



# **BA International Studies**

(wo-bachelor)

Leiden University

30 July 2014

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# 1 Executive Summary

The bachelor's programme International Studies is offered by the Faculty of Humanities of Leiden University on the premises of Campus The Hague. The programme has started in 2012 as a specialisation within the bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences: Global Challenges, of which the other specialisations are offered by the Leiden University College (Faculty Campus The Hague). Leiden University intends to offer International Studies as a separate bachelor's programme.

## *Standard 1. Intended learning outcomes*

International Studies is a multi- and interdisciplinary programme which builds on four pillars: culture, history, politics and economics. Students choose one region in which they specialise and learn a language which is widely used in that area. The combination of multidisciplinary knowledge, geographic specialisation and a comparative approach distinguishes the programme from other Area Studies programmes and from programmes in International Relations. The panel assesses the programme as ambitious and noted during the discussions with students and potential employers that they find the programme's approach very attractive. Because the title International Studies is also used by programmes with a different perspective, it is important that students and potential employers know what to expect. The panel, therefore, advises to be absolutely clear about the programme's mission, its contents and objectives to avoid misunderstandings.

The aim of the programme is to promote the student's academic development in terms of knowledge, understanding and skills in the field of International Studies to such an extent that graduates are able to work in positions in an international environment at a graduate level and that they meet the entry requirements for admission to related master's programmes. The panel concludes that the intended learning outcomes of the programme meet the international requirements of similar programmes. They are clearly described, linked to the Dublin descriptors and appropriate for an academic bachelor's programme.

The panel assesses standard 1 'Intended learning outcomes' as satisfactory.

## *Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment*

The panel has studied the curriculum and course materials and concludes that the structure of the curriculum is well thought out and has a feasible study load. The contents of the courses and the literature enable the students to achieve the intended learning outcomes. The curriculum progresses from general introductory courses in Area Studies and the four core disciplines to the specialised courses 'by area' and, finally, to the comparative courses with a global perspective. The contents of the four core disciplines are selected to enhance the students' understanding of regions in a comparative global and international context instead of, more traditionally, the knowledge base of the disciplines in themselves. The panel finds this an interesting and legitimate choice, which explains the rather idiosyncratic contents of e.g. the Economics courses. Both the international mix of staff members and the international student body and their input in the tutorial groups contribute to the global flavour of the programme.

The panel is impressed by the degree of choice that students have within the structure of the programme. Study coordinators can advise the students to select the best options. After the first semester they choose a region and language in which they specialise. They have a choice of two electives in the second and third year. In the first semester of the third year students can choose for a minor, a study abroad or an internship. In this discretionary space students can either broaden or

deepen their knowledge and prepare themselves for a specific master's programme or employment. In the final semester they write a thesis in the context of a research seminar. Thesis seminars will be offered on the eight regions of specialisation, on the four pillars (core disciplines) and on the comparative approach.

Courses are mostly taught in a combination of (sometimes large-scale) lectures and tutorials. The programme aims at small-scale teaching and close contacts between staff and students as characteristic features of the curriculum. In addition, students are expected to make many written assignments and prepare oral presentations. The tutorial groups are therefore essential. The rapid growth of the programme (over 350 students in 2012-2013 and more than 500 in 2013-2014) did not always allow for a perfect match between a tutor's expertise and the course(s) in which he or she was teaching. With new appointments in 2014-2015, better matches should be possible. Also, consistency problems between different lecturers in the 'by area' courses and between lecturers and tutors were mentioned in the information dossier as points to be improved. Coordination has already been strengthened to remedy this. To maintain balance between quality and scale, the panel recommends that the management investigate how the distinctive features of the teaching-learning environment can be maintained during such a rapid growth and if there is a maximum number of students that can be accommodated.

The programme is taught by a substantial group of experienced and well-qualified lecturers. They all have a PhD degree and combine research and teaching. Together, they cover the range of disciplines and regions of the International Studies programme. The tutors are mostly young members of staff. They are guided by a senior tutor and guidelines are available for each course. These guidelines and the other coordination efforts contribute to the consistency between the tutors and to the quality of their teaching. The Educational Committee monitors the quality of the programme and advises the Programme Board on the basis of student evaluations.

In addition to the general programme management and administration, the programme has a number of support staff for specific components of the programme (coordinator internships and study abroad) and to advise the students (study coordinators and advisers). For the large and international group of students of the programme, this is an asset. The programme is taught at the Campus The Hague, where sufficient facilities and services, such as a library, are available.

The panel assesses standard 2 'Teaching-learning environment' as satisfactory.

### *Standard 3. Assessment*

The panel has checked the Course and Examination Regulations 2014-2015, and found these to be in order. The Board of Examiners has drawn up adequate rules and procedures to check the quality of examinations, deal with requests for exemptions and individual study packages, cases of plagiarism etc. On the basis of the discussions during the site visit, the panel concludes that the Board of Examiners is accessible and ambitious, is aware of its responsibilities, has developed good procedures and is in control of the quality of assessment of the International Studies programme.

Each course is assessed by multiple assessments to reflect the different learning objectives (knowledge, skills). The assignments and exams reflect the learning objectives of the courses. Their validity, reliability and transparency to the students and assessors are checked by the Board of Examiners. Since the programme has been organised since 2012, as a specialisation within the bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences: Global Challenges, the panel was

able to take the achieved learning outcomes of BA1 and BA2 into account. The panel has checked a number of assignments and exams made by the students. These show that the students achieve in general sufficient depth of knowledge and skills in the course of the programme.

The panel assesses standard 3 'Assessment' as satisfactory.

*Standard 4. Graduation guarantee and financial provisions*

Leiden University guarantees that students who have been admitted to the programme, can complete the entire curriculum. The university makes sufficient financial provisions available for the period in which the programme does not yet yield sufficient revenues to cover the costs of the programme. Based on the large number of students who are interested in the programme, the panel concludes that International Studies is a viable programme.

The panel assesses standard 4 'Graduation guarantee and financial provisions' as satisfactory.

The panel confirms that the International Studies programme is multi- and interdisciplinary, as can be seen from both its objectives and its curriculum. The panel, therefore, confirms the allocation of sector(s) as suggested by the applicant: cross-sectoral.

Given these considerations, the panel advises NVAO to take a positive decision regarding the quality of the new bachelor's programme in International Studies offered by Leiden University at its Campus in The Hague.

The Hague, 30 July 2014

Prof. dr. ir. Kees Mouwen  
(chair)

Dr. Marianne van der Weiden  
(secretary)

## 2 Procedure

### 2.1 Process

Macro-efficiency	13 December 2013
Application	5 March 2014 (additional material 8 May 2014)
Composition panel	12 May 2014
Site visit	11 & 12 June 2014 (The Hague)
Panel report	30 July 2014 (Draft report: 2 July 2014)

### 2.2 Panel

Composition of the panel:

- Prof. dr. ir. Kees Mouwen, former Board Member of Tilburg University, and Emeritus Professor in Strategy and Governance in the Non-profit Sector (*chair*);
- Prof. dr. Laurent Boetsch, Professor of Romance Languages and Director of International Education Office of International Education, Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Virginia;
- Dr. John Meadowcroft, Head of the Department of Political Economy, School of Social Science & Public Policy, King's College London;
- Florine Boeding, MA Student Communication and Organisation, Utrecht University (*student member*).

Assisting staff:

- Dr. Marianne van der Weiden, secretary to the panel;
- Michèle Wera, MA, policy advisor NVAO and process coordinator.

### 2.3 Assessment framework

The framework for limited assessments of new programmes (Stcrt. 2010, nr 21523) is used for institutions that have obtained a positive judgement following an institutional quality assurance assessment. The assessment is based on a discussion with peers regarding the content and quality of the programme. It focuses on four questions:

1. What is the programme aiming for?
2. How does the programme intend to achieve its objectives?
3. How does the programme intend to assess its performance?
4. Does the programme have sufficient financial resources?

These four questions have been translated into four standards. Regarding each of these standards, an assessment panel gives a substantiated judgement on a two-point scale: satisfactory or unsatisfactory. The panel subsequently gives a substantiated final conclusion regarding the quality of the programme, on the same two-point scale.

*Generic quality* – The quality that can reasonably be expected in an international perspective from a higher education bachelor's or master's programme.

*Positive* – The programme meets the generic quality standards.

*Negative* – The programme does not meet the generic quality standards.

For programmes that are not entirely new such as the one under review, the achieved learning outcomes need also be taken into account. This could be done for the first two years of the curriculum (BA1 and BA2), BA3 is still under development.

## 3 Programme

### 3.1 Administrative data

Country	The Netherlands
Institution	Leiden University (positive NVAO decision institutional quality assurance assessment: 2 July 2013 until 1 July 2019)
Programme	International Studies
Level	bachelor
Orientation	academic (wo <sup>1</sup> )
Credits	180 EC
Location	The Hague
Mode of study	full-time
Field of study	cross-sectoral (as confirmed by the panel)

### 3.2 University

Leiden University is a research university, founded in 1575, offering approximately fifty academic bachelor's and a hundred academic master's programmes to more than 23,000 students. The university employs over 4,000 staff members (3,404 fte) and is organised in seven faculties, six of which are based in Leiden. The seventh, Campus The Hague, is located in The Hague.

### 3.3 Programme

The bachelor's programme International Studies is offered by the Faculty of Humanities on the premises of Campus The Hague. The programme has started in 2012 as a specialisation within the bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences: Global Challenges, of which the other specialisations are offered by the Leiden University College (Faculty Campus The Hague). International Studies is a multi- and interdisciplinary programme which builds on four pillars: culture, history, politics and economics. Students choose one region in which they specialise and learn a language which is widely used in that area. The programme applies an explicitly comparative approach. The programme attracted more than 350 students in 2012 and over 500 in 2013. Forty per cent of the students come from abroad.

Leiden University intends to offer International Studies as a separate bachelor's programme. This request was approved by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. It distinguishes itself from specific Area Studies programmes in Leiden and other Dutch universities through its comparative nature and from other programmes in International Studies through its global approach and its focus on the humanities.

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<sup>1</sup> wo = wetenschappelijk onderwijs

### 3.4 Standard 1 – Intended learning outcomes

*The intended learning outcomes of the programme have been concretised with regard to content, level and orientation; they meet international requirements.*

The curriculum and organisation of the independent International Studies programme will be identical to those of International Studies as a specialisation within the bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences: Global Challenges. Therefore, the descriptions and judgments of the first two years of the curriculum (BA1 and BA2) are not only based on the information dossier but also on the experiences of staff and students as discussed with the panel during the site visit. The panel's assessment of the final year (BA3) could only be based on the information dossier and the discussions during the site visit about the programme as intended.

#### *Findings*

The information dossier describes the programme International Studies as an Area Studies programme with an explicit interdisciplinary, global and comparative approach, based on four pillars: culture, history, politics and economics. Students choose one region in which they specialise and they learn a language which is widely used in this area. Each of the four pillars is studied from both the global perspective and the perspective of the chosen geographical area. The panel notes that the programme management has clearly chosen for International Studies as an Area Studies programme, while another possibility would have been to define International Studies as the study of International Relations with a stronger focus on law and political science. The chosen aim of the programme corresponds to the aim of comparable programmes abroad, as described in the QAAHE (Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education) benchmark on Area Studies (2008). The panel finds this a legitimate choice.

This choice has led to a specific interpretation of the four pillars, especially of economics and political science. The panel will discuss this in more detail under standard 2.

During the site visit, the panel found that the interdisciplinary approach and the comparative character of the programme were confirmed in the discussions with the programme management and the staff members. They could clearly describe the background and purpose of the programme. Students told the panel that especially the combination of a global perspective and a regional specialisation attracted them. They also appreciate the interdisciplinary approach, transcending the traditional disciplinary boundaries, and the chance to learn a relevant language.

The panel also met with representatives of the professional field. They appreciate the combination of contents and skills offered by the International Studies programme. They indicated that they expect of graduates of the International Studies programme especially the global outlook, comparative perspective and a sensitivity to other cultures, including a grasp of local situations and their political context. One of the representatives emphasised that proficiency in the regional language enhances the cultural sensitivity. All representatives stressed the importance of analytical skills, quick and innovative thinking and social responsibility.

The aim of the programme is to promote the student's academic development in terms of knowledge, understanding and skills in the field of International Studies to such an extent that



graduates are able to work in positions in an international environment at a graduate level and that they meet the entry requirements for admission to related master's programmes.

The information dossier describes the intended learning outcomes. Graduates have a knowledge and understanding of:

1. the principal theories, models, and approaches used in history, culture (including socio-linguistics), economy, politics and international relations;
2. methods in historical and cultural studies, as well as the social sciences, and the relevance of these methods for the different kinds of problems and questions to be addressed;
3. political, legal and economic aspects of international relations, and the formal and informal architecture of the international system;
4. the functions of history, culture, economy, politics and societal development of a particular geographical area from a comparative perspective, leading to a profound understanding of the differences and similarities between areas of the world, fostering cross-cultural and international perspectives;
5. theories, methods and skills that enable them to continue their studies in a master's programme in at least the domains of international studies, international relations, history, and development studies.

In addition, students have developed specific academic skills. Graduates are able to:

1. communicate actively and receptively, on a bachelor's level, and in relation to the disciplinary areas of the programme, in a modern language (not being English or the student's native language) correlating to the chosen area of study;
2. work with research techniques that are current in the social sciences and in the humanities;
3. understand sophisticated academic debates in the English language, and to report, both in oral and in written form, on their studies and their research in good English;
4. participate in debates in an active, prepared and informed way, respecting other people's convictions and emotions;
5. understand fundamental cultural differences and divisions;
6. work and write under time-pressure, and deal with deadlines.

The expected level of language skills (ad 1.) differs according to the script of the language. For French, Portuguese and Spanish the level to be reached is B1/B2 (as defined in the Common European Framework), B1 for Hindi, Indonesian, Russian and Swahili, or A2/B1 for Arabic, Mandarin, Japanese and Korean.

Students devote 30 EC to a minor programme, a study abroad or an internship in order to increase their knowledge and skills in the field of their specialisation to a more profound level, to broaden their knowledge and skills outside the field of their specialisation or to prepare themselves for a concretely defined career in society.

As regards general academic skills, graduates are expected to have elementary research skills, written and oral presentation skills and collaboration and learning skills.

The information dossier provides a table in which all these intended learning outcomes are related to the Dublin descriptors. On this basis, the panel can confirm that all Dublin descriptors are covered by the intended learning outcomes. The panel also confirms that the description of the knowledge and skills, with its emphasis on theories and methods, reflects the academic character of the programme.

### *Considerations*

The panel has studied and discussed the aim of the programme and notes that the chosen combination of a regional specialisation, including the study of a relevant language, and the global comparative approach leads to an ambitious programme that is very attractive for Dutch and international students.

The panel concludes that the intended learning outcomes of the programme meet the international requirements of similar programmes. They are clearly described, linked to the Dublin descriptors and appropriate for an academic bachelor's programme.

Because the title International Studies is also used by programmes with a different perspective, it is important that students and potential employers know what to expect. The panel advises the active promotion of the unique characteristics that define the programme's mission and objectives. Such promotion should include specific information on the contents of the programme and its interdisciplinary relationships and the depth of knowledge to be provided by the four pillars and their comparative nature. Finally, the programme should prepare a profile of its graduates and the type of master's programmes and employment opportunities for which they are prepared.

### *Conclusion*

The panel assesses standard 1 'Intended learning outcomes' as satisfactory.

## **3.5 Standard 2 – Teaching-learning environment**

*The curriculum, staff and programme-specific services and facilities enable incoming students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.*

### *Findings*

#### Structure and contents of the curriculum

The curriculum consists of 180 EC, spread over three years of 60 EC each. See Annex 2 for a schematic overview of the programme. In the first semester of the first year (BA1), the students are introduced to the broad field of Area Studies and its methodology: Introduction to Area Studies (5 EC); Configuring the World (global politics and economics and their scientific methods) (10 EC). They are made aware of their and others' biases when it comes to studying other parts of the world in the course Communicating Power (socio-linguistics) (5 EC). Academic writing is part of the course on Current Issues. Academic skills are also central in the Philosophy of Science course (second semester).

At the end of the first semester of BA1, students choose a region and a corresponding language. The language courses are programmed in the second semester of BA1 (10 EC), in the first semester of BA2 (10 EC) and in the second semester of BA2 (5 EC). The intended level of mastery varies per language, as indicated above, at standard 1. Regions and languages to be chosen are:

- Africa (Swahili, French, Afrikaans\*)
- Europe (French, Spanish, Portuguese, German\*, Italian\*, Dutch\*)
- Latin America (Spanish, Portuguese)

- Middle East (Arabic, New-Persian\*, Turkish\*)
  - North America (French, Spanish)
  - East Asia (Mandarin, Japanese, Korean)
  - Russia and Eurasia (Russian)
  - South and South East Asia (Hindi, Indonesian)
- \*only offered when enough students enrol.

For the four core disciplines, sometimes indicated as the pillars of the programme, the programme provides three courses of 5 EC each: an introductory course, a course 'by area' and a course with a global and comparative perspective. An exception is the discipline history, where the introductory and global courses are integrated. These courses are scheduled in BA1 and BA2.

The programme contains two elective courses (10 EC each), specifically designed for and only accessible to students of International Studies. These thematic courses are interdisciplinary and comparative and are focused on research skills. One is offered in BA2, the other in BA3.

In the first semester of the third year (BA3), the programme gives students the opportunity to follow their specific academic interests (30 EC). They can do a minor, choose an internship in the Netherlands or abroad, or may study abroad for a semester. Students can either choose to follow one of the minor programmes offered by Leiden university or by another Dutch university, or compose their individual package of available courses. Coherence and level of such a package must be approved by the Board of Examiners. A staff member has been appointed who is responsible for the study abroad option. The panel learnt that 120 students of the present specialisation will study abroad (107 in an exchange programme, 13 as free movers). An Academic Internship Supervisor is responsible for maintaining contacts with the professional field, preparing students for their internship through a course on Organisational Theory and guiding the students during their internship.

In the final semester, students choose one of their electives (10 EC, see above), work on an interdisciplinary group assignment in the course Practising International Studies (5 EC) in order to gain experience in putting their academic knowledge and skills to use in a practical, professional context, and write a thesis (15 EC), organised in a thesis seminar. The thesis is a written report of research, carried out under supervision by a faculty member. It is written in English and has maximum 15,000 words, including notes, bibliography and appendices. Students must show that they are able to formulate an academic problem, indicating adequate understanding of relevant methodological questions and the major academic views on their topic of research. They must synthetically and transparently report on secondary academic literature, correctly apply essential notions and methods on a limited corpus of primary source material, and formulate ideas clearly and correctly.

The panel finds the programme to be well-structured and thought out. The study load is feasible. The students whom the panel met during the site visit, indicated that they have a fulltime programme and on average spend forty hours per week on their studies. Students who have successfully completed the components of the programme (courses, discretionary space and thesis) will have covered all intended learning outcomes of the programme, as is shown in a table in the information dossier. The programme strikes a good balance between the general courses for all students on the one hand and the specific courses by area on the other hand. The general courses show a clear progression from an introduction in the four pillars to an

interdisciplinary and comparative approach at a later stage. In the latter courses, students are stimulated to integrate the specific regional knowledge gained in the 'by area' courses.

The panel has studied the syllabi, literature and study books, other study materials and written students' work of a sample of the BA1 and BA2 courses. This shows that the driver of the programme is to teach students about regions in a comparative global and international context, using the basic disciplinary contents (history, culture, economics and political science) to enhance the students' understanding. More traditionally, a programme works the other way around and is driven by a specific discipline, using cases (e.g. regions) to provide a context. The panel finds this an interesting and legitimate choice, which explains the rather idiosyncratic contents of e.g. the Economics courses, which offer macroeconomics without the formal microeconomics. This provides a sufficient background for further studies at master's level in International Relations. The panel does not expect that graduates of International Studies would continue in a master's programme of Economics.

The third year of the programme, BA3, will be organised for the first time in 2014-2015. Based on its meeting with the BA3 staff, the panel is satisfied with the quality of preparation. The requirements and procedures for the various options in the first semester (minor, internship or study abroad) are clear and specific staff members have been appointed for the internship and study abroad. Thesis seminars will streamline and support the thesis writing process through group and individual discussion and presentations. Students will be able to choose a thesis seminar related to the region in which they have specialised, a thesis seminar focusing on one of the four pillars or a seminar with an explicit comparative approach. The panel appreciates the broad range of thesis topics that can be accommodated this way.

#### Didactical approach

Each course generally consists of a series of lectures taught for the whole group, supported by small-scale tutorial courses for groups of twelve students. Elective courses have a group size of 23-25 students, language courses of 15-18 students.

The tutorial system is described as a crucial characteristic of the programme and has a didactic as well as a social objective. From a didactic point of view, the tutorials are meant to discuss the subject matter of the lectures and to do the assignments that are part of the course. Tutors help students through assignments and discussions in class to further develop relevant knowledge and understanding and to develop research, presentation and debating skills. From the social point of view, the tutor groups help students to get acquainted with other students and to feel 'at home'. Groups are mixed in terms of gender and national background. The panel heard during the site visit that the mix of backgrounds and regional specialisations per group contributes to the comparative approach and the international flavour.

The panel was told during the site visit that lectures for large groups of students (more than 500) can be accommodated by hiring space in a nearby theatre. Neither staff nor students doubted the value of these large-scale lectures, although they informed the panel that not all students are attending. The panel expects that the lack of interaction in the lectures is compensated by the tutorial system.

The programme recently investigated the potential merits of Blended Learning, together with two other programmes of Leiden University with large student numbers (Law, Psychology). On the basis of first experiences that were not entirely positive, the Educational Committee has

advised to introduce Blended Learning on an optional basis only and to maintain the face-to-face learning environment as a selling point. The panel agrees with this advice.

With the large number of students (more than 350 in 2012-2013 and over 500 in 2013-2014) a large number of tutors is obviously needed (15 in 2013-2014). In the first two years of the programme, the expertise of a tutor did not always match the subject matter of the tutor group(s) for which he or she was responsible. The programme will hire an additional 9.0 fte tutorial staff for 2014-2015, which will allow for a better match between tutors and subject matter. The panel finds this an important improvement, since tutors play a significant role not only in teaching the tutor groups but also in the assessment of the students' work.

In order to guarantee consistency between the lecturers and the tutors and between the tutors of a given course, the organisation of the tutorship has become more structured as from September 2013. A senior tutor coaches the tutors, the lecturers have written detailed course guidelines including outlines per tutorial and there is intensified consultation between lecturers, senior tutor and tutors. This is a positive step.

On the basis of the information provided and the discussions during the site visit, the panel notes with appreciation that the programme is able to provide a large degree of flexibility and freedom of choice to the students. Students choose a region and language in which they want to specialise. In addition, they have a choice of electives (20 EC), a discretionary space of 30 EC (internship, minor or study abroad) and a choice of thesis topic and thesis seminar (15 EC). If a student wishes to do both a minor and a study abroad, it is even possible to select courses and a study abroad programme to a total of 15 EC each. Advisers, such as the study coordinators, the study abroad coordinator and the internship supervisor, can help students to select the best options, aimed at their specific plans for the future.

#### Staff

The programme is taught by lecturers and tutors. During the site visit, the panel met with a number of staff members and was impressed by their commitment and enthusiasm. The lecturers are members of staff of the Faculty of Humanities. They all have a PhD degree and combine research and teaching. These staff members are affiliated with different institutes of the Faculty. Together they cover the disciplinary areas that are central to the programme International Studies. Academic staff members are required to obtain at least the Basic Teaching Qualification within two years after they start working at Leiden University, which is monitored in the annual performance interviews.

The panel notes that the programme is able to draw on the input of a substantial group of experienced and well-qualified lecturers who are actively involved in research. This contributes to the quality of the programme. A practical problem is that most lecturers have their home base in Leiden, at different institutes. The panel was informed that the programme intends to move the workplaces of a significant number of them to the Campus The Hague per September 2014. This is expected to increase their involvement with the programme. It would probably also help to solve the consistency problem in the 'by area' courses that is mentioned in the information dossier.

The information dossier describes that tutors are mostly young members of staff with a temporary contract. They have at least a master's degree in one of the core disciplines of the programme. Currently, approximately one third holds a PhD. Tutors who have not yet acquired their Basic Teaching Qualification are offered courses to obtain it.

As mentioned above, tutors are guided by a senior tutor and guidelines are available for each course. These guidelines and the other coordination efforts contribute to the consistency between the tutors and the quality of their teaching. In addition, the panel considers it an improvement when the appointment of additional tutors will allow for a match between the tutor's expertise and the subject matter of the course(s) in which he or she is involved.

For lecturers and tutors new to the programme, the panel stresses the importance of orientation and training (when necessary) because they may not be entirely familiar with the peculiar aspects of teaching in such a programme (comparative nature, close student/faculty relationship, on-going assessment, importance of participation, etc.).

The Educational Committee monitors the quality of the programme by evaluating the individual courses and the programme as a whole. Both staff and students approach the Educational Committee when they experience problems or have a complaint. The student members of the Committee are very accessible for their fellow-students, in person, by e-mail or through a special page on Facebook. The Committee advises the Programme Board and is satisfied with the way their advices are handled.

#### Services and facilities

The programme is offered at the Campus The Hague. Due to the unexpectedly fast growth of student numbers, the available lecture hall is not large enough so that facilities in a nearby theatre must be hired. For the tutorial groups and smaller lectures the facilities are adequate, but spread over different locations. The programme will move to a new location around 2016. Students have access to the full library facilities of Leiden University through an annex at the Campus The Hague.

In addition to the general programme management and administration, the programme has a number of support staff for specific components of the programme (coordinator internships and study abroad) and to advise the students (study coordinators and advisers). For the large and international group of students of the programme, this is an asset.

The students with whom the panel met during the site visit mentioned with appreciation the student mentorship, the extracurricular activities that are offered and, in general, the international composition of the student body. This helps significantly to achieve the global perspective the programme aims for.

The students mentioned that, especially in the first year of operation, communication between staff and students was not always perfect, e.g. about the submission of assignments and the grades. Also, some tutors provided more detailed feedback on assignments than others. The panel supposes that these issues are partly inherent to the start of a new programme and also to the unexpected large group of admitted students. The panel found that the management is aware of these problems and expects that they will to a large extent be solved by the stronger coordination of the tutorial groups (see above).

#### *Considerations*

The panel has studied the curriculum and course materials and concludes that the structure of the curriculum is well thought out and that the contents enable the student to achieve the intended learning outcomes. There is a nice build up from general introductory courses in Area Studies and the four core disciplines to the specialised courses 'by area' and, finally, to the

comparative courses with a global perspective. The international student body and their input in the tutorial groups contribute to the global flavour of the programme.

The programme can draw on capable and experienced lecturers and tutors, covering all relevant disciplines and regions. The programme management is aware of the consistency problems that can arise when staff members from different institutes and a substantial number of tutors are involved. Steps have been taken to strengthen the coordination and communication.

In addition to the interdisciplinary nature, the programme advertises the small scale teaching as a distinctive feature. Students work in small tutorial groups and have many written assignments. The panel agrees this is a strong point of the programme, which may, however, be jeopardised by the fast growth of the student numbers. Communication and consistency are mentioned as points of attention in the information dossier, and will be aggravated when numbers of students and staff increase. The panel wonders, therefore, if the quality of the programme, especially related to the characteristic small-scale environment, can be maintained during a fast and unlimited growth and has the impression that the programme management has not considered this sufficiently.

The panel concludes that the curriculum, staff and programme-specific facilities constitute a coherent teaching-learning environment for the students. This enables the students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

#### *Conclusion*

The panel assesses standard 2 'Teaching-learning environment' as satisfactory.

### **3.6 Standard 3 – Assessment**

*The programme has an adequate assessment system in place.*

#### *Findings*

##### System of assessment

The panel has checked the Course and Examination Regulations 2014-2015, and found these to be in order. The previous Regulations (2013-2014) have been reformulated for the new situation where International Studies is an independent programme.

The information dossier describes the system of assessment in detail. Since most courses have multiple learning objectives (theory as well as skills), most courses have multiple types of assessment. Typically, the assessment consists of active participation during tutorials, specific assignments (e.g. writing an essay or paper, giving a presentation or doing a project) and a written exam (usually a midterm and a final exam). Sometimes a written exam consists of multiple choice questions, but most of them require answers to open questions. Despite the obvious workload involved in marking open questions, the panel prefers this assessment method because it requires students to show their ability to formulate their knowledge in good English. It also helps to insure the fulfilment of one of the overall programme objectives regarding the development of student capacity for written communication.

Exams are graded by the lecturers, assignments by the tutors. Before a final exam, students are able to assess whether they master the theory and/or skills at a sufficient level through the feedback on assignments during the tutorials and through example questions and 'old' exams that are available. One resit is allowed when students fail (part of) the exam.

Group assignments are never the only means of examination of a course and 'free rider' behaviour is actively discouraged. All essays and papers are checked on plagiarism. Students have the right to view their marked examination and, if they do not agree with the mark received, to discuss this with the examiner. Should they continue to disagree, the student can turn to the Board of Examiners to file a complaint and to demand a second opinion.

Students must have completed 45 EC at the end of BA1 and 90 EC at the end of BA2 in order to be allowed to continue in the programme. In addition, they must have passed the Current Issues course (first semester) and the language course (second semester).

The thesis will be assessed on four criteria: the adequate wording and operationalisation of the scientific problem studied, the adequate use of secondary literature, the adequate use of primary sources, and the language use, structure and style. The thesis is assessed by two members of staff, the first one being the student's supervisor, the second appointed by the Board of Examiners and not involved in the supervision process. A tutor is not allowed to supervise a thesis. The grade is awarded after joint consultation between both assessors.

The panel was able to confirm in the discussions during the site visit that the system of assessment works as intended. In addition, since the programme has been running since 2012, the panel was able to verify the achieved learning outcomes of BA1 and BA2. The panel has studied a sample of the students' work (essays and exams) of eight courses of the present specialisation (listed in Appendix 3) and concludes that the level of the students' work is of an appropriate level and that the students receive good and detailed feedback from their teachers. Achieved learning outcomes of the final year and, therefore, of the thesis, could not yet be assessed.

#### Board of Examiners

The Board of Examiners consists of five members of staff, recruited from diverse disciplines, and is supported by a specially appointed secretary. Until now, the Board was appointed for the International Studies programme as a specialisation. It will continue in the same manner for International Studies as a separate bachelor's programme.

The Board meets every two weeks and is accessible by mail for staff and students. The information dossier lists the major tasks of the Board of Examiners:

- to establish whether students meet the conditions to obtain a degree;
- to secure the quality of assessments and exams;
- to set rules and regulations on how assessments and exams are effected;
- to grant exemptions and permission for individual programmes (including the discretionary space and internship plan);
- to judge cases of fraud and take appropriate measures;
- to designate examiners;
- to draft an annual report of tis methods and results.



The quality of assessments and exams is secured in two ways. First, three weeks before the exam is taken, the exam questions and answer sheets are checked by the Board of Examiners. They must be in line with the aims and objectives of the course to be assessed and must be clear enough for students to answer and for tutors to assess. Second, a schedule has been drawn up by the Board of Examiners to check samples of the students' work and the marks and feedback they have received. In three years all courses will have been assessed in this way. The panel assesses this procedure as exemplary and expects that it will enable the Board of Examiners to deal effectively with the occasional differences in the level of exams between courses, which was mentioned in the information dossier as a point of improvement.

The Board of Examiners has developed a number of protocols and procedures. Those for the third year, such as the thesis, are still in development. Some tasks, such as dealing with students' requests, have been delegated to the study coordinators. The Board of Examiners is aware of the threat of the programme's success, but expects that the flexible structure will be able to accommodate the larger groups of students that may come in. If the procedures are clear and effective for the first, smaller group of students, they can fairly easily be adapted, if necessary, for larger groups thereafter. From the discussion with the Board of Examiners during the site visit, the panel concludes that the Board performs its role well and is in control of the quality of assessment in the programme.

#### *Considerations*

The panel has checked the Course and Examination Regulations 2014-2015, and found these to be in order. The panel has studied the assessment system and a sample of students' work and has met with the Board of Examiners during the site visit. The panel concludes that the Board of Examiners is accessible and ambitious, is aware of its responsibilities, has developed good procedures and is in control of the quality of assessment of the International Studies programme.

The assignments and exams reflect the learning objectives of the courses. Their validity, reliability and transparency to the students and assessors are checked by the Board of Examiners. The assignments that were seen by the panel, show that the students achieve sufficient depth of knowledge and skills in the course of the programme.

#### *Conclusion*

The panel assesses standard 3 'Assessment' as satisfactory.

### **3.7 Standard 4 – Graduation guarantee and financial provisions**

*The institution guarantees students that they can complete the entire curriculum and makes sufficient financial provisions available.*

#### *Findings*

The information dossier describes the graduation guarantee and financial provisions of the programme. Leiden University guarantees that students who have enrolled can finish the entire three-year programme. In the event of a termination of the programme, students can take exams until two years after the regular duration of the programme and will thus have five

years to finish the three-year programme. Leiden University guarantees that it will pay the associated costs.

The institutes of the Faculty of Humanities, that are collectively responsible for providing teaching staff for International Studies, are mainly financed by the number of credits obtained by students. The business plan for International Studies shows that this system will generate ample means to carry out the programme from 2016 onwards. In the run-up period (2012-2015), deficits are financed by subsidies in the context of the national programme for Sustainable Humanities, by investments by Leiden University and the Faculty of Humanities. The first two years of the programme (so far offered as a specialisation within the bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences: Global Challenges) have shown that it is able to attract many students, nationally and internationally. This warrants the expectation that the programme will yield sufficient revenues, as stipulated in the business plan.

#### *Considerations*

The panel has ascertained that Leiden University has invested strongly in the International Studies programme and is convinced that it will guarantee sufficient financial provisions in the run-up period of negative financial results and a sufficient time for students to complete the entire curriculum. The first two years of the programme have shown that it is attractive for many students. The panel is, therefore, convinced of the viability of International Studies as an independent programme.

#### *Conclusion*

The panel assesses standard 4 'Graduation guarantee and financial provisions' as satisfactory.

### **3.8 Final conclusion**

On the basis of the information dossier and the discussions during the site visit, the panel concludes that the academic bachelor's programme International Studies is an ambitious programme with a distinctive combination of Area Studies and an interdisciplinary, global and comparative approach. The intended learning outcomes reflect this and are in line with the requirements of similar international programmes.

The structure and contents of the curriculum are well-considered. There is a good combination of disciplinary foundation, regional specialisation including language study and interdisciplinary integration. The learning objectives of the courses build up towards the programme's intended learning outcomes. The quality of the academic staff and the services and facilities constitute a coherent teaching-learning environment for the students. The Educational Committee monitors the quality of the programme actively. Small-scale teaching is a characteristic of the programme, mainly visible in the tutorial groups. This feature, combined with the many written assignments, makes it an attractive programme. In the first two years of the programme, (as a specialisation within the bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences: Global Challenges), it has drawn large numbers of students. The panel wonders if the quality of the programme, especially related to the characteristic small-scale environment, can be maintained during rapid and unlimited growth.

The Board of Examiners is a strong committee that has developed good procedures and actively checks the quality of assessments. The assessments are in line with the learning objectives and students receive adequate feedback.

The panel can confirm that the level of the work so far produced by students is of the appropriate level for an academic bachelor's programme.

Leiden University guarantees that students who have been admitted to the programme, can complete the entire curriculum. The university makes sufficient financial provisions available for the period in which the programme does not yet yield sufficient revenues to cover the costs of the programme. Based on the large number of students who are interested in the programme, the panel concludes that International Studies is a viable programme.

The panel's final conclusion therefore is satisfactory.

### **3.9 Recommendations**

The panel appreciates the small scale teaching (tutorial groups, many written assignments and close staff-student contact) as a distinctive feature of the programme, but feels that this may be jeopardised by the fast growth of the student numbers. To maintain balance between quality and scale, the panel recommends the management

- to investigate how the distinctive features of the teaching-learning environment can be maintained during growth;
- to examine whether there is a maximum number of students that can be accommodated.

### **3.10 Advice on sector(s) in the Central Register of Higher Education**

#### *Findings*

Leiden University argues that International Studies, as a multi- and interdisciplinary programme, partakes in two sectors recognised in the Central Register of Higher Education Programmes (CROHO). It contains elements from both the Language and Culture-sector, and the Behaviour and Society-sector (politics and economics). It therefore requests registration as a cross-sectoral programme.

#### *Considerations*

The panel confirms that the International Studies programme is multi- and interdisciplinary, as can be seen from both its objectives and its curriculum.

#### *Conclusion*

The panel confirms the allocation of sector(s) as suggested by the applicant: cross-sectoral.

## 4 Overview Assessment

STANDARD		ASSESSMENT
<b>1 Intended learning outcomes</b>	The intended learning outcomes of the programme have been concretised with regard to content, level and orientation; they meet international requirements.	satisfactory
<b>2 Teaching-learning environment</b>	The curriculum, staff and programme-specific services and facilities enable incoming students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.	satisfactory
<b>3 Assessment</b>	The programme has an adequate assessment system in place.	satisfactory
<b>4 Graduation guarantee and financial provisions</b>	The institution guarantees students that they can complete the entire curriculum and makes sufficient financial provisions available.	satisfactory
<b>FINAL CONCLUSION</b>		SATISFACTORY

## Annex 1 – Panel

### **Prof. dr. ir. Kees Mouwen (*chair*)**

Professor Mouwen has originally been trained as a physicist. After getting his PhD in Physics at Eindhoven University of Technology, he became head of a Physics department of a Teacher-training College. Further in his career, he held positions as principal of various Colleges for Higher Professional Education. His interest and work in the field of management started in the early eighties. He studied Strategy and Innovation at the Wharton Business School in Philadelphia and later at the Kennedy School of Government of Harvard University. In 1992 he was appointed Visiting Professor at Glasgow University Business School. In 1994 he was appointed as member of the Executive Board of Tilburg University, in 1999 as Vice-Chairman. Prof Mouwen has published a number of books and articles on Strategy and Innovation in the Non-Profit sector. In 2001 he was appointed Professor of Strategy and Innovation for the Non-profit sector at Tias Business School, which is part of Tilburg University. In 2005 he stepped back as Executive Board member and started to work part-time as Academic Director of the Public / non-profit sector of Tias Business School. He is the founder and until recently director of the Centre for Governance of the Private, Public-Sector Enterprise.

Kees Mouwen was also chair of the panel that assessed the Liberal Arts and Sciences programme early 2014.

### **Prof. dr. Laurent Boetsch**

Laurent Boetsch (B.A., Washington and Lee,'69, M.A., DML, Middlebury College) is Professor of Romance Languages and Director of the Center for International Education. He has been a member of the faculty since 1976 and served as Vice President for Academic Affairs from 1996-2001, Acting President, 2011-02, and Provost, 2002-03. From 2003 to 2008 he worked with the Christian A. Johnson Endeavor Foundation to found the European College of Liberal Arts, Berlin, Germany, and served as its first President. Since 2008, he has overseen the formulation and implementation of a strategic initiative for the integration of global learning into the undergraduate curriculum at Washington and Lee. He is one of three founding Executive Directors of the European Consortium of Liberal Arts and Sciences (ECOLAS), an educational consulting group for emerging liberal arts programs within the European Higher Education Area.

Larry Boetsch was also member of the panel that assessed the Liberal Arts and Sciences programme in 2008 and early 2014.

### **Dr. John Meadowcroft**

John Meadowcroft is Senior Lecturer in Public Policy and Head of the Department of Political Economy in the School of Social Science and Public Policy at King's College London. He has previously taught at Queen Mary, University of London (1999 – 2003) and at the London School of Economics and Political Science (2004- 2006). In addition he has worked in the practical world of policy and politics, as an assistant to a Member of the UK Parliament and as Deputy Editorial Director of the Institute of Economic Affairs in London. He has a PhD in Political Science and is the author of a number of books and articles in the field of political economy.

**Florine Boeding (*student member*)**

In 2012 Florine Boeding obtained her college bachelor's degree in business communication at the Hogeschool Utrecht. After completing the premaster she is doing the Master Communication and Organization at Utrecht University. Besides her studies she has been active member of the Student Affairs Programme, the Education Committee and the Association of Corporate MUST (Utrecht Student Participation). As a student member she has participated in various visitation panels to NVAO since 2012.

Assisting staff:

- Dr. Marianne van der Weiden, secretary to the panel;
- Michèle Wera, MA, policy advisor NVAO and process coordinator.

*All panel members and the secretary signed a declaration of independence and confidentiality prior to the assessment process.*

## Annex 2 – Overview of the programme

In the scheme below, the Arabic numerals (1 - 3) indicate the year of study, the Roman numerals (I, II) the semester. The scheme is to be read bottom-up, i.e. BA 1 is below, BA 3 on top.

Students may spread their minor programme over two semesters. In that case, they will take a thesis seminar in the first, instead of the second semester. The first semester seminar is also open to students with some study delay.

<b>BA 3</b> <b>I + II</b>	Elective 2 (10 ec)		Thesis seminar and thesis (15 ec)			Practising International Studies (5 ec)
	Minor programme (30 ec) Internship Study abroad					
<b>BA 2</b> <b>II</b>	Elective 1 (10 ec)		International Economics (5 ec)	Politics by area (5 ec)	International Politics (5 ec)	Foreign language (25 ec)
<b>BA 2</b> <b>I</b>	Culture by area (5 ec)	Globalisation and Culture (5 ec)	Economics by area (5 ec)	Politics (5 ec)		
<b>BA 1</b> <b>II</b>	History by area (5 ec)	Cultural Studies (5 ec)	Economics (5 ec)	Philosophy of Science (5 ec)		
<b>BA 1</b> <b>I</b>	Global History (5 ec)	Communicating Power (socio-linguistics; 5 ec)	Configuring the World (10 ec)		Current Issues (incl. Academic Writing; 5 ec)	Introduction to Area Studies (5 ec)

### Meaning of the colours:

Pale green	History	Green	Foreign language
Yellow	Culture	Purple	Economics
Orange	Introductory and skills courses	Pale blue	Philosophy
Pink	Politics	Blue	Electives and thesis

## **Annex 3 – Programme site visit**

Bachelor in International Studies,  
Leiden University (Campus The Hague)

### **Wednesday 11 June 2014**

- 12.00 – 15.00 Preparatory meeting panel during lunch (closed meeting)
- 15.00 – 15.30 Short presentation new programme  
Prof. Richard Griffiths (founding father of the programme)  
Prof. André Gerrits (chair of the programme board)
- 15.30 – 16.00 Tour through the buildings and facilities  
Prof. Wim van den Doel (dean of the faculty)  
Jolanda Riel, QC (director of operational management, faculty board)
- 16.00 – 18.00 Preparatory meeting panel (continued)
- 18.00 – 18.30 Session 1 – Representatives of the professional field (30')  
Mr. René Ahuja (director of Rexus Consulting Ltd., London), via Skype  
Mrs. Juany (Otra Cosa Network, Peru), via Skype  
Mr. Peter Murphy (Otra Cosa Network, Peru), via Skype  
Mrs. Marie-José Alting von Geusau (manager CNV International)
- 19.00 Dinner (panel)

### **Thursday 12 June 2014**

- 09.00 – 09.30 Preparatory meeting panel (continued)
- 09.30 – 10.15 Session 2 – Programme management and designers curriculum (45')  
Prof. André Gerrits (chair of the programme board)  
Dr. Johannes Magliano-Tromp (member of the programme board; programme coordinator)  
Juan Leandro Costa (student member of the programme board)
- 10.30 – 11.15 Session 3 – Staff responsible for BA I & II (45')  
Prof. Richard Griffiths (lecturer)  
Dr. Ethan Mark (lecturer)  
Prof. Patricio Silva (lecturer)  
Dr. Sanjukta Sunderason (lecturer)  
Dr. Meike de Goede (lecturer/tutor)  
Dr. Paula Jordão (senior tutor)  
Looi van Kessel, MA (tutor)  
Maris Avaguimova (language instructor)  
Sieglinde de Horde-Bollen, LL.M (study coordinator)



- 11.30 – 12.15 Session 4 – Staff responsible for BA III (45')  
Dr. Matthew Frear (thesis seminar)  
Dr. Simanique Moody (elective; thesis seminar)  
Sarita Koendjibiharie, MSc (lecturer; academic internship supervisor)  
Ruth Davison, MA (study abroad coordinator)  
Dr. Elizabeth den Boer (study coordinator)
- 12.30 – 13.00 Session 5 – Students of the present specialisation International Studies within the bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences (30')  
Sabbah Hindawey (first year)  
Marta Rocha Lopes (first year)  
Souhaib Ben Kchouh (second year)  
Ugne Mikalajunaite (second year)  
Jana De Poorter (second year)
- 13.00 – 14.00 Lunch and meeting panel (closed meeting)
- 14.00 – 14.30 Session 6 – Representatives of the Educational Committee (30')  
Dr. Michelle Carmody (chair)  
Dr. Jeff Fynn-Paul  
David Chadwick (student member)  
Rachel Quennell (student member)
- 14.30 – 15.00 Session 7 – Representatives of the Board of Examiners (30')  
Prof. Giles Scott-Smith (chair)  
Dr. Paula Jordão  
Dr. Maaïke Warnaar  
Ellen van Daal-Doppen, LL.M (administrative officer)
- 15.00 – 16.30 Final panel meeting (closed meeting)
- 16.30 – 16.45 Feedback session

## Annex 4 – Documents reviewed

Documents presented by the applicant

- Information dossier
- Additional information on the third year of the programme
- Additional information on research, teaching and staff development
- Powerpoint presentation by the programme board
- Students' work for the eight courses listed below

Documents made available during the site visit

- Overview of several courses year 1:
  - Introduction to Area Studies
  - Cultural Studies
  - History: Latin America
  - Economics
- Overview of several courses year 2:
  - Politics
  - Economics Russia and Eurasia
  - Politics Africa
  - Elective: Enemies, undesirables and Others: forced migration and the creation of the modern world
- Textbooks
- Collection of essays
- Various documents:
  - Course and Examination Regulations 2014-2015
  - Annual Report 2012-2013, Preliminary Report April 2013
  - Assessment, grading, feedback and retakes in BA International Studies – policy note
  - Short report on the International Studies tutorials process
  - Summary advice audit Leiden University internal quality assurance system
  - Educational Committee: Minutes and correspondence
  - Course descriptions 2014-2015
  - Area and language: students' choices 2012 and 2013
  - Board of Examiners
    - Annual Report 2012-2013 (in Dutch)
    - Agendas and minutes 2012-2013 and 2013-2014
    - Correspondence 2012-2013 and 2013-2014
    - Checked exams
- Access to Blackboard

## **Annex 5 – Abbreviations**

ba	bachelor
EC	European Credit Transfer System
ma	master
NVAO	Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie (Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders)
QAAHE	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
UL	Leiden University
wo	wetenschappelijk onderwijs

This panel report was commissioned by NVAO for the initial accreditation of the wo-bachelor's programme International Studies of Leiden University.

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