

VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT AMSTERDAM



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EXAMINATION APPEALS BOARD

No. 2019/70/914

EXAMINATIONS APPEALS BOARD

Pronouncing its ruling on the appeal of Mr [name] appellant, resident in [residence], against the assessment of the Interviews Skills 1 examination by Dr L. Genet, examiner of the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences (Psychology) of the Vrije Universiteit, defendant.

I. Course of the proceedings

The appellant submitted an appeal by undated letter against the decision of the defendant dated 31 July 2019. The notice of appeal was received on 6 August 2019 – and therefore in good time – but did not fulfil the legal requirements. On 12 August 2019 the appellant was requested to supply the missing details before 24 August 2019. The appellant complied with this request on 22 August 2019. The other requirements were fulfilled.

On 26 August 2019 it was communicated on behalf of the Examinations Appeals Board to the Examination Board that the prescribed procedure requires that the Examination Board, in consultation with the appellant and the examiner, investigates whether an amicable resolution of the dispute is possible. The Examination Board notified the appellant to this end in a timely manner. However, an amicable resolution did not come about.

On 14 October 2019 the Examination Board submitted a notice of appeal. The appeal was handled at a meeting of the Board on 21 November 2019.

The appellant did not appear. The Examination Board was represented by Dr M. Sijbrandij and Dr M. Milders, chairperson and vice-chairperson respectively of the Examination Board. The Examination Board made an oral presentation of its standpoint.

II. Facts and dispute

On the basis of the documents and the proceedings of the session, the Board has proceeded on the assumption of the following facts.

The appellant has been following the Psychology (English track) programme since September 2018. The appellant attained an insufficient mark (1.6) for the subject Interviews Skills 1, whereas he is of the opinion that he was in any event entitled to the mark 5.5.

The appellant is a lecturer at the University of Amsterdam, and older than the average fellow student. The appellant is of the opinion that that is the reason why his work was assessed differently to that of his fellow students.

The Examination Board explained that the final mark for the subject Interviews Skills 1 consists of partial results, namely an interview assignment and a reflection report (90% of the final mark). Furthermore,

presence at and active participation in the work groups is obligatory (10%). The appellant's reflection report was assessed with a mark of 1.6. This low mark is explained by the appellant not having written large parts of the report.

The Examination Board is aware that special circumstances play a part with the appellant. He was therefore referred to the academic advisor.

III. Course of the hearing

The Examination Board set out that during the meeting to attempt to reach an amicable resolution the appellant gave insight into his health situation. The appellant's academic performance was possibly influenced by this. The appellant was advised by the Examination Board to contact the academic advisor to discuss his situation.

The appellant had omitted large parts of the reflection report that formed a component of the subject. The assessment of the report takes place on the basis of rubrics. If no text is supplied by the student for a particular component, no points are awarded. It has not become clear to the Examination Board why the appellant is of the opinion that he should in any event have been awarded a 5.5.

IV. Considerations of the Board

The Board has taken cognizance of the appellant's notice of appeal. The appellant has no other reason for his appeal than his assertion that he was assessed in a different way to his fellow students. The appellant did not substantiate his assertion. The Board is of the opinion that discrimination is not apparent from the supplied documents. The Board determines that the manner in which the assessment came about was in accordance with the applicable procedure. All things considered, the defendant came to his decision in a reasonable manner.

Finally, the Board notes that the conversion of the points that are awarded to a student per rubric is not clear. Moreover, the calculation of an assessment should proceed transparently.

V. Judgement

The Board declares the appeal unfounded.

Pronounced in Amsterdam, on 10 December 2019, by Dr N. Rozemond, chairperson, and Prof. M.W. Hofkes and Dr J.R. Hulst, members, in the presence of J.G. Bekker, secretary.

Dr N. Rozemond,
chairperson

J.G. Bekker,
secretary

The person concerned can submit an appeal against a judgement of the Examination Appeals Board, stating a sound justification, to the Higher Education Appeals Tribunal, Postbus 16137, 2500 BC The Hague. The term for the submission of a notice of appeal is six weeks. The registry fee is €47.00.