisation electives	Master Thesis
1. Knowledge and understanding					
1.1	x	x	x		x
1.2	x	x			x
1.3		x	x	X	x
2. Applying knowledge and understanding					
2.1		x	x		x
2.2			x		x
2.3	x		x		x
3. Making judgements					
3.1	x	x	x		x
3.2		x	x		x
3.3		x	x		x
4. Communication					
4.1			x		x
4.2		x	x	X	x
5. Learning skills					
5.1			x	X	x
5.2	x	x	x		x
5.3				X	
5.4				X	x
5.5			x		x

Appendix 2. Schematic overview of the assessment programme

YEAR 1, semester 1			**Block 1**		**Block 2**	**Language of assessment**
Course unit title	**Course unit code**	**Weeks 1-7: lectures**	**Weeks 8/9/10: exams/resits**	**Weeks 11-17: lectures**	**Weeks 18/19/20: exams/resits**	
Advanced Theory and Research Practice in IR	LYX049M05	Lectures (in weeks 1-4)	Written exam	Lectures (in weeks 11-13)	Written exam Resit	English
Research Seminars	Various	Seminar (including lectures & individual meetings) These two blocks comprise several seminars, lectures and individual meetings. This course unit will always include a paper/article and oral presentation, with resit(s), and may include a written exam, debating assignments, assessment of participation, etc. with resit(s).				English
Capita: International Security	LYX047M05	Seminars (in weeks 4-7) This block comprises seminars and lectures.	Written assignment	Seminars (in weeks 14-16) This block comprises several seminars, lectures and individual meetings. Assessment consists of oral presentation and written assignment and resit(s).	Written assignment Resits	English
Capita: Geopolitics & Connectivity	LYX102M05	Seminars (in weeks 4-7) This block comprises seminars and lectures.	Written assignment	Seminars (in weeks 14-16) This block comprises several seminars, lectures and individual meetings. Assessment consists of oral presentation and written assignment and resit(s).	Written assignment Resits	English
Capita: International Political Economy	LYX051M05	Seminars (in weeks 4-7) This block comprises seminars and lectures.	Written assignment	Seminars (in weeks 14-16) This block comprises several seminars, lectures and individual	Written assignment Resits	English

				meetings. Assessment consists of oral presentation and written assignment and resit(s).		
Capita: European Politics in a Global Perspective	LYX112M05	Seminars (in weeks 4-7) This block comprises seminars and lectures.	Written assignment	Seminars (in weeks 14-17) This block comprises several seminars, lectures and individual meetings. Assessment consists of oral presentation and written assignment and resit(s).	Written assignment Resits	English
Capita East Asian Studies	LYX097M05	Seminars (in weeks 4-7) This block comprises seminars and lectures.	Written assignment	Seminars (in weeks 14-16) This block comprises several seminars, lectures and individual meetings. Assessment consists of oral presentation and written assignment and resit(s).	Written assignment Resits	English
Capita International Relations and International Organization	LYX122M05	Seminars (in weeks 4-7) This block comprises seminars and lectures.	Written assignment	Seminars (in weeks 14-16) This block comprises several seminars, lectures and individual meetings. Assessment consists of oral presentation and written assignment and resit(s).	Written assignment Resits	English
Total number of ECTS from examinations	30					

YEAR 1, semester 2			**Block 3**		**Block 4**	**Language of assessment**
Course unit title	**Course unit code**	**Weeks 1-7: lectures**	**Weeks 8/9/10: exams**	**Weeks 11-17: lectures**	**Weeks 18/19/20: exams/resits**	

Master's Placement *or* Professionalisation elective	LYX000M10 Various (LYX157M10)	Placement, individual (supervised). A placement takes at least 7 weeks, assessment takes into account multiple factors including the placement report and resit(s). If the Placement is replaced by a Professionalisation Elective, the student chooses one 10 ECTS course, which take place in block 4. Professionalisation electives comprise several seminars and lectures. Depending on the elective, the assessment consists of a combination of written assignments, group work, oral presentation, portfolio, or project proposal.	English
Master's Thesis	LYX999M20	Independent study, individual (supervised). 560 hours of conducting research in the field of specialization and writing a thesis and resit.	English
Total number of ECTS from examinations	30		

NB1: For a more detailed description of the teaching activities and assessment methods, see the course manual of the respective module.
NB2: The programme cycle of four blocks starts in September and in February. For exact time schedule of modules and holiday periods, see rooster.rug.nl.

Appendix 3. Additional regulations for the graduation dossier

Obtainable at the manuals of the programmes courses, MA thesis and placement.