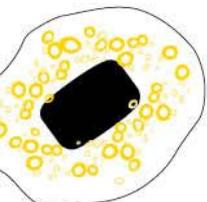


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University of Twente
Attn. Prof.dr. T.A.J. Toonen
Dean Faculty BMS

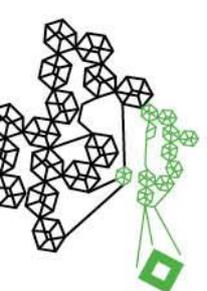
FACULTY OF BEHAVIOURAL, MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

FROM	DATE	PAGE
Dr. Henk van der Kolk	18 July 2017	1 of 5
T +31 53 489 3281	OUR REFERENCE	
h.vanderkolk@utwente.nl	BMS-FC/2017.010	

DEPARTMENT
BMS-Faculty Council

SUBJECT
Advise on EERs

Dear dean,



In the meeting on July 11 2017, the Faculty Council of BMS (FC-BMS) discussed the Education and Exam Regulations (EERs) of many bachelor and master programs of the faculty BMS. According to Dutch law, the FC has a right of consent on core aspects of the EERs, while as of the first of September 2017 the Program Committees (we will use the more familiar abbreviation "OLCs" in the remainder of this advice) also have a right to consent on some aspects of the EERs. Since the EERs are valid as of the first of September, we act according to this new rule, by including the advices and consent from the OLCs in our advice. Both the FC and the OLCs have a right to advise you on all remaining matters of the EERs.

What complicates matters is that the Board of the University claims having broad powers regarding the EERs. The powers of the FC are seen as 'complementary'. The Board of this university has decided to construct a single 'central' EER to which the program specific EERs are *annexes*. The FC-BMS is well aware of the fact that the central EER was sent to the faculty very late in the spring, which made it difficult for the various programs to carefully consider and implement all changes in their annexes. *The FC-BMS will send a letter to the university council stressing the importance of timely decision making regards the central EER, and suggest you take up this issue with the board of the university as well.*

Since the EERs constitute the 'foundation' of all teaching, discussing the EERs is one of the most important tasks of the FC. And because of the sketched context it is also one of its most difficult tasks.

Well-organized procedures

In the weeks preceding the formal deadlines for the FC-meeting in the 11th of July, in which the EERs were put on the agenda, the FC received numerous (not all, see table) annexes to the central EER in time. In addition, it received advices (and consents), not only from the OLCs, but also from several (decentral) Examination boards. The documents were sent in various formats and various advices were giving consent and/or advise about different programs (mostly bachelor/master combinations). At least two OLC advices were lacking a clear and explicit consent. Many advices suggested minor changes to the program specific annexes of the EERs, however, none of the advices was accompanied by a letter or note from the program director discussing the extent to which these recommendations would be followed.

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Given the importance of the EERs and the role of the FC-BMS in these matters, *we strongly recommend the dean to structure this flow of information more carefully. We would like to receive all documents in time from the Board of the Faculty only, and we would like to see clearly spelled out to what extent the Program directors followed up on the OLC recommendations in (the annexes to) the EER. The FC cannot be a box for major and minor comments on over 18 programs.*

Since the OLCs now have a formal role in the process of adopting EERs, *we also strongly recommend the dean to formalize this aspect of the process by explicitly asking the OLCs to give explicit formal consent on these aspects.*

The FC-BMS also received a lot of comments and advises from the decentral examination boards. These contained valuable insights and comments too. However, we are not sure which role the examination boards have in formally advising the FC and/or the board. *We therefore recommend the dean to clarify the role of the examination boards in the process of adopting changes in (parts of) (the annexes to) the EER.*

Finally, the FC can only meaningfully advise you on these matters if we are given clear advice by the OLCs and (if possible) by the examination boards. Part of these advices now, is rather technical and should have been handled without involvement of the FC. Since information about how program management planned to handle these comments is missing, we were not sure what preliminary status the EERs actually had.

The FC-BMS received the annexes and documents indicated in table 1.

Table 1: overview of received documents in the context of giving consent on the annexes to the EERs

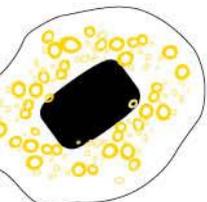
		EER/ annex	OLC advise	explicit consent from OLC	Examination committee advise
Bsc	European Public Administration	No	x	Only advice	
Bsc	International Business Administration	x	x	Yes	x
Bsc	Technische Bedrijfskunde	x	x	Yes	x
Bsc	Communicatiewetenschap	x	x	Yes	
Bsc	Psychologie	x	x	Yes	
Bsc	Onderwijskunde (discontinued)	x	No		
Msc	Business Administration	x	x	Yes	x
Msc	European Studies	No	No		
Msc	Industrial Engineering & Management	x	X	Yes	x
Msc	Public Administration	No	No		
Msc	Communication Studies	x	X	Yes	
Msc	Educational Science and Technology	x	No		
Msc	Leraar VHO Maatschappijleer & Maatschappijwetenschappen	x	No		
Msc	Philosophy of Science, Technology and Society	x	x	Yes	
Msc	Psychology	x	x	Yes	
Msc	Science Education and Communication	x	No		
Msc	Environmental and Energy Management	x	Only students?	No	
Msc	Research Master Methodology and Statistics for the Behavioural, Biomedical and Social Science	No	No		
Bsc	OER Bsc NL	x	From TBK		x
Bsc	OER Bsc Eng	x	From TBK		x
Msc	OER Msc Eng	x			x

This implies that the consent and advise we will discuss in the remainder of this letter is valid for a limited set of documents only.

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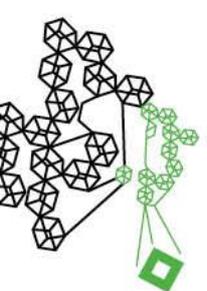
Many of the advices of the OLCs contain valuable suggestions. We think that the OLCs have to see that their recommendations are taken seriously. *The FC-BMS suggests to the dean and the program managers to either adopt the stated recommendations and/or explain carefully to the OLCs why a specific OLC recommendation is not adopted. We would like to be informed about this in a letter to be sent to the council before September 1, 2017.*

In the FC meeting on July 11 2017, the FC-BMS discussed five general points. On the basis of this discussion we formulate some additional advice.

Extended validity of tests

Because of the discretionary powers offered to the programs by the changes in the central EER (adopting the rule that non-integrated tests may have extended validity), BMS programs have now adopted diverging rules with regard to the extended validity of tests. Some offer extended validity to a *limited set of tests* (mathematics only, for example, as in the TBK program). Other programs offer extended validity to *all tests* in a module. In our meeting, you clarified that you see this as a discretionary power offered to the programs, not as something to be regulated or coordinated at the faculty level. *The FC-BMS, however, advises to keep coordinating rules about the extended validity of tests used by the various BMS programs. One of the aims of the faculty was and is to offer students the opportunity to select modules from various programs. In a context of very different rules with respect to the extended validity of tests, this will create confusion among students, especially because programs will define 'coherence' (and thus limited extended validity) in very different ways. The least the faculty should offer students a format in which the extended validity of tests is explained consistently across programs. In addition, we recommend the inclusion of the clarification in all EERs that the extended validity of tests within a module is only regulated by the program (and its annex) primarily responsible for that module.*

Diverging rules regarding the BSA



The new central EER forces programs to rethink their Binding Study Advise (BSA) rules. Instead of simply passing 3 modules, programs are now allowed to ask for 75% of the ECs (and all elements of the modules are to be connected to ECs). Because programs are also allowed to set additional rules, anything between 75% of the ECs and 3 full modules can be the basis of the BSA. *The FC-BMS advises the dean to ask program directors to clarify not only when students will NOT have a positive BSA, but also when they WILL get a positive BSA. In line with the advice we gave about the extended validity of tests, we understand that the central EER guideline grants discretionary powers to the program directors, but we still advise the dean to keep coordinating BSA rules used by the various BMS programs.*

The quality of the examination rules (appendices)

The faculty of BMS added a set of examination rules to the central EER. The FC-BMS thinks this set of rules (both in Dutch and in English) lacks the required clarity, brevity and consistency: responsible actors are not consistently addressed, some rules are overlapping or superfluous and some rules are not clearly formulated. *The FC-BMS therefore recommends to revise this set of rules in close coordination with the examination boards and the OLCs.*

'Second opportunities' for students who passed an exam

According to an addition to the central EER made by BMS, the Psychology and Communication Science programs, do not always offer students who passed a test the opportunity to improve their grade in a retake. Such a general rule is not used by the other programs. The reason this rule is added to the central EER (footnotes 5 and 6), is probably because it implicitly contradicts some rules in this central EER, *if so, we suggest deleting this footnote. If this footnote does NOT contradict the central EER, the footnote should be part of the program specific annex to the EER of both programs.* The FC understands that a procedure in which students can simply implement comments to get a higher grade may not be a good way to assess students. However, we can imagine that other, less strict rules can be implemented offering ambitious students the opportunity to improve their grades. *We therefore advise the dean to get more clarity about the motives of these programs to adopt this rather strict rule.*

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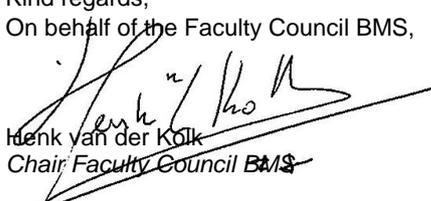
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Overall quality of the EERs (language, terminological consistency, differences between translations, allocation of topics between general EER and in program specific parts etc...)

Generally, the FC likes to address the overall quality of the EERs and the annexes. As some OLCs have noted, the EERs are not always clear (we already mentioned the examination rules), the amended central EER contains 'policies' instead of 'rights and duties' (including the set of rules about the evaluation of education) some EERs use inconsistent vocabularies (some OLCs have noted the confusing usage of words like 'tests', 'partial grades' and 'exams'). *We strongly recommend the dean to put effort into formulating clearer, more accessible documents outlining the rights and duties of students and teaching staff in the context of teaching programs.*

Notwithstanding these advises the FC-BMS gives its consent to all (annexes to) the EERs we received before the deadline (see table 1) on the basis of its rights and duties according to Article 7.13, lid 2, WHW.

Kind regards,
On behalf of the Faculty Council BMS,


Henk van der Kolk
Chair Faculty Council ~~BMS~~