



Thesis Regulation English-taught programmes 2026/27, Faculty of Law

Paragraph 1 General provisions

Article 1.1 – Applicability of the regulation

1. This Regulation is applicable to the academic year 2026/27.
2. This Regulation is applicable to the following degree programmes:
 - a. the Bachelor's degree programme International and European Law;
 - b. the Pre-Master's programme International and European Law;
 - c. the Master's degree programmes Advanced European Union Law and its track Technology Law and Innovation, Energy and Climate Law, Global Criminal Law, International Commercial Law, Public International Law and its tracks Health and Technology Law and International Human Rights Law;
 - d. the Master's degree programme Legal Research (Research Master).

Article 1.2 – Definitions

The following definitions apply to this Regulation:

- a. Academic year: the period of time starting on 1 September and ending on 31 August of the following calendar year.
- b. the Act: the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act (Dutch acronym: WHW).
- c. Board of Examiners: the independent body entrusted with the tasks and powers as set out in the Act, including the decision of whether the requirements of the final assessment have been met.
- d. Course unit: a teaching unit of the degree programme within the meaning of the Act, reflected in Ocasys.
- e. ECTS credit: credit in Article 7.4 of the Act. The student workload of each course unit is expressed in ECTS credits, where 1 ECTS is equivalent to a student workload of 28 hours.
- f. Examiner: a person appointed by the Board of Examiners to administer examinations and determine their results.
- g. Extraordinary circumstances: circumstances such as those defined in Article 7.51 of the Act. Article 7.51 of the Act is further elaborated in the UG Student Support Fund Regulations.
- h. Faculty thesis coordinator: a person responsible for providing information to students and coordinating the Faculty's thesis policy.
- i. Master's thesis: a thesis written as part of the Master's degree programme.
- j. Ocasys: the UG's online course catalogue. Ocasys is part of these Teaching and Examination Regulations.
- k. Paper: a written demonstration of legal and academic research competence with a minimum scope of 3 ECTS and a maximum scope of 7 ECTS.
- l. Pre-Master's programme: a programme intended to remedy deficiencies for admission to the degree programme.



- m. Semester: part of the academic year, either starting on 1 September and ending on a date to be determined by the Board of the University, or starting on a date to be determined by the Board of the University and ending on 31 August.
- n. Student: a person registered at the UG for the purpose of taking course units and/or examinations leading to the conferral of a University degree.
- o. Substantive thesis coordinator: a person responsible for assessing the suitability of the topic and coordinates the assigning of supervisors and second assessors within a programme or track.
- p. Thesis: a written demonstration of legal and academic research competence.
- q. Thesis supervisor: an examiner under whose supervision and guidance the student writes the thesis. Where supervision is provided by two thesis supervisors, any reference in the singular in this Regulation shall be read in the plural.
- r. Track: a graduation track for a degree programme approved as such by the Board of the University.

All other definitions will have the meaning that the Act ascribes to them.

Article 1.3 – Aim

The learning objectives for the course units designed for writing a thesis are described in Ocasys.

Article 1.4 – Student workload

- 1. The student workload for the Bachelor's thesis (Research Colloquium) and for the Master's thesis is determined in the Teaching and Examination Regulation of the programme concerned.
- 2. The student workload for a small thesis/paper is determined on the basis of the scope of the work. The guidelines are available in [Appendix 1](#).

Article 1.5 – Language

Theses have to be written in English.

Article 1.6 – Supervision structure

- 1. The Faculty Board shall appoint a Faculty Thesis Coordinator. The Faculty Thesis Coordinator is responsible for both the Bachelor's thesis (Research Colloquium) and the Master's thesis.
- 2. The department management shall appoint a Substantive Thesis Coordinator, where necessary for each degree programme or area of law.

Article 1.7 – Deadlines

- 1. The deadlines for a small thesis/paper are set by the supervisor in consultation with the student.



2. The deadlines for the Master's thesis with the Master's degree programmes Advanced European Union Law, Energy and Climate Law, Global Criminal Law, International Commercial Law, and Public International Law are published in the Thesis Guide and on Brightspace.
3. The deadlines for the Master's thesis within the Master's degree programme Legal Research (Research Master) are published on Brightspace.

Paragraph 2 Preparation

Article 2.1 – Enrolment procedure for the Master's thesis of the Master's degree programmes Advanced European Union Law, Energy and Climate Law, Global Criminal Law, International Commercial Law, and Public International Law

1. Students must enrol for their Master's thesis in the Master's degree programmes Advanced European Union Law, Energy and Climate Law, Global Criminal Law, International Commercial Law, and Public International Law, and their respective tracks.
2. Enrolment for theses as arranged for in Article 2.1.1 is binding and will, by definition, result in the award of a mark (either a final mark or a 'F' (Fail)).
3. The student may request to withdraw their enrolment before the start of the thesis writing process, namely 1 February or 1 September. This will result in the withdrawal of the award of a result.
4. The Board of Examiners may deviate from the above in the event of exceptional circumstances.

Article 2.2 – Enrolment procedure for other theses

1. Students must enrol for their Master's thesis in the Master's degree programme Legal Research (Research Master) via the process described on Brightspace.
2. Students must contact the thesis coordinator of the relevant department to write a small thesis/paper.

Article 2.3 – Master's thesis preparation process

Students must take part in the thesis preparation process. This compulsory preparation process consists of a thesis class, a library instruction session, and a thesis meeting for each programme or track. This preparation process takes place before the writing process begins.

Article 2.4 – Research plan for the Master's thesis

1. The student must submit a proposal for a research question to the substantive thesis coordinator.



2. The student shall inform their thesis supervisor as soon as possible if they wish to deviate from the research plan. If the Thesis Guide allows for this, further arrangements shall be made.
3. The Master's thesis within the Master's degree programme in Legal Research (Research Master) may be written in the form of one or more articles in a generally recognised legal academic journal.

Article 2.5 – Assigning of a thesis supervisor for the Master's thesis

1. The substantive thesis coordinator appoints an examiner as thesis supervisor who is a suitable fit for the research question set out in the research plan.
2. The substantive thesis coordinator can assign a second supervisor where the research question transcends a single area of law or is interdisciplinary in nature.
3. The substantive thesis coordinator appoints two examiners as thesis supervisors for a Master's thesis within the Master's degree programme Legal Research (Research Master).
4. The substantive thesis coordinator appoints one examiner as the second assessor.

Article 2.6 – Research question for the Master's thesis

1. The research question is determined in consultation with the thesis supervisor.
2. The research question for the Master's thesis must be relevant to the degree programme from which the student is graduating.
3. The provisional research question for the Master's thesis within the Master's degree programme Legal Research (Research Master) must make an innovative contribution to existing knowledge and must be cross-disciplinary or multidisciplinary.

Article 2.7 – The research question for other theses

1. The research question for a small thesis/paper is determined in consultation with the thesis supervisor.
2. The research question for the Bachelor's thesis is determined in consultation with the thesis supervisor.

Paragraph 3 Research and writing process

Article 3.1 – Academic supervision and deadlines

The thesis supervisor and the student shall agree on the following matters, within the deadlines set out in the Thesis Guide:

- the frequency of supervision (meetings);
- the option to submit one or more interim (draft) versions;
- the deadline and method for submitting the interim (draft) version(s);
- the expected periods of absence of the thesis supervisor;





- the date for submission of the final version.

Article 3.2 – Draft version and assessment deadlines

1. The student must submit at least one (partial) draft version and to discuss this orally with the thesis supervisor.
2. The student must submit a draft version by the deadlines set out in the timeline laid down in the Thesis Guide or, in the absence thereof, in accordance with the approved research plan. These deadlines are available in the Thesis Guide.
3. A draft submitted in accordance with the timeline or writing plan will be assessed by the thesis supervisor as soon as possible, but no later than fifteen working days after submission.
4. A draft submitted outside the timeline or research plan will be assessed by the thesis supervisor as soon as possible, but no later than twenty working days after submission.
5. The student incorporates the feedback from the thesis supervisor.

Article 3.3 – Final version

1. The final version of a Master's thesis must be submitted in accordance with the timeline set out in the Thesis Guide or, in the absence of such a guide, in accordance with the research plan.
2. The final version of a thesis cannot be amended after submission.
3. The student will receive a grade of 'F' (Fail) if the final version of the Master's thesis is not submitted or is not submitted on time. In this case, the student will not be offered a repair period.

Article 3.4 – Hardship clause

The Faculty Thesis Coordinator may, in exceptional circumstance of a compelling nature, grant an extension to the submission deadline for the final version of the thesis, following consultation with the substantive thesis coordinator and the thesis supervisor and after consulting the study advisers.

Paragraph 4 Style and format

Article 4.1 – Length

1. The length of the thesis shall be related to the student workload as specified in the relevant Teaching and Examination Regulations.
2. A thesis or paper shall be the minimum length of 3 ECTS credits.
3. In consultation with the thesis supervisor, a thesis may exceed the maximum word count.





4. [Appendix 1](#) contains an overview of the number of words corresponding to the number of credits.
5. The Master's thesis for the Master's degree programme Legal Research (Research Master) must be between 15,000 and 17,000 words in length, including the research proposal, but excluding tables bibliography and appendices.
6. The Master's thesis for the Master's degree programme Legal Research (Research Master) based on one or more articles comprises 8,000-10,000 words, supplemented by a methodological justification and an overarching discussion.

Article 4.2 – Lay-out

The requirements set out in the Thesis Guide apply to the formatting and lay-out of a thesis.

Paragraph 5 Assessment

Article 5.1 – Minimum requirement for the Master's thesis

1. The minimum requirements for the Master's thesis written for the Master's degree programmes as mentioned in Article 1.1.2c are as follows:
 - a. At least the required minimum word count of 10,000, excluding title page, table of contents, tables, the bibliography, appendices and footnotes;
 - b. Written in clear and correct English;
 - c. Must contain all mandatory sections, namely the title page, table of contents, introduction, main chapters, conclusion and bibliography;
 - d. It employs a consistent method of referencing in both the footnotes and the bibliography in accordance with applicable legal and academic standards, and,
 - e. The plagiarism check of the Master's thesis yields no anomalous results in accordance with Article 5.2 on the determination of plagiarism.
2. The thesis supervisor shall assess whether the final version of the Master's thesis meets the minimum requirements referred to in Article 5.1.1. If this is the case, the final version of the thesis shall be submitted to a second assessor for assessment. If this is not the case, the student will be awarded a grade of 'F' (Fail). In this instance, the student will not be offered a repair period.

Article 5.2 – Fraud

1. The final version of the Master's thesis shall be checked for plagiarism by the thesis supervisor using a digital plagiarism check. The thesis supervisor is responsible for this digital check.
2. The thesis supervisor is free to check draft versions for plagiarism digitally at an earlier stage.
3. During the oral discussion of the thesis, the thesis supervisor assesses the student's knowledge and understanding of the topic.
4. If plagiarism is detected, the thesis supervisor shall forward the results of the digital check, together with an official report, to the Board of Examiners.





Article 5.3 – Assessment criteria

1. The assessment of the Master's thesis is based on the learning objectives of the relevant Master's degree programme
2. The mark for the Master's thesis written for the Master's degree programmes as mentioned in Article 1.1.2c is determined on the basis of the following criteria:
 - a. The extent to which a (societal) problem has been identified, and the clarity and specificity of the academic legal research question formulated on that basis;
 - b. The relevance and suitability of the chosen research design and the degree of justification for and suitability of the chosen research method;
 - c. The relevance of the sources used and the extent to which these sources are critically evaluated and related to the research question posed;
 - d. The extent of reflection on legal concepts relevant to the research question and the extent to which questions regarding the interpretation and application of the relevant legal terminology are critically discussed;
 - e. The degree of independence in conducting a legally and academically sound research project and the timely completion of the Master's thesis;
 - f. The reasoning used to answer the research question, in particular the clarity, linguistic accuracy, conciseness and structure of the written work, and the extent to which the argument is supported by relevant and academic sources;
 - g. The degree to which the student has independently and adequately incorporated the feedback from the thesis supervisor and the degree to which the student has defended the written work to the thesis supervisor.
3. The mark for the Master's thesis written for the Master's degree programmes Legal Research (Research Master) is determined on the basis of the following criteria:
 - a. Research question and methodology;
 - b. Structure and organisation;
 - c. Language use;
 - d. Content;
 - e. Argumentation;
 - f. Mastery of specific research skills;
 - g. Originality of the research;
 - h. Independence in the research;
 - i. Publishable;
 - j. Supplementary research proposal;
 - k. Transcending a single field of law or multidisciplinary.
4. The thesis supervisor and second assessor shall explain how the mark was determined, based on the relevant assessment criteria.

Article 5.4 – Failure to submit or late submission

1. The student writing a Master's thesis for the Master's degree programmes as mentioned in Article 1.1.2c will be awarded a grade of 'F' (Fail) if they fail to submit the final version of the Master's thesis or submit it late. In this case, no repair period will be offered.
2. Article 5.4.1 does not apply to students writing a Master's thesis for the Master's degree programme Legal Research (Research Master).





Article 5.5 – Repair period for the Master’s thesis

1. A student whose Master’s thesis meets the minimum requirements, as referred to in Article 5.1.1, shall be offered a repair period of four weeks if the final version of the Master’s thesis is assessed to as unsatisfactory. No supervision will be provided during the repair period.
2. The student will not be offered a repair period if no oral discussion of the Master’s thesis or parts thereof has taken place.
3. A student whose Master’s thesis is assessed as unsatisfactory after the repair period will receive a fail grade (between 1.0-5.0) and they must re-enrol for the Master’s thesis. The student must write a new Master’s thesis on a different topic, and it must be supervised by a different thesis supervisor if the final version is assessed as unsatisfactory after the repair period.
4. This article does not apply to Master’s theses for the Master’s degree programme Legal Research (Research Master).

Article 5.6 – Oral defence of the Master’s thesis

1. The Faculty Board may decide that an oral defence of the Master’s thesis forms part of the thesis process.
2. The oral defence shall last no longer than 45 minutes.

Article 5.7 – Number of copies to be submitted

1. The student must submit the digital final version to the thesis supervisor in accordance with the procedure described in Brightspace.
2. The student may agree with the thesis supervisor that one or more hard copies of the final version of the thesis should also be submitted.

Article 5.8 – Assessment deadlines for the final version

1. The thesis supervisor and the second assessor shall, by mutual agreement, award a mark to the final version of a small thesis or paper as soon as possible, but no later than ten working days after the agreed submission date.
2. The thesis supervisor and the second assessor shall, in mutual consultation, jointly award a mark to the final version of the Bachelor’s or Master’s thesis as soon as possible, but no later than twenty working days after the agree submission date.

Article 5.9 – Determining the mark for the final version of the thesis

1. The thesis supervisor shall only award a mark for the final version of the Master’s thesis after an oral discussion of the draft version of the thesis, or parts thereof, with the student.



2. The Master's thesis shall be assessed as a fail ('F') no oral discussion has taken place.
3. The final version of a Master's thesis is marked using half-marks.
4. The mark awarded for a final version of a Master's thesis submitted following a repair period may not exceed a six (6.0).

Article 5.10 – Processing of marks

1. The student is informed of the final assessment of the final version by the thesis supervisor and the second assessor.
2. The thesis supervisor and the second assessor enter the final assessment of the final version into the digital thesis assessment form and send it to the Examination Administration.

Paragraph 6 Final provisions

Article 6.1 – Formal and informal appeals procedure

1. A student may request a review of the mark if they disagree with the mark awarded for their thesis.
2. The thesis supervisor and the second assessor may decide to seek the opinion of an additional examiner.
3. The student may submit an appeal to the [Central Portal for the Legal Protection of Student Rights](#) within six weeks of the mark being awarded.

Article 6.2 –Storage period

The digital version of the thesis will be stored according to a procedure approved by the Faculty Board for a period of at least seven years.

Article 6.3 – Hardship clause

The Board of Examiners may, upon written request from the student, deviate from the provisions of these regulations in extraordinary circumstances of a compelling nature.

Article 6.4 –Date of commencement

This regulation shall enter into force on 1 September 2026.



Appendix 1. Size thesis

1.

Number of credits (in ECTS)	Number of hours	Number of words
3	84	2,500 – 3,000
4	112	3,000 – 3,500
5	140	4,000 – 4,500
6	168	5,000 – 5,500
10	280	8,000 – 9,000
12	336	10,000 – 11,000
18	504	15,000 – 17,000
20	560	20,000 – 22,000

2. The maximum word count mentioned above does not include title page, table of contents, tables, the bibliography, appendices and footnotes.