

Besluit

Besluit strekkende tot het verlenen van accreditatie aan de opleiding wo-onderzoeksmaster Communicatie- & Informatiewetenschappen (research) van Tilburg University

Gegevens

datum	Naam instelling	: Tilburg University
30 juni 2017	Naam opleiding	: wo-onderzoeksmaster Communicatie- & Informatiewetenschappen (research) (120 EC)
onderwerp		
Besluit	Datum aanvraag	: 25 juli 2016
accreditatie	Variant opleiding	: voltijd
wo-onderzoeksmaster	Locatie opleiding	: Tilburg
Communicatie- & Informatiewetenschappen (research) van Tilburg University	Datum goedkeuren panel	: 18 maart 2016
(005039)	Datum locatiebezoeken	: 21 en 22 april 2016
uw kenmerk	Datum visitatierapport	: 23 juni 2016
213.6087		
ons kenmerk	Instellingstoets kwaliteitszorg	: ja, positief besluit van 3 april 2013

Aanvullende informatie

NVAO/20171574/LL De NVAO heeft bij brief van 22 november 2016 de instelling aanvullende informatie gevraagd over de mate waarin het panel zijn oordeel heeft afgestemd op de oordelen van de KNAW-commissie die de voorgaande beoordeling heeft uitgevoerd. Het panel is gevraagd aan te geven toe te lichten op welke gronden het voor de standaarden 2, 3 en 4 een hoger oordeel (goed) ten opzichte van de vorige beoordeling gerechtvaardigd acht. Bij brief van 13 april 2017 heeft de NVAO de aanvullende informatie ontvangen. De NVAO heeft de aanvullende informatie in haar oordeelsvorming betrokken.

Beoordelingskaders

Beoordelingskader voor de beperkte opleidingsbeoordeling van de NVAO (Stcrt. 2014, nr 36791).

Richtlijn beoordeling onderzoeksmasters vanaf 1 september 2015 van de NVAO d.d. 23 april 2015

Bevindingen

De NVAO stelt vast dat in het visitatierapport en de aanvullende informatie deugdelijk en kenbaar is gemotiveerd op welke gronden het panel de kwaliteit van de opleiding goed heeft bevonden. Het visitatierapport geeft de bevindingen en overwegingen weer van het panel

Pagina 2 van 6 over de opleidingen wo-onderzoeksmaster Taalwetenschappen (research) van de Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen en wo-onderzoeksmaster Communicatie- & Informatiewetenschappen (research) van Tilburg University. Het panel heeft beide opleidingen gezamenlijk beoordeeld.

In de aanvullende informatie wijst het panel op een aantal vernieuwingen in het curriculum, de intensievere loopbaanbegeleiding en de strenge selectie waarmee de opleiding uitstekende en gemotiveerde studenten weet te werven. Ter onderbouwing van het oordeel goed op de standaarden 2 en 4 wijst het panel op de bovengemiddelde kwaliteit van leeromgeving en staf, de kwaliteit van de theses en het succes van afgestudeerden op de arbeidsmarkt.

Advies van het visitatiepanel

Samenvatting bevindingen en overwegingen van het panel.

The research master's programme Language and Communication is a two-year programme offered jointly by the universities of Nijmegen (Radboud University) and Tilburg (Tilburg University). Its aim is to develop its students into junior researchers in the domains of linguistics and communication sciences, able to successfully and independently initiate their own high-quality research. The research approach is characterised by a strong emphasis on empirical and quantitative data.

The programme's objectives have been formulated in ten learning outcomes. From these, the panel concludes that the academic master level is clear: students will have acquired general theoretical and methodological knowledge in the fields of language and communication and more thorough knowledge in their area of specialisation. The skills and abilities are strongly geared to research skills and a critical academic attitude. The panel recognises that the emphasis on these research skills and critical academic attitude distinguishes the research master's programme from the one-year master's programmes. The profile of the programme is less clear: the programme is registered under two separate CROHO labels and both universities have their own marketing strategies, administrative systems and regulations. Re-structuring the programme as a joint degree, possibly with one or more foreign partners, could strengthen the profile and visibility of the programme. The panel assesses Standard 1 as satisfactory.

On the basis of the written documentation and the meetings during the site visit, the panel has ascertained to which degree the teaching-learning environment enables the students to achieve the intended learning outcomes. The panel has paid special attention to the specific requirements for a research master programme. The curriculum consists of classroom-based substantive and methodological courses on the one hand and practical research involvement on the other. The contents of the curriculum provide a sound mix of breadth and depth and are up to date. Students have a large degree of freedom to build their own research profile by selecting from the broad offering of elective courses. These courses are either developed specifically for the research master students or require extra assignments in case they are also attended by students of a one-year master programme. In addition, the students define the topics for their term paper, internships, grant proposal writing and thesis. In practice, this freedom works well because of the quality and motivation of the students. The panel advises paying more explicit attention to programme-wide topics, such as ethics and data science. The didactic approach and study guidance are good, preparing the students for their role as researchers. They gain experience in all stages of the research

Pagina 3 van 6 cycle and are guided in their choices by a tutor and the programme coordinators. The admission procedures are appropriate. Selection is based on the academic background of the applicants (disciplinary and methodological knowledge and level of grades), their English proficiency and their motivation. It is clear that the programme has been able to attract a high-quality group of students, both from the Netherlands and from abroad. A minority of students completes the programme in two years. Generally, the delays are not caused by a lack of guidance. In fact, quite a few students make a strategic choice to extend their study time. Nevertheless, the panel advises monitoring the students' progress closely. Both the quality and quantity of staff are excellent. They are experienced researchers, participating in high-quality research groups, active in international projects and supervising a substantial number of PhD candidates. They are motivated to contribute to the research master programme. Their substantive expertise and didactic qualities, combined with the research activities such as seminars and colloquia, the cooperation with PhD students, and the experimental facilities, provide an excellent research context to the programme. The budgetary arrangements are satisfactory, the bilocation presents some administrative problems. The panel advises stimulating more international exchange, especially for Dutch students. Summing up, the panel assesses Standard 2 as good.

The general assessment principles are described in the critical reflection. Both universities have their own Education and Examination Regulations. They agree on the main points, but there are slight differences, e.g. in the calculation of distinctions. The assessments are generally appropriate for the learning goals and allow the students to show their abilities. Most assessments are based on individual work, mostly a written report. A programme-wide assessment plan and assessment system are still under development. For a number of courses grading is on a pass/fail scale. The panel advises reconsidering this practice, partly because it may contribute to the very high number of distinctions, compared with other universities, but also because it does not allow sufficient differentiation among students. All students end the programme with a Research Master Thesis. The thesis is graded by the first and second reader independently, on the basis of the thesis assessment form. The forms used in Nijmegen and Tilburg are slightly different. The panel recommends developing one thesis assessment form to be used both in Tilburg and Nijmegen. The panel finds the thesis to be a valid indicator of the intended learning outcomes. The panel appreciates the role of the joint Examination Board, both as regards the admission procedure and the quality of assessment. The panel advises an additional role for the Examination Board in monitoring the coherence of the students' individual programmes. The work of the Examination Board would be less complicated if the research master programme would continue as a joint degree. The panel assesses Standard 3 as satisfactory.

In order to assess the achieved learning outcomes the panel has studied a sample of recent theses as an internal indicator, and has examined the graduates' success in a research career as an external indicator. The panel is impressed by the high quality and academic level of the fifteen theses it examined. The panel agrees with all grades and would have given almost identical marks. All students present the outcomes of an empirical study. The research hypotheses are well-formulated and are always followed by a state-of-the-art section. The methods sections provide clear descriptions of the data collection. Results are presented and discussed in a correct manner. Both alumni and staff members emphasize that the students are able to perform the (sometimes complex) statistical techniques for analysing the data. The limitations and implications of the research are clearly stated. The students also formulate pertinent ideas for future research. A number of theses could lead to

Pagina 4 van 6 an academic publication, in fact, some graduates succeeded in publishing articles in peer-reviewed journals based on their thesis. A number of theses is truly interdisciplinary, while most are either focused on linguistics or on communication, with a fairly high number of theses characterised by a cognitive approach. This reflects the research topics of the staff members involved in the programme and is in line with the freedom for each student to develop his/her own specialisation. This internal indicator is corroborated by the external indicator: the graduates' success in securing a PhD position or finding another appropriate employment.

The programme is obviously able to provide the students with the necessary knowledge and skills and, in addition, the staff members play a positive role in helping graduates to get started in the career they aim for. The panel assesses Standard 4 as good.

Besluit

Ingevolge het bepaalde in artikel 5a.10, derde lid, van de WHW heeft de NVAO het college van bestuur van de Tilburg University te Tilburg in de gelegenheid gesteld zijn zienswijze op het voornemen tot besluit van 8 mei 2017 naar voren te brengen. Bij e-mail van 12 juni 2017 heeft de instelling van deze gelegenheid gebruik gemaakt te reageren. Dit heeft geleid tot een tekstuele aanpassing.

De NVAO besluit accreditatie te verlenen aan de wo-onderzoeksmaster Communicatie- & Informatiewetenschappen (research) (120 EC; variant: voltijd; locatie: Tilburg) van Tilburg University te Tilburg. De NVAO beoordeelt de kwaliteit van de opleiding als goed.

Dit besluit treedt in werking op 30 juni 2017 en is van kracht tot en met 29 juni 2023.

Den Haag, 30 juni 2017

De NVAO
Voor deze:

b/c 

Dr. A.H. Flierman
(voorzitter)

Paul Zevenbergen
Bestuurder

Tegen dit besluit kan op grond van het bepaalde in de Algemene wet bestuursrecht door een belanghebbende bezwaar worden gemaakt bij de NVAO. De termijn voor het indienen van bezwaar bedraagt zes weken.

Onderwerp	Standaard	Beoordeling door het panel
1. Beoogde eindkwalificaties	De beoogde eindkwalificaties van de opleiding zijn wat betreft inhoud, niveau en oriëntatie geconcretiseerd en voldoen aan internationale eisen.	Voldoende
2. Onderwijsleeromgeving	Het programma, het personeel en de opleidingsspecifieke voorzieningen maken het voor de instromende studenten mogelijk de beoogde eindkwalificaties te realiseren.	Goed
3. Toetsing	De opleiding beschikt over een adequaat systeem van toetsing.	Voldoende
4. Gerealiseerde eindkwalificaties	De opleiding toont aan dat de beoogde eindkwalificaties worden gerealiseerd.	Goed
Eindoordeel		Goed

De standaarden krijgen het oordeel onvoldoende, voldoende, goed of excellent. Het eindoordeel over de opleiding als geheel wordt op dezelfde schaal gegeven.

Pagina 6 van 6 **Bijlage 2: panelsamenstelling**

- Prof. dr. Maarten Mous, (voorzitter) Professor of African Linguistics, Leiden University;
- Prof. dr. Susanne Janssen, (lid) Professor of Sociology of Media and Culture, Erasmus University Rotterdam;
- Prof. dr. Marie-Francine Moens, (lid) Professor of Language Intelligence and Information Retrieval, KU Leuven, Belgium;
- Prof. dr. Dominiek Sandra, (lid) Professor of Psycholinguistics and General Linguistics, University of Antwerp, Belgium;
- Saar Hommes BA, (student-lid) Student research master Language and Cognition, University of Groningen.

Het panel werd ondersteund door dr. Marianne van der Weiden, secretaris (gecertificeerd).