

## **Utrecht University Code of Conduct on the Language of Instruction**

Based on article 7.2 of the Dutch law on Higher Education and Scientific Research (WHW), this code of conduct has been adopted by the Executive Board with consent of the University Council on March 27, 2018, and is a guideline ex article 9.5 WHW.

### **Artikel 7.2 WHW**

Het onderwijs wordt gegeven en de examens worden afgenoem in het Nederlands. In afwijking van de eerste volzin kan een andere taal worden gebezigd:

- a. wanneer het een opleiding met betrekking tot die taal betreft,
- b. wanneer het onderwijs betreft dat in het kader van een gastcollege door een anderstalige docent gegeven wordt, of
- c. indien de specifieke aard, inrichting of kwaliteit van het onderwijs, dan wel de herkomst van de studenten daartoe noodzaakt, overeenkomstig een door het instellingsbestuur vastgestelde gedragscode.

Approximate translation:

Education will be provided and exams will be taken in Dutch. In exception to the first sentence, another language may be used:

- a) when the subject of instruction is the language concerned
- b) when it involves instruction by a guest lecturer or non-Dutch speaking lecturer, or
- c) if the specific nature, set up, or quality of education, or else necessitated by the origin of the students, in accordance with a code of conduct established by the administration of the institution.

## **Preamble**

The Executive Board of Utrecht University adopts the following code of conduct,

Considering that:

- it is important that upon graduation, students have the international and intercultural skills to function in a globalised labour market;
- many programmes at Utrecht University therefore create an international learning environment with a student population of Dutch and international students, which leads to necessary choices related to the language of instruction;
- the language proficiency needed for the Dutch or international labour market be taken into account;
- it is advisable that Bachelor's programmes in Dutch prepare their graduates for admission to Master's programmes in English;
- the university aims to offer internationally competitive master's programmes that reflect the university's research activities and attract talented (inter)national students;
- it is advisable to establish rules with respect to the language of instruction and the language of examination in a guideline to Deans of the faculty.

## **Article 1 – Scope**

1. This code of conduct determines the language of instruction and the language of examinations and tests for all Utrecht University programmes, hereinafter: the language instruction.
2. This code of conduct applies to all publicly funded Bachelor's and Master's programmes listed in the Utrecht University Register of Study Programmes (URO), excepting those programmes that study a specific language.

## **Article 2 – The bachelor's programme**

1. As a rule, the language of instruction in bachelor's programmes is Dutch.
2. Individual components of the curriculum, including tests and exams, can be offered in English or in another language if:
  - a. the curriculum component is taught by international lecturers,
  - b. it is deemed necessary for the curriculum component that students acquire intercultural and

- c. international skills in an international classroom setting (e.g. with exchange students),
  - c. it is deemed necessary for that part of the curriculum that students acquire speaking or writing skills in English or in another language, or
  - d. the curriculum component prepares students for the entry requirements of a master's programme in another language, and participation in this curriculum component demonstrably meets students' need to prepare for such a programme.
3. If deemed appropriate, the language of instruction of a bachelor's programme can also be English or another language, or a programme can be offered in more than one language. The appropriateness of English or another language as language of instruction is determined by the international orientation of a programme in terms of its academic field of study or the fact that it prepares students for a specific field or professional career. In addition, English or another language of instruction may be deemed appropriate if its use is required by the specific nature, structure, or quality of the programme, or by the students' countries of origin. If the language of instruction is English, specific curriculum components, including tests and exams, can be offered in another language if it is deemed necessary for the component that students acquire speaking or writing skills in English or in another language, provided this does not negatively affect the learning outcomes of the programme.
4. The bachelor's programme is organised in such a way that the graduate meets the entry requirements with respect to the English language for Master's programmes taught in English at Utrecht University.

### **Article 3 – The master's programme**

- 1. In the master's programme, the language of instruction, where appropriate, is English or another language. The appropriateness of English or another language as language of instruction is determined by the international orientation of a programme in terms of its academic field of study, or by the fact that it prepares students for a specific field or professional career. In addition, English or another language of instruction may be deemed appropriate if its use is required by the specific nature, structure, or quality of the programme, or by the students' countries of origin.
- 2. If the language of instruction is Dutch, some curriculum components, including accompanying tests, may be offered in English or another language if:
  - a. the curriculum component is taught by international lecturers,
  - b. it is deemed necessary for the curriculum component that students acquire intercultural and international skills in an international classroom setting (e.g. with exchange students),
  - c. it is deemed necessary for the curriculum component that students acquire speaking and writing skills in English or another language.
- 3. If the language of instruction is English, a specific curriculum component, including a test or an exam, may be offered in another language if it is deemed necessary for this component that students acquire speaking and writing skills in another language, provided this does not negatively affect the learning outcomes of the programme.

### **Article 4 – Specifying the language of instruction**

- 1. The language(s) of instruction for each programme are registered in:
  - a. the University Register of Study Programmes (URO)
  - b. the Education and Examination Regulations (OER) of the programme
- 2. The Osiris course catalogue specifies the language of instruction of each curriculum component.

### **Article 5 –Level of language proficiency**

Within each faculty, the Dean of the faculty is responsible for ensuring an adequate level of language proficiency of all staff members appointed to teach in a bachelor's or master's programme.