

Wageningen University – Regulations Governing Flexible Bachelor's or Master's Programmes

1. Introduction

Every Wageningen University bachelor's or master's student is entitled to compile a flexible bachelor's or master's programme. Such a programme must comply with the educational frameworks of Wageningen University and the Examining Board's approval is required for it.

As in the case of a conventional degree programme, such a programme leads to a BSc or MSc degree. The diploma will list the name of the most closely related degree programme along with the qualification 'flexible programme'. The courses that have been passed will be listed on an addendum to the diploma.

2. Procedure

2.1. Student and study adviser

The following matters are important where a student decides in favour of a flexible programme:

- the student must compile a comprehensive selection of courses. Contact a study adviser for advice beforehand;
 - the selection of courses must be submitted in the normal manner in the electronic SPA application system and all of the courses must be entered under 'optional part';
 - a number of additional documents must also be submitted, namely:
 - an overview, in which the student must indicate whether it is feasible to study the relevant courses; the schedule and timetable must be in order. A possible structure may comprise a list of the courses that have already been passed (along with the marks) and also of the courses that are still to be taken (together with the schedule and timetable);
 - the rationale for opting for a flexible programme clearly stipulated in writing;
 - in the case of a flexible BSc programme the relevant student is advised to include notes, in which they set out the prospects for them after obtaining the requisite diploma (e.g. correlation with the field of work and/or a follow-up MSc).
- NB. The compilation of a flexible BSc programme **may** entail constraints on the admission to a follow-up MSc (or specialisation or major);
- a study adviser will assess the SPA application and will send it to the Examining Board along with a recommendation.

The assignment of degree programmes to the various Examining Boards is listed on the [Examining Boards' webpage](#).

A student is required to apply for a flexible programme as soon as possible in the course of their studies, preferably by no later than halfway through the second year in the case of the bachelor's and 10 months in the case of the master's degree. If a student waits too long to apply for a flexible programme, they run the risk that their courses will not be approved. An application for a flexible programme may be submitted to the Examining Board of the degree programme to which that flexible programme is most closely related. This is often the Examining Board of the degree programme for which the student is registered and is determined in consultation with the study adviser.

2.2. Assessment by the Examining Board

The Examining Board first examines whether there are clearly understandable grounds for the application, and whether the latter has been correctly completed and the programme contains sufficient ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits. The Examining Board most closely involved then assesses the substance of the application. Which Examining Board is determined on the basis of the essence of the programme. If the programme is inadequate or specific matters are not clear, the relevant student is asked to provide additional information or a more detailed explanation. The Examining Board maintains contact with the student (usually through the study adviser) and ensures that its decisions are appropriately filed (in SPA along with any additional documents).

The Examining Board designates the degree programme as a 'flexible programme' in SPA.

It may happen that the Examining Board for the degree programme for which a student is registered contacts another Examining Board, because the essence of the relevant programme has shifted. Sometimes a student may eventually need to register for a different degree programme.

2.3. Response time and approval

An Examining Board seeks to deal with a student's application within six weeks. After the relevant Examining Board approves a programme, the relevant student is notified accordingly.

2.4. Amendment of an application that has already been approved

Should a student wish to change a selection of courses that has already been approved, the Examining Board will be required to make a decision in this respect. The student will modify their programme in SPA, add clearly understandable reasons and arrange for a study adviser to assess the amended programme. The study adviser will forward the application to the Examining Board.

3. Criteria for approval

- The flexible programme must comply with the general guidelines for the degree programme for which the relevant student has registered and Wageningen University's educational frameworks.
- A bachelor's programme represents 180 ECTS credits. The conclusion to the bachelor's degree programme (a BSc thesis) is a mandatory component.
- A master's programme represents 120 ECTS credits. The final subject (an MSc thesis), internship (second thesis) or an academic master's cluster constitute mandatory components.
- Rationale for the course selection – the following matters are important:
 - job prospects and/or a follow-up study (MSc);
 - how the student views their studies in a broader context;
 - the reason why it is impossible to do the selection of courses as part of an existing degree programme;
 - the coherency of the selection of courses.
- The final selection of courses must differ sufficiently from the university's regular degree programmes. Should that not be the case, the relevant Examining Board may decide not to assess the selection of courses and the student will be advised to complete their studies through one of the regular degree programmes.
- An Examining Board will assess the **structure** and **depth** of every selection of courses.
- Courses may be done at another university (foreign or otherwise). An explanation for a decision to do so must be set out as part of the rationale.

Guidelines for the structure of a flexible bachelor's programme:

- **introductory and basic courses** representing a total of 60 ECTS credits;
- **more in-depth and advanced courses** representing a total of 60 ECTS credits;
- **specialist courses, including a BSc thesis and minor (or free choice (selective) component)** representing a total of 60 ECTS credits (these courses should constitute a coherent selection covering the subject matter that has been decided on in greater depth).

Guidelines for the structure of a flexible master's programme:

- **more in-depth courses** representing a total of 48 ECTS credits;
- an **Academic Master's Cluster (AMC)** representing 12 ECTS credits;
- a **thesis and internship** representing a total of 60 ECTS credits. One may also opt for a second thesis instead of an internship.

4. Diploma

If a student completes a flexible BSc or MSc, they will receive a BSc or MSc diploma citing the title of the most closely related degree programme and the qualification 'flexible programme'.

5. General information

If a current or prospective student requires information about the possibility of doing a flexible bachelor's or master's programme, they will first be referred to these regulations. Should there still be anything that is not clear, they may contact a study adviser and/or the Examining Board of the degree programme for which the student is registered, or the Examining Board of the degree programme that is most closely related to the flexible programme that they want to do.