

ANNUAL REPORT 2009

Examination Board BSc&MSc programmes
Rotterdam School of Management
Erasmus University

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© Examination Board BSc & MSc programmes,
Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University,
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Editor

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1. Preface

I am pleased to present you with the fourth annual report of the Examination Board, in which we elaborate on the implementation and execution of our tasks. Following the bill 'strengthening control' of 18 December 2008¹ the Examination Board is legally obliged to submit an annual report to the Dean. It is expected that the amendment will enter into force on 1 September 2010.

Teachers and students still know the Examination Board primarily in the role of the body that grants exemptions or extra examination opportunities to students. However, the tasks of the Board are much broader. It is less known, for example, that the core task of the Examination Board is ensuring the quality of the examinations. In the aforementioned bill 'strengthening control' this task is defined explicitly for the first time².

Another key task of the Examination Board is to establish in an objective and professional manner, whether a student meets the requirements of the OER (teaching and examination regulations) with regard to knowledge, insight and skills needed to obtain a degree³. In short, the Examination Board must be able to guarantee public trust in the certificate. In 2009, the Examination Board has therefore paid extra attention to the graduation process by means of the *excellence check* and *sampled monitoring*. This report describes our findings so far.

The annual report shows that some issues certainly require further attention: the way in which the examination monitor is carried out, as well as the *cum laude* rewards, and the procedure and composition of the thesis committees.

It is our hope that the annual report will contribute to the understanding and discussion of what an Examination Board actually does and should do. The Examination Board is not merely there for granting exemptions or extra examination opportunities; we want to shed the image to be there 'primarily for the students' because this conflicts with our objective supervisory tasks.

This report is organized as follows: first you will be introduced to the tasks, composition, procedures, mission and vision of the Examination Board. Then we will report on the implementation of the key tasks in 2009, to end with a *preview* of newly set beacons.

I invite you to take note of our annual report. Should you have any queries or remarks, then please do not hesitate to let us know at eb@rsm.nl.

With warm regards,

Prof dr ing Teun W Hardjono
Chairman

March 2010

¹ Wet versterking besturing

² Article 7:12 b, paragraph 1 sub a.

³ Article 7:12, paragraph 2.

⁴ See for example the 'Rules and Guidelines' and the policy document 'Policy on Quality Assurance Of Examinations and

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Members	portfolio
prof.dr.ing. T.W. Hardjono (chair)	Awarding certificates, admission statements, binding study advice BScIBA
prof.dr. P.P.M.A.R. Heugens	MPhil, <i>excellence check</i> for all programmes
dr. R. Kuik	MScBA including the General Management programme, <i>sampled monitoring</i> , master electives, internships
dr. J. van Rekom	BScBA year 2 and 3, bachelor minors, examinations monitor, fraud
ir. A.J. Roodink	PTO (Part time MScBA programme)
drs. W.M.J. Schauten	BScBA year 1, admission premaster programmes, binding study advices BScBA, fraud
vacancy	BScIBA

Secretariat	portfolio
C.M. Dirks-van den Broek LLM (0,6 fte)	Official secretary and head of the secretariat
I.M. van Essen LLM (0,8 fte)	Deputy secretary for the BScIBA- and MScIM programmes
drs. A.M. Schey (0,4 fte)	Deputy secretary; admission statements ; <i>tuition fee waivers</i> ; EC-meetings; fraud
drs. A.I.S. Accord (1,0 fte)	General secretary
G.M. den Bakker (0,4 fte)	Secretary for BA-programme, exemptions
drs. I.T.T. Przewoźna (0,7 fte)	Secretary for IBA-, MPhil- and MScIM programmes
drs. A.W.M. Berndsen (1,0 fte)	Administer admission premaster programmes; examination monitor



2. The Examination Board BSc & MSc programmes

2.1 Tasks

The Examination Board has a broad range of different tasks with regard to the examinations. The tasks of the Examination Boards are based on the Higher Education and Scientific Research Act (*Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek- WHW*). A summary of the Board's tasks can be found in appendix A.

The Examination Board has been appointed by the Dean on behalf of the BSc- and MSc-programmes funded by the government. Appendix B shows the BSc- and MSc-programmes concerned and the amount of students per programme; nearly 7000.

2.2 Composition and way of working

The Examination Board consists of seven members of the faculty. The members are appointed by the Dean. The Examination Board collectively sets up rules and policy. The Examination Board as a whole meets once a month. Each member has his own portfolio. As portfolio manager a Board member is responsible for taking care of the daily matters regarding his portfolio.

The portfolios are primarily divided on the basis of the educational programmes. Furthermore, tasks not related to an educational programme such as the quality control policy and the fraud prevention policy are added to a few portfolios.

2.3 Mission and vision

The Examination has been commissioned by the legislator to monitor the ways of testing and examining of the programmes. The Examination Board is doing this independently. Core task of the Examination is to ensure the civil effect of the certificates. To this end, the Examination Board draws up rules and policies⁴. The Board is inspired by the following core values: professionalism, academic freedom, fair play, continuous improvement. These values are explained in the paper 'Integrated testing policy'.

2.4 Secretariat

The Examination Board is supported by the secretariat. The secretariat prepares the meetings and the decision making of the Board and implements the decisions. Within the secretariat the tasks are mutually divided, see aforementioned scheme.

In 2008 drs. A.W.M. Berndsen was assigned to the secretariat of the Examination Board in order to administer the admission of premaster students and to prepare the examinations monitor.

2.5 Performance

On the next page the chart shows the performance highlights of the Examination Board over the year 2009. In the next paragraphs a brief comment is given on the various tasks.

⁴ See for example the 'Rules and Guidelines' and the policy document 'Policy on Quality Assurance Of Examinations and Assessments' d.d. 12 February 2008.

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	2006	2007	2008	2009
Meetings				
Plenary meetings of the Examination Board:	10	10	9	9
Meetings of the chairmen of all EUR Examination Boards	4	3	3	3
Degrees awarded				
BScBA	341	482	429	288
BScIBA	214	180	250	248
MScBA	850	813	902	1022
MScBA Double degree		2	14	7
MScIBA	44	43	26	na
MScIM			28	48
PTO	77	82	88	119
drs. Business Administration		80	na	na
MPhil		10	3	7
Total	1526	1692	1740	1739
Examiners appointed				
Total			157	143
Fraud				
BScBA	58	40	33	28
BScIBA	74	21	29	16
MScBA	2	2	3	2
PTO			4	3
MScIBA/MScIM	3	0	0	0
MPhil			1	0
Total	137	63	70	49
Incoming post (*)				
BA (BSc/MSc)	1187	1158	1190	1081
IBA	872	588	481	335
PTO		32	36	29
MPhil		34	20	18
Total	2059	1812	1727	1463
Outgoing post (*)				
BA	1080	1225	933	766
IBA	886	606	425	337
PTO		33	40	32
MPhil		34	20	18
Total	1966	1898	1418	1153
Appeals				
BA	21	27	17	29
IBA	67	45	34	17
Total	88	72	51	46
Admitted and subscribed premaster students				
Dutch language	350	147	119	187
English language	80	60	34	52
Total	430	207	153	239
Granted Admission Statements				
MScBA internal transition bachelor students	650	954	908	503
MScBA external transition premaster students				170
MScBA intake external students		144	100	141
MScIBA (IM-CEMS)	50	53	51	23
MScBA GM programme foundation year	40	56	49	63
MScBA GM programme specialization year	nvt	34	34	42
Total	740	1241	1142	942

* not included are the large scale standard decisions such as admission statements for transitional students, Interim study advice, binding study advice etc., or e-mails

3. Performance in 2009

3.1 The Examination Board as supervisor

a. The awarding of degrees

According to law the Examination Board establishes whether a student meets the requirements set by the Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER) with regard to the knowledge, insight and skills necessary for acquiring the degree of bachelor or master⁵. As evidence that the requirements have been met a degree certificate is supplied. With the degree certificate a list of marks is supplied and also a diploma supplement. The chairman of the Examination Board signs these three documents. In 2009, the Examination Board presented **1739** degree certificates and the same number of lists of marks and diploma supplements.

Remarkably, the number of *cum laude* certificates varies considerably per degree programme, see table below. The differences between the Master Programmes within the MScBA degree programme are large as well, ranging from 3% in the number of certificates in the master programme *Accounting & Control* to 30% in the master programme *Global Business & Stakeholder Management*.

<i>Degrees awarded</i>		<i>cum laude</i>	%
BScBA	288	7	2,4
BScIBA	248	18	7,3
MScBA	990	112	11
MScBA/GM	32	13	40
MScBA Double degree	7	2	29
MScIM	48	18	38
PTO	119	6	5
MPhil	7	4	57
Totaal	1739	180	10

Ensuring the civil effect of the degree certificate is part of the core task of the Examination Board. The quality assurance of the examinations and thereby the certificates is further elaborated upon in the integral testing policy. In paragraph C. this is further explained.

b. Appointing the examiners

The Examination Board appoints the examiners. In the Rules and Regulations the Examination Board has established that the members of the academic staff (professors and associate or assistant professors) are examiners for the teaching units for which they are responsible⁶. Other members of the academic personnel such as for example PhD students are therefore not 'automatically' examination authorised. If a PhD student or another expert from outside RSM wishes to set examinations and assessments the Examination Board must declare him examinations authorised. In the case that a PhD student is involved, the Examination Board will always seek advice from the relevant PhD supervisor.

In the case that an expert from outside RSM would like to be declared temporarily examination authorised for example to sit *once* in a thesis committee, then the Examination Board test whether the person in question fulfils in principle the demands required to be a member of the academic personnel at RSM: the minimum required is a completed university degree and preferably also a completed PhD or in any case experience in academic research.

If an expert from outside RSM *temporarily* teaches and designs, sets up and assesses examinations the following demands must be met:

- University level (minimum master or similar and PhD or similar proof of familiarity with doing academic research);

⁵ See article 7.11, paragraph 2, WHW

⁶ See article 1.4 Rules and Guidelines all programmes

- Guest contract or temporary employment at RSM;
- Incorporation in a department for the duration of the guest contract/employment term.

In 2009 the Examination Board provided **160** examination authorisation declarations to a total of 73 persons. This concerned 42 PhD students and 31 external experts. Of the 160 declarations, 51 were issued to 9 PhD students of the Finance and Investments section, either as coach or co-reader.

The external experts are usually deployed as co-reader in a thesis committee only once. In 5 cases, an external expert has received an examination authorisation declaration for the duration of 1 year. Consequently, these experts may be members of several thesis committees.

The Examination Board explicitly indicated in its memo *Integral testing policy*⁷ that it can withdraw the examinations authorisation of a teacher as a final measure in the case of apparent persistent dysfunction regarding testing. Certainly the Examination Board will not resort to this without first conducting discussions with the relevant teacher and his superior and after reasonable possibilities have been considered to improve performance. The Examination Board has not yet used this measure.

c. Quality assurance of testing and examinations: an integral testing policy

One of the key responsibilities of the Examination Board is to supervise the quality of testing and examinations of the programmes. In 2008 the Examination Board has published the document *Policy on quality assurance of examinations and assessments*. This document was spread throughout the campus. The testing policy is a transparent system of measures and provisions to promote and monitor the quality of testing and examining.

In 2009, the Examination Board put particular emphasis on the further development of instruments to monitor the final level of students. The master thesis is seen as the culmination of the programme; that is why special attention is paid to the master thesis

Checking of the master thesis

The Examination Board views the final examinations as the moment of ascertaining whether a student has achieved the desired level. Therefore the Examination Board has chosen to pay extra attention to this. Firstly a procedure has been designed to check the final examinations by sampling whether they fulfil the learning objectives described and procedural rules: the *sampled monitoring*. Furthermore the Examination Board has implemented an *excellence check*. If a thesis committee consider the possibility to grade the thesis with a 9, this thesis should be presented to the *Council for Distinction Mark*. A negative evaluation of the committee entails that the final grade cannot be higher than an 8.5. Finally the Examination Board monitors the composition of a thesis committee and presence during the graduation session.

- *Sampled monitoring*

In consultation with the Dean of BSc&MSc Programmes the Examination Board has chosen to step away from a thesis committee with a second co-reader and implement a *dual quality check*. The reason for choosing this was double. On the one hand there was much dissatisfaction about the second co-reader system because second co-readers often feel powerless if they disagree with the coach and the first co-reader resulting in a lack of incentive to be a second co-reader. On the other hand there was insufficient insight into the level of the theses of the various Master Programmes. The Examination Board as issuer of degree certificates and supervisory body is involved to an extraordinary extent in the graduation process. The thesis is the moment of checking whether the student has reached a sufficient level to be considered eligible to receive a degree certificate. It has been established that by or on behalf of the Examination Board theses are to be monitored in an expert sampling method and monitored objectively. The objective of the monitoring of masters theses is that it will become transparent for the Examination Board how the (examiners of the) programmes deal with the assessment of theses – for the benefit of a judgement regarding the quality of the Master

⁷ policy document 'Policy on Quality Assurance Of Examinations and Assessments' of the Examination Board d.d. 12 February 2008

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theses including the defence in the MSc programmes. The Examination Board is interested in answers to the questions such as (a) which elements will be included in the discussion/assessment, (b) traces that with the assessment matrix used as a guideline, (c) the matrix offers something to go by in the assessment regarding the quality of the work, (d) what are the most important quality dimensions included in the assessments?"

The Examination Board strives to screen about 10% of the final examinations by external experts. In 2008 and 2009, Emeritus Professor Prof Dr H. Oppelland was commissioned by the Examination Board to implement the *sampled monitoring*. He attended a total of 115 graduation sessions in the period from June 2008 up until September 2009. Professor Oppelland set up an interim report. In October and November 2009, his findings were evaluated by the Examination Board. Subsequently, the following action points have been identified:

- The composition and functioning of the graduation committee sometimes still calls for questions like the role of research assistants and external experts in the graduation committee. In the spring of 2010, the Examination Board will put this topic on their agenda. The assessment process and the role of the external observer in the thesis committee will thereby also be addressed.
 - We have learned that the examination session is still showing flaws. This includes things like addressing the examinee and the guests, the close of the ceremony, the duration of the presentation etc. The Examination Board will draw up rules regarding the process of the graduation exam, both for teachers and students.
 - The entourage in the graduation sessions leaves much to be desired. Especially the ICT support remains insufficient. IT support should always be there. The head of the department Student Administration will be urged to improve the entourage, catering and ICT support.
 - Sometimes the contents of the thesis leave much to be desired. We therefore consider paying attention to issues such as defining the problem, objective and methodology in the graduation manual. Furthermore, structuring and layout deserve extra attention.
 - The evaluation process is not transparent enough. The evaluation form is rarely used. Perhaps the thesis committee could award a provisional grade on the graduation form. The Examination Board has not yet decided on this item.
 - It is agreed that Mr Oppelland will observe the exams in this manner until September 2010. Subsequently, both the excellence check and the sampled monitoring will be evaluated and adjusted, if necessary. The preliminary assessment of the Examination Board is that sampled monitoring and excellence checks sufficiently compensate the abolishing of the second reader.
- *Excellence check*

As well as the implementation of the *sampled monitoring*, the Examination Board has decided that theses that will probably be graded with a 9.0 or higher would first be presented to a *Council for Distinction Mark* to evaluate whether the thesis is indeed of this level. This procedure is comparable with that of the judicial *cum laude* for a PhD. In this *Council for Distinction Mark* are members of the academic staff at full professor level from the various areas of expertise of the programme.

The following members have a place in this committee:

- Prof.dr. B.M. Balk (department 6)
- Prof.dr.ing. F.A.J. van den Bosch (department 4)
- Prof.dr. F. Hartmann (department 7)
- Prof.dr. P.P.M.A.R. Heugens, chairman (department 2)
- Prof.dr. A. de Jong (department 5)
- Prof.dr.ir. H.W.G.M. van Heck (department 1)
- Prof.dr. R.J.M. van Tulder (department 8)
- Prof.dr.ir. B. Wierenga (department 3)

In 2009, **50** theses were reviewed. Seven times the verdict turned out negative. The tables below display the number of theses that were nominated for an excellence check per programme or per department.

Programme	number
MScBA	41
A&C	4
BIM	2
ES	1
FI	9
GBSM	0
HRM	2
MC	1
MI	0
MM	9
SCM	2
SM	11
PTO	3
IM-CEMS	5
MPhil	1

Department	number
1 Decision and Information Sciences	3
2 Organization and Personnel Management	7
3 Marketing Management	9
4 Strategy and Environment	13
5 Financial Management	12
6 Management of Technology and Innovation	2
7 Accounting and Control	4
8 Business-Society Management	0

The coach and co-reader can lodge an appeal against a negative verdict of the *Council for Distinction Mark*. The thesis will then be reevaluated by another member of the Council. The Chairman of the Council will take a decision, taking all the reports into consideration. In 2009, this procedure was followed once.

If the examiners concerned do not agree with this second reading of the Council, they can lodge a final appeal with the Chairman of the Examination Board. This is followed by a hearing in which the chairmen of the Council and the Examination Board participate. Following this hearing, the Chairman of the Examination Board will take a decision whether or not a distinction mark may be granted. This decision is final. This procedure was followed once in 2009 as well.

When introducing this new form of quality control in 2008 it was also decided that the functioning of the Council would be evaluated within two years regarding efficiency, effectiveness and accuracy. This assessment will take place in 2010.

Supervision Composition of thesis committees

The Examination Administration informs the Examination Board regarding the composition of the thesis committee and the attendance of the members of the thesis committees during the graduation sessions.

If the composition of the thesis committee does not meet the examination regulations, for example because one of the members is not authorised to evaluate examinations, then the Examination Board can assess whether the person concerned can still be authorised or must be replaced.

It can occur that members of the thesis committee are prevented from taking part in the final examinations because of circumstances beyond their control. In that case, they must find a replacement; should this be impossible, then the department involved must do so. The Examination Board checks if this happens effectively. In the 1204 final examinations which the Examination Board have checked 70 persons have been replaced by departmental colleagues.

In sum there are 10 persons who were not present and also did not ensure replacements. In 6 cases the absence was caused by illness. In 4 cases, the cause is unknown.

Examination Service Point

Development of expertise and training of faculty regarding setting up good examinations, is part of the quality assurance of testing. Training in testing, assessing and grading should be structurally embedded in the personnel policy of departments. Starting in 2000, the faculty could receive specific support in examination construction at the Teaching Expertise Centre Rotterdam (TECR). The aim is to enable lecturers to direct their questions there in the course of setting examinations, making score

cards, establishing the cut-off scores, evaluating examination questions, instructing marking assistants and the like. The TECR provides feedback to the lecturers, orally and in writing. In 2009 the TECR received 13 support requests. The number of teachers who use this service is declining. A possible explanation could be that teachers have meantime gained enough knowledge about constructing exams themselves and do not need further assistance. Another explanation is that teachers are not sufficiently aware of TECR's services.

Examination monitor

In 2001, the Examination Board set up an examination monitor system in collaboration with the Teaching Expertise Centre Rotterdam (TECR). This monitoring system enables the Examination Board to receive information about the examinations established with quality assurance in mind. The examinations are assessed at the end of each trimester (currently only Bachelor's examinations). Also included are factors such as yields, averages, cut-off scores, reliability scores (in case of multiple choice examinations). Details are also included, such as the manner in which the course is examined, marks are established and *student evaluations* done. The Examination Board deals in a reticent manner with the details of the examinations monitor. Based on the monitor details, it is impossible to establish whether an examination complies with expectations/standards. Certain outcomes lead to further investigation. In some cases, the appropriate examiner is asked for an explanation. This consultation is meant to get further information; it is not an appraisal. After the consultation, based on the core values, the Examination Board decides what further steps will be necessary to improve the quality of the testing. Improvement points are passed on to the lecturer and the department, where necessary.

In 2008 the Examination Board chose a compact examination monitor with only basic data. The *Quickscan* is sent directly to the portfolio members so that they can take immediate action if so required. The portfolio members must report afterwards. In 2009, the *Quickscan* did not lead to any specific actions by the Examination Board.

In its capacity as supervisor of the examinations, the Examination Board received many complaints about the course *Financial Accounting* BKB0031/BAD06 in August 2009. This course has the same examination in English for both the BA as well as the IBA programme. Most complaints came from the students of the BScBA programme. The complaints mainly concern the grading standards and the language of the examination. Following the complaints, the Examination Board reviewed the exam and took note of the student evaluations and pass rates of recent years. The pass rates of the resit were low to very low. The BA students clearly did less well in the exam (pass rate 33.6%) than the IBA students (pass rate 48.3%). The student evaluation showed that both groups found the exam very difficult. Then the complaints were discussed with the Programme Management and also with the lecturer and the chairman of the department involved. All information considered, the Examination Board has seen no need to adjust to the norm. The students of the Dutch bachelor's programme had rightly complained about the fact that the examination was in English. Moreover, it was wrongly prohibited to use a dictionary during the examination. The Examination Board felt that this point - not having been allowed to use a dictionary - was not as compelling as to reconsider the standard or to organize an additional resit. The Examination Board has neither been able to determine whether the exam or the grading have been unclear or whether the feedback was unreasonable. However, the Examination Board has granted a large group of students to take an additional resit, in line with the policy, because they would otherwise experience an unreasonable delay in completing their studies.

Supervision course manuals

Part of the integrated testing policy is that the Examination Board routinely checks whether the testing meets the learning objectives. In 2009, a start was made to the effectuation of this audit: all course manuals are submitted to the Examination Board before publication. The Board then screens whether the examinations and learning objectives are in line. At the same time it is checked whether the grading rules are consistent with the examination regulations. This process started off with difficulty because the textual material only became available at the very latest; now the Board receives the texts in time so that adjustments can still be made.

d. Fraud

The Examination Board can take legal measures in case of cheating pursuant to article 7.12, paragraph 4 of the WHW⁸. In the graph below the measures taken per student over the past 4 years are shown. Remarkably little fraud is detected. For example, 50,000 RSM examinations are taken by RSM students in the M-building annually and only 24 students were caught for fraud in 2009. These numbers are comparable with the other faculties of the Woudestein campus. What is also evident is that plagiarism is committed in particular subjects: the first year BScBA-module *Inleiding Bedrijfskunde* (12 cases in 2009) and the BScIBA-module Skills 3 (5 cases in 2009). Noteworthy is that a new type of fraud was detected in 2009: via YouTube, it was demonstrated, step by step, how a particular case had to be made.

	2006	2007	2008	2009						
	totaal	totaal	totaal	BScBA	BScIBA	MScBA	PTO	MScIM	MPhil	total
number of students	137	63	70	27	16	3	3	0	0	49
<i>Type of test</i>										
Group assignment	34	8	18	13						13
Individual assignment	20	24	28		7	1	3			11
Written test	80	31	24	14	8	2				24
Thesis	3	0	0		1					1
<i>Type of fraud</i>										
Plagiarism	54	32	45	13	6	1	3			23
Copying	16	18	5	1		1				2
Mobile phone	64	8	17	6	7					13
Graphic calculator	3	5	0	7	1	1				9
Other			3		2					2
<i>Measure/sanction</i>										
none	9	2	6	2						2
reprimand	65	19	25	7	10	1				18
Mark invalid	14	38	7							
Mark invalid, exclusion for 1 year	48	7	32	18	6	2	3			29
Still under consideration	0	1	0							

On 26 November, a delegation of the Examination Board attended the National Exam Congress on fraud organized by the Dutch Association for Examinations (NVE). During the congress, various forms of fraud were discussed (fraud in exams, diplomas and identity). At the same time, there was a focus on fraud detection by means of, e.g., statistical techniques, prevention of fraud by securing diplomas and the checking of identification papers for security features.

e. Ensuring the implementation of examination rules

The Examination Board has the task of ensuring that the examination rules are properly carried out and - if necessary - permit deviations of the rules on the basis of the hardship clause.

By screening the course manuals the further implementation of the exam rules is monitored. In addition, the Examination Board can incidentally derogate from the rules at the request of a lecturer or a student. For example, the hardship clause can be applied if a student wants to move into the master's, does not yet meet the admission requirements, but would experience an unreasonably large study delay. In section 4 you will find a summary of the Board's decisions in individual cases.

⁸ The Examination Board sets rules with regard to good implementation of examinations and with respect to measures to be taken in this regard. The measures can include that in the case of cheating by a student the examination board can insist that, during a period of time set by them, lasting for a term of no more than a year, the student will lose the right to sit one or more to be indicated tests or examinations at the institution.

f. Appeals

Students who object, among other things, to a decision of an examiner (e.g. assessments) or the Examination Board may lodge an appeal at the Examination Appeals Board of the Erasmus University (CBE). The procedure is regulated in article 7.60 et seq WHW. Appeals should be lodged with the Appeals Board within four weeks after the decision. This procedure is an administrative appeal, as referred to in section 1:5 subsection 2 of the Dutch General Administrative Law (Awb). The CBE restricts itself to review the rightfulness of a decision. The review is done in accordance with both statutory⁹ and customary¹⁰ law.

Below you will find a list of appeals over the past three years. The distinction between BA/IBA appeals dates from the time when the secretarial office of the BA and IBA programmes were still separated. By now, there is only a certain division of portfolios on the level of secretaries.

Appeals	2007		2008		2009	
	BA	IBA	BA	IBA	BA	IBA
Subject						
rejection admission BScIBA ¹¹		3				
rejection premaster Dutch	3		4		3	
rejection premaster English		4		1		2
rejection admission to MScBA	9		6		10	
rejection admission to MScGM	1		2			
rejection admission to MScIM					2	1
negative bsa	3	27	3	23	8	11
rejection registration mark		8			2	1
rejection shortened Research Project		1		10		
Plagiarism	2				2	
rejection exemption	6		2			1
rejection extra examination	2	1				1
rejection (re)assessment	2	1			2	
total	27	45	17	34	29	17
Outcome						
Premature					1	
Withdrawn	8	11	4	4	15	6
Settled	10	19	13	23	10	8
Disallowed	5	3			1	1
Invalid	4	11		6	2	2
Valid		1		1		

Again, there has been a decline in the number of appeals. This decrease is mainly in the IBA bachelor's programme: a decline of 50 percent. This reduction is largely due to a decrease in the number of appeals against a negative binding study advice. Most likely, the selection of IBA bachelor students is beginning to show its results. The latest IBA cohorts perform well anyway. In 2009, no appeals were lodged against a denial to take part in the research proposal project either. There is a rise in the number of appeals of the BA programmes. There is no clearly identifiable cause.

3.2 Regulation: the rules and guidelines and advice regarding the TER

The Examination Board has the authority of setting regulations. The Examination Board can set order regulations and give guidelines and indications to the examiners. This has an impact on the Rules and Guidelines in which subjects are discussed such as fraud, failure/pass regulation, 'cum laude'-

⁹ E.g. the general principles of proper administration included in the WHW, the TER and the Awb.

¹⁰ E.g. unwritten general principles of proper administration and other general principles of law.

¹¹ Deze beroepen worden m.i.v. 2008 behandeld door de selectiecommissie en niet door de examencommissie

regulation, compensation regulations, registration for examinations, perusal of examinations, and the composition of thesis committees.

Moreover, the Examination Board advises the Dean with respect to determining the Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER) for every programme. The Examination Board can also make independent proposals amending the TER. The main change in the academic year 2009 – 2010 was that relating to the retake of sufficient grades in the master programmes. The Faculty Council has agreed to alter the rule 'the highest grade counts' into 'the last grade counts' Unfortunately, Osiris cannot carry out this rule yet. It was therefore decided to retain this alteration until the implementation as of 1 September 2010, pending the adaptation of Osiris.

3.3 Decisions in individual cases

In the TER of the various programmes it is established in diverse articles that the Examination Board can permit digression from the rules in some cases. It concerns granting exemption from the TER in individual cases because of personal circumstances or on the basis of the hardship clause (if a rule in an individual case leads to an unreasonable consequence) or other specific reasons. A few examples are: granting exemption for courses, granting of extra and/or accelerated examination opportunities, doing examinations in an adjusted manner due to a certain limitation, adjustment of the norm of the binding study advice in the case of personal circumstances, permitting transition to the Master programme in the case of personal circumstances or hardship, and also granting permission for the following of external electives, admission to the premaster programmes for the purpose of the master programme, the interim advice in the framework of the binding study advice, establishing a free master programme, etc. The majority of incoming and outgoing post from the Examination Board has relevance to these decisions. Below you will find a report about the most important subjects. The admission decrees will be dealt with in the following chapter with the granting of the admission statements.

a. Exemptions

In most examination regulations it is established that the Examination Board can grant exemptions on the basis of knowledge and skills gained elsewhere. However in the regulations of the premaster programmes and the master regulations it is established that *no* exemptions will be granted. In the admission to these programmes of students from outside RSM it is already taken into account that they have a broad and related education and in addition to this these programmes are so short and specific that exemption is not considered.

In the bachelor programmes exemptions are, however, granted. The Examination Board will always seek for advice with the lecturer of the course concerned. Many exemption requests relate to the binding study advice: it frequently occurs that that students change after a rejection recommendation after a negative binding study advice. In 2009, the following numbers of EUR students changed to the BScBA-programme: 5 students from the IBA programme, 19 students from the Erasmus School of Economics and 7 students from other EUR programmes. In total, **68** students have requested exemption for 134 courses; 91 exemption requests were granted and 43 were denied.

The transfer to the IBA-bachelor programme after a negative binding study advice does not often occur because the candidates for this course are individually selected. Exemptions are however requested in particular by students with a foreign education. In total **27** IBA students have requested an exemption for a total of 34 courses; 53 exemptions were granted and 19 denied.

b. Extra examination opportunities

Under certain conditions students can request an extra examination opportunity because of special circumstances such as long term illness but also when the entire study has been completed apart from one subject by which graduation is seriously delayed. In 2009, **86** students submitted a request for an extra examination opportunity: 54 BA and 32 IBA students. In total, 58 requests were granted and 28 denied. Moreover, the Examination Board has granted 60 students (BA and IBA) an extra examination opportunity for the course *Financial Accounting* BAD06/BKB0031 because they otherwise would have experienced unreasonable study delay.

c. M1-5 statements

Students with temporary or structural forms of limitation or handicap (for example dyslexia or diabetes) can use special facilities for the duration of this limitation within reasonable borders. These facilities, including adjustment of examination provisions, must contribute to enable students with a limitation to have an even chance of study success. An important facility is the taking of examinations with half an hour extra examination time in a separate room: classroom M1-5. In 2009 the Examination Board provided 60 M1-5 statements. In total, **140** RSM students make use of an M1-5 statement.

d. Binding Study Advice

The Examination Board plays a crucial role with regard to binding study advice. The Examination Board is required to issue so-called interim advice to all students three times during their first academic year. This is followed at the end of the study year by the Dean's final advice. This final advice is prepared by the Examination Board in consultation with the student advisers. Each year, the Examination Board determines which students are given exemptions from the norm, based on personal circumstances. For this purpose, individual dossiers are discussed with the student advisers and student counsellors in August. The chart below shows the files that have been processed and the decisions taken during the past three years.

PO-files BSA	2007		2008		2009	
	BA	IBA	BA	IBA	BA	IBA
Senior year cohorts						
Files	46	46	72	61	51	35
Exemption due to pers.circum.*	32	26	55	41	30	18
Negative BSA	14	20	17	20	21	17
First year cohort						
Files	95	60	74	39	87	32
Exemption due to pers.circum.*	59	39	38	16	44	16
Negative BSA	36	21	36	20	43	16
Unknown				3		

* including exemptions due to FFA in 2008

3.4 Admission Statements

a. Admission to the premaster programmes

For many years, RSM has had an inflow of higher professional education (hbo) students. This concerns a group of students with a four year hbo-programme that are allied to the RSM business administration programme. This group of students can be admitted into the master programme MScBA after following a year-long introductory programme. Since the implementation of the so-called bachelor-master structure this inflow is no longer financed for the school. RSM considers the specific higher professional education (hbo) transition also to be a valuable supplement to the student population and therefore wishes to continue to provide this introductory programme for the group of students that perform best.

Starting with the academic year 2007-2008 a new higher professional education (hbo) premaster programme was established, with a Dutch and English variant. What was new was that of the admissible programmes the poorly performing programmes have been eliminated and that as an extra demand a grade point average of 7.0 or higher is required. In 2008, this formula proved to work well.

The premaster cohort 2008-2009 has again done very well: in the Dutch language premaster programme 60% completed the entire programme in one year and in the English language premaster programme 40% completed the programme in one year. Respectively 67% en 60% of them were admitted to the MScBA programme. On the basis of the programmes, is expected that only very few students will not finish the premaster programme in 2 year.

In 2009, there were noticeably more applicants for the Dutch language premaster programme. Below you will find an overview of the applications and admissions in the past three years.

Total overview hbo-premaster	2007		2008		2009	
	NL	ENG	NL	ENG	NL	ENG
Applications	260	160	208	112	271	124
Denials	77	74	52	47	42	34
Withdrawals	36	26	37	31	40	38
Actually registered	147	60	119	34	189	52

Remarkably, in the new cohort 2009 – 2010 of the Dutch language premaster programme, the number of hbo students with a previous educational background in *Commerciële Economie* has nearly tripled: from 24 to 67 students. Another well represented study is *Technische Bedrijfskunde*: 31 students. Surprisingly, many students of the new cohort come from the *Hogeschool Rotterdam*: 81. In the previous cohort, 41 students were from the *Hogeschool Rotterdam*.

In the English language premaster programme 30 students come from an IBMS training. Of these, 15 from the *Hogeschool Rotterdam*.

b. Admission to the master programme

The chairman of the Examination Board is mandated by the Dean to grant *admission statements* to the master programmes. Students from the BSc(I)BA-programmes and students switching from another course that fulfil the transition norms requirements receive on request an admission statement to the affiliated master programme. Twice annually there is an opportunity to submit a request: in the period May/June for the start on 1 September and in December/January for the start on 1 February. Internal transition students are processed by the secretariat of the Examination Board.

For the internal master inflow per February 2009, 55 students were registered. Out of these, 31 have received an Admission Statement, 7 received a denial and 17 received a denial with the suggestion to register for (one of the) guest regulations of the Master (see next paragraph).

For the internal master inflow per September 2009, a total of 815 students registered. Of these, 684 students received an admission statement, among whom 42 student of the General Management programme who were admitted to their specialization year. A total of 131 students received a denial.

In the master admission per September 2009, the Examination Board received 86 requests to deviate from the rules on the basis of hardship or personal circumstances. In 73 cases, they agreed, among which 60 'conditional' admissions (no extra examination opportunities, exclusion from participating in the Master Electives of block 3 and 4, a compulsory English course at the EUR Language Centre). These special cases resulted in a large peak load for the Examination Board during the last two weeks of August.

The admission requests of transfer students are processed by the RSM's Admissions Office under the responsibility of the Chairman of the Examination Board. Unlike internal students, external transfer students can only start their master programmes per 1 September. In 2009, 227 students from outside the faculty were *directly* admitted to the master programmes. Of that number, 141 students received an admission statement based on both their previous education that has to equal the final level of the bachelor programmes and their GMAT and TOEFL scores. Furthermore, 63 students were admitted to the foundation year of the two-year General Management programme and 23 students to the one and a half year IM CEMS degree programme.

c. The guest regulation

As well as the official Master admission, there also is a **guest regulation** in operation: the Examination Board decides which students may participate as 'exchange student' in a Master Elective, without being admitted to the MScBA. The most important objective of this is to prevent too long a period without an offer of a study course for students that only slightly do not fulfil the master admission requirements in February, but are seen as capable of participating in an optional course (master elective). This is in contrast with the master admission in September which involves participation in the core courses. The core courses demand a greater preliminary knowledge, in order not to disturb progress within the group. An important point in the guest regulation is that the participation in master electives can only occur if there are places 'available'. The regular master students always have priority. Furthermore, in April there is no transition moment for block 4, because between the end of the bachelor trimester-2 and the beginning of the master elective block 4 there is insufficient time to correct the trimester-2 examinations. Here, it must be noted that the participation requirements were a lot stricter in 2009 than in the five years prior (a maximum of 2 open courses instead of 3).

1. Evaluation of the participation of the 27 students in the guest regulation block 3-2009 has shown that 11 students did not fulfil the master admission requirements per September 2009, but did pass their master electives, meaning they had probably set their priorities incorrectly;
2. Evaluation of the participation of the 30 students in the guest regulation block 4-2009 has shown that 4 students did not fulfil the master admission requirements per September 2009. From this group, only 11 students managed to pass both open bachelor courses. In other words, probably meaning they had set their priorities incorrectly. Remarkably, this related to failing the third year course Financial Accounting.

Based on the above it can be concluded that the 'guest regulations' have been abolished per September 2009 in the run up to the introduction of the '*harde knip*' (i.e: the bachelor-before-master rule which states that students have to obtain a full bachelor's degree before they can start a master's programme). The guest regulations were introduced in 2004 on behalf of HBO transfer students and were put into effect later for *all* students (BA and IBA).

4. Preview

Unknown, unloved. The Examination Board cannot carry out its duties properly if the faculty as a whole is unaware of the tasks and powers of the Board. Why should lecturers and students adhere to rules and instructions of a Board that is not visible? Who cares about rules if there are no consequences?

It is of vital importance to the Examination Board that its work is visible both internally and externally. The distribution of annual reports can help. In 2009, a start was made to send Newsletters – E-topics – to the academic staff, not only to keep the lecturers informed but also specifically because of the exposure. Furthermore, the Examination Board joined the Dutch Association for Exams in 2009, and visited a symposium about fraud organized by them.

The Examination Board intends to put even more emphasis on internal exposure in 2010. Not only by spreading the annual report, or sending more E-topics but also specifically by organizing small-scale symposia to seek the debate with lecturers and students.

In 2010, the contact with lecturers will be strengthened in particular. We think about another, more involved way of monitoring the exams where professionalism and continuous improvement are paramount. Furthermore, giving tools to teachers, such as an Examination Manual, could help in this respect and is therefore top priority.

Finally, the chairmen of all EUR Examination Boards have proposed to draw up a protocol for professional conduct for students. Following the example of the Faculty of Medicine, the Examination Board will consider whether such a protocol could also be drawn up for students of (International) Business Administration.

5. Appendices

Appendix A. Tasks of the Examination Board

Generally, the following components can be discerned:

1. *A supervisory responsibility for / with regard to exams and examinations.* This responsibility is manifested in the competence of the Examination Board to:
 - a. award the certificate of the degree;
 - b. appoint the examiners;
 - c. control the quality of exams and examinations;
 - d. take disciplinary action in case of fraud;
 - e. supervise the practice of the examination rules with due observance of the common legal principles like equality, legal security, legitimacy, reasonableness, fair play and so on;
 - f. be a mediator or even a defendant in case of disputes or appeals.
2. *Legislation:* the Examination Board makes Rules and Guidelines concerning the examinations, for example rules for enrolment, rules concerning order during examinations, fraud, assessment criteria, classifications (like cum laude). Once a year new Rules and Guidelines are drawn up.
3. To grant exemptions from the rules in individual cases. *Tasks that are further defined in the Teaching and Examinations Regulation or 'Onderwijs- en Examenregeling'* (TER or OER) established by (or on behalf of) the dean. This concerns the granting of exemption by the OER in individual cases due to personal circumstances or on grounds of the hardship clause (if a rule in an individual case leads to unreasonable consequences). A few examples are: the granting of exemptions for subjects, the admission to the premaster programmes with regard to the master programme, the granting of transition to the Master programme, the interim advice within the framework of the binding study advice, the adjustment of the norm of the binding study advice in the case of personal circumstances, granting an extra and/or accelerated examinations opportunities, the establishment of a free master programme.
4. In addition, on behalf of the Dean of the Rotterdam School of Management, the chairman of the Examination Board grants *admission statements* to the MSc-programmes.
5. *Advisory tasks:* three times a year the Examination Board issues an advice to every first year student concerning his success-rate. Furthermore the Examination Board advises the Dean regarding his Teaching and Examination Regulations.
6. *Other,* such as delegations in selection committees and the 'colloquium doctum' committee.

Appendix B. Students per programme 2007, 2008 en 2009

Programme	2007	2008	2009	CROHO	language	ects	Ft/pt
BScBA*	2250	2327	2585	50015	Ned.	180	ft
BScIBA*	1160	1209	1249	50952	Eng.	180	ft
MScBA**	1930	2175	2035	60644	Eng.	60	ft
PTO	300	301	273	60644	Ned.	60	ft
MScIm/CEMS	220	155	125	60256	Eng.	90	ft
MScGM	72	103	107	-60644	Eng.	120	ft
MPhil	30	27	21	60313	Eng.	120	ft
Hbo-premaster NL	550	396	274	-	Ned.	65	ft
Hbo-premaster EN	110	96	102	-	Eng.	65	ft
totaal	6622	6789	6771				

Appendix C. Report of advice to the Dean regarding tuition fee waivers

Since September 2005 it is possible on a limited scale for English language Master Programmes to grant waivers to students from outside the European Economic Area, the EEA: the waiver implies that the student in question is seen as equal to a student having the nationality of a member state of the EEA. The waiver is an extension of the course fee. The quality demands that a student must fulfil to be considered for a waiver are established in the OER. Furthermore, no more than 25% of the intake of students from outside EEA may receive a waiver. These waivers are further supplied by the Dean and up to the present time the Examination Board have prepared the advice and letters.

Due to the increasing intake of external Master students, the implementation of time frames for graduation and the considerable rise in tuition fees for non-EEA students, the number of applications for waivers on the basis of 'financial need' increased. The Examination Board has no proper view of the possibilities that exist for such cases and also no view of the volume/numbers of non-EEA-students. Consequently it is desirable that this decision-making occurs closer to 'the source'. Therefore, this task was completely transferred to the MScBA programme management in September/October 2009, which seeks advice with the student advisers in cases of financial need and 'personal circumstances'.

In total **17** waiver applications were passed on to programme management in the period from January up until October 2009.