



Bachelor Security Studies
Leiden University

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info@academion.nl

Project code P2227

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Summary

Standard 1. Intended learning outcomes

The panel finds that the BaSS has a unique profile with a clear and distinct focus on safety and security. The panel appreciates the multi-disciplinary approach in the programme that features the contribution of various disciplines. According to the panel, the programme could clarify which of those disciplines are closest to the core of the programme and fine-tune the focus of the programme in line with this. The programme's learning outcomes are well-formulated, clearly demonstrate an academic bachelor's level, and align with academic and professional expectations.

Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment

According to the panel, the BaSS curriculum has a clear structure with multi- and interdisciplinary courses, research methodology courses, integrated group projects, and a thesis. The panel is positive regarding the learning environment and values the various methods the programme uses in a stimulating and activating way. A strength of the programme is that it educates both academic professionals as well as professional academics, and it provides a solid foundation and balance in both professional and academic skills. A remark of the panel is that a relatively large part of the teaching methods consists of lectures. The panel advises continued monitoring of whether lectures are the most suitable teaching method or whether another more interactive method could be appropriate. The panel advises the programme management to explore the extent to which their actions to keep student numbers in check are effective, and suggests that all involved parties reflect on, debate, and analyse what size best fits the programme. Furthermore, the panel suggests making the build-up of the programme more explicit for both students and the external audience. Students are well-supported and the curriculum is feasible. The programme is taught in English, which aligns with the international orientation of the programme, academia, and the global labour market. The programme has sufficient teaching staff who are suitably qualified, well-appreciated by students, and passionate about and committed to both the programme and the students and passionate about and committed to both the programme and the students.

Standard 3. Student assessment

The panel is impressed with the bachelor's programme's clear and transparent assessment policies and practices. It considers assessment to be done in a clear, transparent and accessible way that supports students' learning process and aids teachers in making well-founded assessment decisions. The panel advises the programme to explore whether the assessment of professional skills could be further integrated into the programme. The panel examined the bachelor's thesis assessment procedure and concluded that it is transparent and robust. The programme has a proactive and well-functioning BoE that understands its tasks and responsibilities and is accountable for them; however, the panel advises the BoE to ensure that thesis topics are sufficiently related to safety and security issues.

Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes

According to the panel, the theses and alumni of the BaSS programme demonstrate that the learning outcomes are achieved. The theses are well elaborated and are generally of good quality with a clear multi-disciplinary approach. Alumni look back on the programme with appreciation, voicing satisfaction with the structure and content of the programme as well as the academic and professional skills they obtained. The programme prepares students well for related master's programmes and for professional jobs.

Score table

The panel assesses the programme as follows:

Programme

Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes

meets the standard

Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment

meets the standard

Standard 3: Student assessment

meets the standard

Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes

meets the standard

General conclusion

positive

Esther Versluis

Jessica van Rossum

Date: 27 January 2024

Introduction

Procedure

Assessment

On 2 and 3 November 2023, the bachelor's programme Security Studies of Leiden University was assessed by an independent peer review panel. The assessment included the bachelor's programme Security Studies and the master's programme Crisis and Security Management of Leiden University. The assessment followed the procedure and standards of the NVAO Assessment Framework for the Higher Education Accreditation System of the Netherlands (September 2018).

Quality assurance agency Academion coordinated the assessment upon request of Leiden University. Fiona Schouten acted as coordinator and Jessica van Rossum acted as secretary in the assessment. They have been certified and registered by the NVAO.

Preparation

Academion composed the peer review panel in cooperation with the institution and taking into account the expertise and independence of the member. On 28 August 2023, the NVAO approved the composition of the panel. The coordinator instructed the panel chair on her role in the site visit according to the Panel chair profile (NVAO 2016).

The programme composed a site visit schedule in consultation with the coordinator (see appendix 3). The programme selected representative partners for the various interviews. It also determined that the development dialogue would be made part of the site visit. A separate development report was made based on this dialogue.

The programme provided the secretary with a list of graduates over the period September 2022 – August 2023. In consultation with the secretary, the panel chair selected 15 theses. She took the diversity of final grades and examiners into account. Prior to the site visit, the programme provided the panel with the theses and the accompanying assessment forms. It also provided the panel with the self-evaluation report and additional materials (see appendix 4).

The panel members studied the information and sent their findings to the secretary. The secretary collected the panel's questions and remarks in a document and shared this with the panel members. In a preliminary meeting, the panel discussed the initial findings on the self-evaluation report and the theses, as well as the division of tasks during the site visit. The panel was also informed on the assessment framework, the working method and the planning of the site visits and reports.

Site visit

During the site visit, the panel interviewed various programme representatives (see appendix 3). The panel also offered students and staff members an opportunity for confidential discussion during a consultation hour. No consultation was requested. The panel used the final part of the site visit to discuss its findings in an internal meeting. Afterwards, the panel chair publicly presented the preliminary findings.

Report

The secretary wrote a draft report based on the panel's findings and submitted it to the coordinator for peer assessment. Subsequently, the secretary sent the report to the panel for feedback. After processing this

feedback, the secretary sent the draft report to the programme in order to have it checked for factual irregularities. The secretary discussed the ensuing comments with the panel chair and changes were implemented accordingly. The panel then finalised the report, and the coordinator sent it to the Faculty of Governance and Global Affairs, Leiden University.

Panel

The panel assessing the bachelor programme Security Studies at Leiden University consisted of the following members:

- Prof. dr. E. (Esther) Versluis, professor of European Regulatory Governance, Maastricht University - chair
- Prof. dr. M. (Magnus) Ekengren, professor of Political Science and director of the Programme for European Security Research, Swedish Defence University
- Prof. dr. M.B. (Marcel) Veenswijk, professor of Organizational Sciences, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
- Drs. S. (Sander) Dekker, board member, Maasstad Ziekenhuis
- E. (Eline) Pothoven BSc., alumna bachelor programme Educational Sciences, Utrecht University, and student master programme Ethics of Education: Philosophy, History and Law, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen – student member

Information on the programme

Name of the institution:	Leiden University
Status of the institution:	Publicly funded institution
Result institutional quality assurance assessment:	Positive

Programme name:	B Security Studies
CROHO number:	59320
Level:	Bachelor
Orientation:	Academic
Number of credits:	180 EC
Specialisations or tracks:	-
Location:	The Hague
Special features	-
Educational minor:	-
Mode(s) of study:	Fulltime
Language of instruction:	English
Submission date NVAO:	1 May 2024

Description of the assessment

Previous accreditation panel's recommendations

The documentation presents an overview of how the programme management has followed up on the recommendations provided during the initial accreditation review (2017). Several recommendations and their follow-up actions were discussed with the programme management during a site visit. The panel concludes that the programme management has genuinely acted upon the recommendations. The panel is content with the improvement measures and recognizes that these have improved the quality of the programme.

Organization

The bachelor's programme Security Studies (BaSS) is part of the Institute of Security and Global Affairs (ISGA) at the Faculty Governance and Global Affairs (FGGA). The faculty is located in The Hague. The programme is aligned with the ISGA's master's programme Crisis and Security Management. The ISGA also offers the advanced master's programme International Relations and Diplomacy, the executive master's programme Cyber Security, and the minors Security, Safety and Justice, Global Affairs, Intelligence Studies, Violence Studies, and Cybersecurity and Cybercrime.

Standard 1. Intended learning outcomes

The intended learning outcomes tie in with the level and orientation of the programme; they are geared to the expectations of the professional field, the discipline, and international requirements.

Findings

Profile

The bachelor's in Security Studies (BaSS) aims to teach students how to address the governance of complex contemporary safety and security problems from a multi- and interdisciplinary approach with a focus on multiple levels of governance and perspectives from a variety of actors. Students are taught to analyze these problems from different viewpoints and develop both academic and professional skills throughout the curriculum. The fields of safety and security are dispersed across disciplines, sectors, jurisdictions, and organizations, which demands agility from students to combine a diversity of perspectives. Given the fact that the field of security is constantly evolving, the programme's objective is to train students to become independent and critical professionals who seek constructive solutions to contemporary challenges. The programme aims to train flexible, creative students who can look beyond the boundaries of disciplines and connect real-life security issues with scientific insights, norms, and values. The programme intends to teach students a thorough understanding of the causes of, impact from, and potential solutions to modern-day security challenges, using insights and methods from various academic disciplines. Students gain academic and professional skills that enable them to work in the security domain with an integrated vision of complex, social, often internationally oriented security issues, and that help them to critically reflect on new forms of governance and policy. The programme is the only academic bachelor's programme in Europe on the themes of safety and security.

With the above in mind, the BaSS provides students with:

a) *An integrative approach to safety and security*

The focus in the programme is on contemporary safety and security challenges, with an integrative approach to safety and security, not only regarding threats to national security but also global challenges that threaten people's safety, such as critical infrastructure vulnerabilities and climate change.

b) *A multi- and interdisciplinary approach*

A multi- and interdisciplinary approach to security is used in the programme to manage the increasing complexity of modern-day security issues, thereby integrating disciplinary concepts, theories, and methods from disciplines as public policy and governance, international relations and political science, sociology, psychology, law, criminology, history, philosophy, economics, computer science, environmental studies, and communication and media.

c) *A multi-level approach*

Security challenges are multi-layered and cross both state and institutional borders. Therefore, the programme encompasses various levels of responsibility and impact and has a multi-level approach, taking into account that causes and consequences within security challenges range all the way from the international level to the lives of individual citizens.

d) *A multi-actor approach*

Safety and security issues are not only the responsibility of state actors at multiple levels of governance but also are placed on the agenda and are managed by a variety of actors, above and beyond the traditional state. The programme employs a multi-actor view to include the perspectives of all relevant actors.

The BaSS teaches students to view society through a safety and security lens to signal, understand, and analyse current and (near-)future challenges and to determine strategies and approaches that could mitigate risks. Safety and security challenges often do not easily translate into pre-structured academic problems, with unambiguous goals. This means that students must be familiar with real-life cases and field experts and engage with state-of-the-art research that forms a basis for discussions on content and methodology. To achieve this goal, the programme uses a three-phase approach of *exploring*, *understanding*, and *doing*, which is integrated into the learning outcomes. *Exploring* safety and security challenges focuses on acquiring basic knowledge and an understanding of the historical, political, and cultural relevance of specific challenges. *Understanding* safety and security challenges exposes students to various disciplinary lenses and perspectives, including international relations, political science, sociology, public administration, and international history. It also teaches students to divide complexities into a set of both distinct and interrelated problems. *Doing* safety and security trains students to synthesize the disciplinary knowledge they have gained and identify governance responses, strategies, and practices to mitigate risks and threats.

The panel studied the documents provided by the programme and discussed the profile and orientation with both programme management and lecturers. It concludes that the programme has a unique profile with a clear and distinct focus on safety and security. The panel values this focus, considering that modern-day security challenges are often difficult to understand and solve, partly because they are potentially global in reach and scale and are characterized by both safety and security aspects. The panel recognizes that this requires academics in the safety and security domain who have the ability to think integrally and strategically about safety and security, who have analytical flexibility, and who have the ability to quickly switch between levels, actors, and different situations. The panel notices that these qualities are well provided in the BaSS.

The panel appreciates the multi-disciplinary approach of the programme, involving the contribution of 10 disciplines. According to the panel, a useful development could be to further highlight the programme's core disciplines of safety and security studies more in relation to the other disciplines. Additionally, the programme could define which of the 10 disciplines are closest to its core – for example, public administration and political science, since an in-depth understanding of democratic accountability, transparency, personal integrity, and human rights is of vital importance in the study of security and crisis management. This could help define and finetune the profile even further and help clarify the programme's ambitions.

Intended learning outcomes

The programme translated its profile into a set of 16 intended learning outcomes (ILOs). The ILOs have been created along the lines of the Dublin descriptors for bachelor's programmes. In addition to knowledge of and insight into the field of safety and security and the ability to apply this expertise, the learning outcomes stress professional and lifelong learning skills and the ability to communicate the acquired insights. The ILOs also comply with the domain-specific framework formulated by the ISGA concerning crisis and security governance, aligning the programme's aims with academic and professional expectations. The panel studied the ILOs and now considers them suitable for an academic bachelor's programme in security studies. It considers the ILOs sufficiently detailed and clearly in line with the Dublin descriptors and appreciates that both academic and professional skills are sufficiently represented in the ILOs.

Considerations

The panel finds that the BaSS has a unique profile with a clear and distinct focus on safety and security. The panel appreciates the multi-disciplinary approach in the programme that features the contribution of various disciplines. According to the panel, the programme could clarify which of those disciplines are closest to the core of the programme and fine-tune the focus of the programme in line with this. The programme's learning outcomes are well-formulated, clearly demonstrate an academic bachelor's level, and align with academic and professional expectations.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programme meets standard 1.

Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment

The curriculum, the teaching-learning environment and the quality of the teaching staff enable the incoming students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Findings

Curriculum

The programme comprises three years (180 EC). The curriculum consists of an academic core, skills labs, and an elective space. Throughout the curriculum, students are familiarized with different disciplinary lenses and skills with a goal of stimulating a layered understanding of safety and security. In the courses, contemporary safety and security challenges are studied on various levels and from the perspective of multiple actors. State-of-the-art academic literature and research are linked to real-life examples.

The compulsory *academic core* (135 EC) entails multi- and interdisciplinary courses (85 EC), research methodology courses (15 EC), integrated group projects (20 EC), and the thesis (15 EC). See Appendix 2 for an

overview of the curriculum. Courses in the academic core aim to offer students a detailed understanding of safety and security in contemporary society. Students are presented with concepts, theories, and methods of specific disciplines, and they focus on integrating this academic knowledge across disciplinary boundaries. In the integrated group projects, students work in interdisciplinary teams to create a research-based artefact (podcasts, simulations, or business plans) to foster societal change, as well as a group- and practice-oriented consultancy project with a relevant organization in the security domain.

Within the *skills labs* (15 EC), the focus is on academic and professional skills training, and students work in small groups of around 16. Students develop academic skills, such as critical thinking and academic writing, and professional skills, such as organizational and leadership expertise and the ability to work in teams and in intercultural settings. The focus is always on the application of these skills to contemporary safety and security issues. Special attention is given to skills that enhance interdisciplinary thinking and problem-solving and that allow students to communicate ideas to a wide range of professional, public, and academic audiences. Students work under the guidance of tutors to develop their learning skills, deepen their substantive knowledge beyond the courses, and learn and practice academic and professional skills. Furthermore, the labs allow tutors to monitor and enhance study progress and to build a student community. Each skills lab is connected to the core course in the same block.

The *elective space* (30 EC) in the final year offers students the opportunity to enrich their study programme according to their individual needs and interests. This encourages students to play an active role in the design of their own learning process. Students may choose to follow either deepening or broadening courses inside or outside Leiden University, which allows them to prepare for possible entry requirements of a specific master's programme. Students can also follow a minor, a part of a programme abroad, or an internship to further develop their professional skills.

In the first and second years, students engage in 12 contact hours per week. Half of all contact hours in the first year take place in the setting of a skills lab with groups of, on average, 16 students. In the second year, students have nine hours of lectures and three hours of course labs. In years 2 and 3, students work more interdependently, as they should have acquired planning and learning skills during the skills and course labs in the first year. The number of contact hours in the third year varies depending on the choices students make in their elective space and the need for guidance during the graduation phase. The didactic methods and assessments within the skills labs and integrated group projects are used to encourage active student learning. The didactics focus on student activity and engagement in the learning process and actively involving students with the content through teamwork in various in-class exercises. Furthermore, examples of teaching methods within the programme are case studies, in-house development of simulations and serious games across various courses, facilitating blended and hybrid modes of teaching, and a structural involvement of safety and security stakeholders in education. Lectures and labs are constantly updated to incorporate the latest challenges and cases.

The panel studied the curriculum and several course materials and its members have talked to the programme management, teaching staff, tutors, and students. It concludes that the programme offers a well thought-out curriculum that logically brings together subjects related to safety and security. Although the programme has grown substantially since its start, it works with small-scale groups and values that provide an inspiring learning environment that encourages critical debate and reflection. The panel has a positive impression of the learning environment and values the various methods used in the programme, such as working groups, labs, project work, field work, and lectures. It also appreciates that teaching is done in a stimulating and activating way, for example, by using simulation, conducting serious games, and linking the courses to real-life examples. Furthermore, the panel learned from the documentation and the interviews

with various stakeholders that a strength of the programme is that it educates both academic professionals who are preparing for the professional working field and professional academics who are preparing for academia. Students develop both academic and professional skills throughout the curriculum, and the panel values the solid foundation that the programme provides in both professional and academic skills. Based on the self-evaluation report, panel members wondered whether the programme places a relatively strong focus on the professional orientation of the BaSS in proportion to the academic part of the programme. Students made it convincingly clear to the panel that this is not the case. The panel learned from the interview with students that there is a solid balance between academic and professional skills in the programme, such as in the way that activating and action-based didactics are part of the programme, but there substantial attention is also focused on developing academic skills in the teaching methods.

In spite of the diversity in teaching methods, which the panel appreciates, the panel learned from interviews with teaching staff and students that the programme is relatively highly lecture-based in proportion to other teaching methods. More than half of the teaching methods take the shape of a lecture. The panel recognizes this to be an effective way to teach large groups of students but emphasizes further monitoring of whether lectures are the most fitting teaching method for the content that is taught or whether another teaching method is more appropriate. The panel also sees possibilities to include more interactive elements in lectures and group-based learning and learned from teaching staff that they are already including parts of this in lectures. The panel advises the programme management to explore this element even further.

During the site visit, the panel learned from the available documents and the interview with teaching staff that there is a clear build-up in the curriculum and that the complexity increases throughout. In the first year, students learn about safety and security concepts; in the second year, they learn to think critically about these concepts; and in the third year, they further develop their knowledge and skills and examine the insights they have obtained in more depth. After noticing this during the site visit, the panel believes the information could be more explicit about the programme's progression and sequence, both for students and for the external audience.

Guidance and feasibility

In recent years, the BaSS has experienced significant growth in the number of students, from approximately 100 students in the first cohort in 2017–2018 to more than 250 students currently. In response, the programme management halted promotion of the programme amongst prospective students from abroad. The admission requirements consist of an online preliminary matching tool to clearly explain the aim and content of the programme to prospective students and to assess whether they meet the student's expectations and qualifications. To enter the programme, students must follow a short private online course that provides a realistic view of the field of security studies and the BaSS. The matching procedure is mandatory for those interested in the programme.

Students have access to guidance and support by student mentors, tutors, study coordinators, and study advisors. Student mentors, who act as role models and the first point of contact, aim to familiarize first-year students with the programme, study skills, and student life. Mentoring takes place in a small-group setting with a maximum of 20 students per mentor. Student mentors are second- and third-year students from the bachelor's programme in Security Studies.

In addition to the student mentors, tutors – junior lecturers who provide workgroup education such as the skills labs – are important linking pins of the programme. Additionally, tutors help students get acquainted and become comfortable with the programme, academia, and the skills to succeed at the university. In their first year, students have weekly contact hours with a tutor and discuss topics in a small-scale setting with a

tutor. Moreover, first-year students have individual meetings with their tutors every semester to discuss topics such as personal study habits and the transition from secondary school to university. Tutors are trained to help students find assistance within the university and are in regular contact with the study advisors should problems arise. In practice, tutors get to know students well and are often the first person students go to with questions or requests for help. Throughout this process and with the guidance of tutors, students form an active learning community in which they can work together to solve problems with the help of others.

The study advisors play a crucial role in fostering student well-being. They monitor progress, help to prevent or limit study delay, advise students on the best course of action, and, if required, assist in managing academic delay. If necessary, they can refer the students to the appropriate care provider. Study coordinators are responsible for student support on a more practical and programme level in relation to schedules, grades, and extra-curricular activities. The coordinator meets with the tutors twice a year to discuss students' progress. A student handbook provides information on the programme and available support, and students can find frequently asked questions and answers on the Student Care platform. Furthermore, online coaches are available to assist with situations that students might face, such as fear of failure.

In the bachelor thesis, students execute an individual study on a particular security or safety topic relevant to the programme. This is the final compulsory module for students of the BaSS. Students are divided into groups and assigned a supervisor with a particular area of expertise. The supervisor supports the students through group seminars in which students have access to instruction and materials, share their research, and receive feedback. The supervisor defines the research area that students explore and helps them identify theories and empirical material to address the main question of their thesis. After the initial plenary meeting and group allocation, the instruction is mostly in the form of group supervision meetings.

The panel concluded from the interviews with various stakeholders that the programme is feasible and that guidance for students is well organized and well structured, even though the programme has had a large influx of students in recent years. The panel learned from students that they appreciate the available guidance and the clear infrastructure for this as well as a well-functioning support system, in which tutors have significant contact with students. The only point of attention that the students mentioned is that their large number sometimes influences the courses, which can become crowded and slightly chaotic, leaving less space for self-study. The panel learned from the programme management that their focus is already on stabilizing the inflow of students and advises monitoring to ensure that the course schedule fits the number of students who participate.

Furthermore, the panel advises the programme management to explore the extent to which their actions to keep student numbers in check are effective. With the increase in student and staff numbers, the panel believes the programme may have become accustomed to further growth. Therefore, the panel suggests that all involved parties reflect on, debate, and analyse what size best fits the programme. According to the panel, such conscious reflection and dialogue can help focus the programme's future development and inspire any decisions concerning curriculum development.

Language and internationalization

During the site visit, the panel discussed the use of English as the language of instruction and the programme name with the management. The panel considers English an appropriate choice given the international orientation of the programme and the global labour market related to the BaSS; it is convinced that the international character is a core element of the programme. The panel also notices the added value of the

international classroom for the programme, particularly the way in which it incorporates varying perspectives and insights and prepares students for global academic and professional fields. An English language proficiency (level C1) is one of the academic staff recruitment requirements. Students are satisfied with the fact that the programme is taught in English, and foreign students entering the programme must meet English language proficiency requirements as part of their admission.

Teaching staff

The teaching staff consists of 20 lecturers and 23 tutors. Their various disciplinary backgrounds in public administration, history, law, criminology, psychology, international relations, and sociology reflect the multi-disciplinary character of the BaSS. All BaSS lecturers hold a doctoral degree or are close to obtaining their doctoral degree. The tutors are junior lecturers who teach the skills and course labs, in which they work with small groups of 16 students, on average. Research-led teaching is key to the programme, and all lecturers have a University Teaching Qualification (UTQ) or are in the process of obtaining one.

Based on documents and discussions during the site visit, the panel concludes that the teaching staff is well qualified to deliver the programme and that sufficient staff members are available to teach it. The panel learned from student evaluations that BaSS lecturers and supervisors are highly appreciated and that students value them for their expertise. This is also the case for tutors, who received highly positive evaluations from students. The panel spoke to enthusiastic, passionate, and committed staff during the site visit and saw their passion for the programme and students. The panel values the motivation of the teaching staff to make the programme work. The panel noticed openness to discuss development and a cooperative spirit amongst staff members. In addition, the panel appreciates the quantity of the teaching staff. Sufficient attention is focused on teacher professionalization and educational innovation. For example, BaSS lecturers are engaged in several educational innovation projects at Leiden University, lecturers annually attend workshops on teaching and assessment methods, and Leiden University offers individual teacher development trajectories for academic staff. Furthermore, regular meetings and trainings are organized for all BaSS staff on a variety of issues to ensure coherence in the programme and to promote knowledge sharing. The panel learnt from the conversation with tutors that for them professionalization opportunities can be further improved. Tutors mentioned that there are development options, but it is not structurally embedded. The panel suggests the programme management to include structural professionalization opportunities for tutors.

Considerations

According to the panel, the BaSS curriculum has a clear structure with multi- and interdisciplinary courses, research methodology courses, integrated group projects, and a thesis. The panel is positive regarding the learning environment and values the various methods the programme uses in a stimulating and activating way. A strength of the programme is that it educates both academic professionals as well as professional academics, and it provides a solid foundation and balance in both professional and academic skills. A remark of the panel is that a relatively large part of the teaching methods consists of lectures. The panel advises continued monitoring of whether lectures are the most suitable teaching method or whether another more interactive method could be appropriate. The panel advises the programme management to explore the extent to which their actions to keep student numbers in check are effective, and suggests that all involved parties reflect on, debate, and analyse what size best fits the programme. Furthermore, the panel suggests making the build-up of the programme more explicit for both students and the external audience. Students are well-supported and the curriculum is feasible. The programme is taught in English, which aligns with the international orientation of the programme, academia, and the global labour market. The programme has sufficient teaching staff who are suitably qualified, well-appreciated by students, and passionate about and

committed to both the programme and the students and passionate about and committed to both the programme and the students.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programme meets standard 2.

Standard 3. Student assessment

The programme has an adequate system of student assessment in place.

Findings

Assessment system

Within the BaSS, assessment is based on the Course and Examination Regulations and the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Examiners (BoE). Assessment in the BaSS programme is used to determine that course and programme learning objectives have been met, provide students with feedback on their progression towards the learning outcomes, and offer signals for the assessor on the progression of student performance. The assessment methods document provides an overview of the examination methods and their respective weight within each course, and assessment methods vary between courses. The programme courses offer multiple assessments, including examinations with multiple-choice and open-ended questions, papers, oral presentations, and in-class quizzes.

In each course, senior lecturers instruct tutors on how to grade with the help of extensive model answers and grading rubrics. Rubrics are continuously improved based on shared experience. Furthermore, grading trainings are structurally organized, and reliability checks are in place when grading is done in teams. Grading teams discuss and check each other's work, and grading scores are compared within teams as a means for internal quality control. After each course, students fill in a course evaluation; likewise, they complete a programme evaluation at the end of the programme. The evaluations are discussed in the programme committee, with the programme director, with the individual lecturers, and in staff meetings.

After studying the assessment procedures and interviewing the BoE, programme management, and teaching staff, the panel has the impression of a well-functioning assessment system that supports students by making assessments clear, transparent, and accessible and aids teachers in making well-founded assessment decisions. The panel learned that continuous calibration sessions among teachers take place that promote transparency in the assessment process. Average grading is monitored and the programme uses data analysis to unravel grading behaviour. When two assessors do not agree on a mark, they discuss their underlying arguments and, after that, decide what grade to assign, which enhances alignment among teaching staff.

The panel advises the programme to explore whether the assessment of professional skills can be further integrated into the programme. The panel noticed that, while this could add value for students, it has not yet been clearly included in the assessment system. For example, the programme can think of serious gaming assessment as a means for this.

Thesis assessment

The bachelor's thesis allows the student to demonstrate the insights, attitudes, and knowledge gained during the programme. The bachelor's thesis is assessed by an academic supervisor who is a lecturer in the ISGA at Leiden University and a second, independent, examiner who is also appointed by the examination committee. If the first and second assessor differ in their assessment by more than 1.5 points of a grade, or if one of them passes the thesis while the other fails it, the assessors must discuss their differences. If they are unable to reach consensus, a third assessor is appointed. A digital thesis grading tool is used for thesis assessment, which allows for independent grading and incorporates relevant procedures in the online environment, including a plagiarism check.

As part of its preparation for the site visit, the panel examined 15 theses and their assessments. It concluded that the theses were assessed fairly overall and that the grades aligned with the panel's assessment. The panel approves of the programme's thesis assessment procedures due to their transparency and robustness: assessment is conducted independently by two assessors, rubrics are available for students, and feedback is provided on forms as grade-underpinning.

Board of Examiners

The Board of Examiners (BoE) consists of members representing diverse research groups and positions, from tutor to associate professor, an external member, and a secretary. The BoE meets weekly to discuss student requests, monitor the quality of courses and examinations, and further improve the procedures and protocols. The BoE appoints examiners by establishing the requirements for course and thesis examiners and by verifying that examiners meet the requirements. In response to the prior mid-term review, the BoE made substantial changes to enhance its quality control procedures, with the goal of making these more proactive and more systematic. Central elements of this are continuous quality monitoring, yearly course reviews, and an annual review of the bachelor's thesis that includes the evaluation of a random set of 10 theses. The BoE plays an active role in preventing fraud and plagiarism and has developed an instruction manual for course convenors to prepare their courses. The BoE advises on how to deal with text-generating artificial intelligence (AI) tools in assignments and provides lecturers with instructions about this. The BoE involves teaching staff in assessment quality by regularly presenting and discussing regulations and issues concerning the quality of examinations during meetings of the Institute Council and by sending its instruction manual to all lecturers. Staff members and students can contact the BoE with questions or request a consultation; additionally, the BoE has frequent contact with study advisors to discuss relevant and urgent matters. The BoE actively advises the director of education, programme director, policy officer, and programme coordinator on improving assessment quality.

The panel spoke to members of the BoE and recognized a solid and proactively functioning board that understands its tasks and responsibilities and is accountable for them. It noticed that the BoE currently does not oversee the topic selection of theses by students. The panel sees a role there for the BoE, and advises the board to ensure that thesis topics are always sufficiently related to safety and security issues.

Considerations

The panel is impressed with the bachelor's programme's clear and transparent assessment policies and practices. It considers assessment to be done in a clear, transparent and accessible way that supports students' learning process and aids teachers in making well-founded assessment decisions. The panel advises the programme to explore whether the assessment of professional skills could be further integrated into the programme. The panel examined the bachelor's thesis assessment procedure and concluded that it is transparent and robust. The programme has a proactive and well-functioning BoE that understands its

tasks and responsibilities and is accountable for them; however, the panel advises the BoE to ensure that thesis topics are sufficiently related to safety and security issues.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programme meets standard 3.

Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes

The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Findings

Theses

As part of its preparation for the site visit, the panel studied the bachelor's theses of 15 students, which are the final products of the programme. It concludes that the quality of the theses is good and that the theses demonstrate the level and quality that may be expected of bachelor's theses in security studies. In general, students made appropriate use of academic literature and research methods and the theses demonstrated that students were able to successfully formulate and investigate an academic research question with a multidisciplinary approach, which the panel values as an appropriate approach within the theses. This resulted in well-elaborated scientific reports of the research that students performed.

Alumni

In 2021, the programme conducted a survey of the first graduates of the BaSS programme. Of the respondents, 76% enrolled in a master programme, among which 73% enrolled in programmes at Leiden University. A total of 53% enrolled in the CSM master's programme offered at the ISGA. Most alumni (79%) remained in The Netherlands. Students mentioned in the interview during the site visit that they feel prepared for the working field, because the professional skills that had learned are a substantial part of the programme. Moreover, they appreciate the academic skills they have gained, with a significant focus on academic writing and researching. The majority of the alumni reported that the BaSS programme prepared them well for their master's programme. While most BaSS students continued with a master's programme, some students directly entered the labour market, with most of them working in the Netherlands in public and semi-private organizations. Jobs included positions as consultants, project officers or managers, trainees, policy officers, and financial positions. A majority of the alumni, including those who enrolled in a master's programme, indicated they found a job within six months of graduation (78%) at an academic level (77%).

The panel learned from the alumni survey that the majority of the graduates are satisfied with the structure and content of the programme as well as with the academic and lifelong skills they acquired; they said they would sign up for the programme again. The panel also spoke to BaSS alumni and learned that they are enthusiastic about the skills and knowledge they gained in the programme. The panel appreciates the fact that the programme prepares students well for related master's programmes and also for the working field.

Considerations

According to the panel, the theses and alumni of the BaSS programme demonstrate that the learning outcomes are achieved. The theses are well elaborated and are generally of good quality with a clear multi-disciplinary approach. Alumni look back on the programme with appreciation, voicing satisfaction with the

structure and content of the programme as well as the academic and professional skills they obtained. The programme prepares students well for related master's programmes and for professional jobs.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programme meets standard 4.

General conclusion

The panel's assessment of the bachelor's programme Security Studies is positive.

Development points

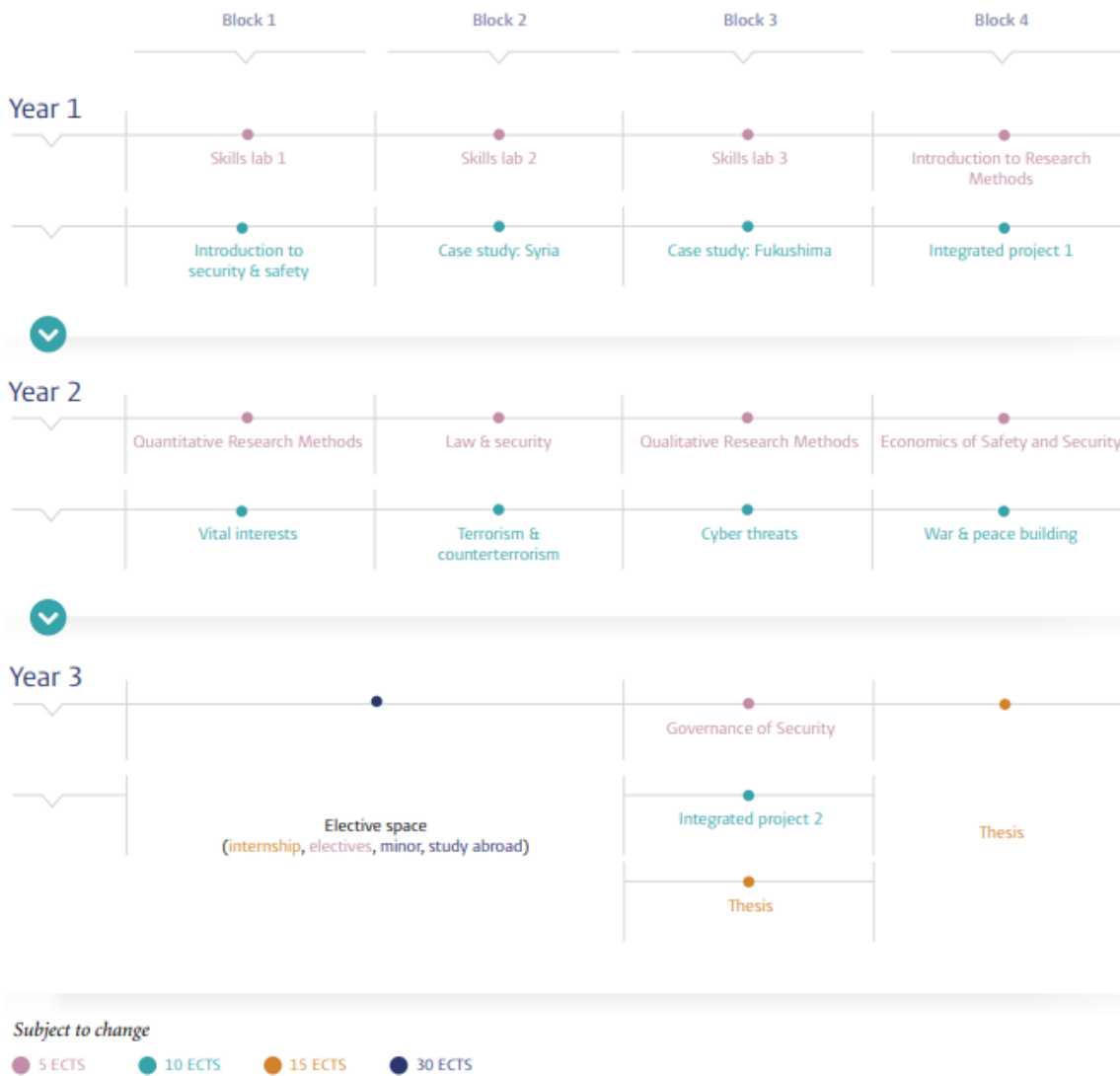
1. Specify which of the disciplines that are taught in the BaSS are most central within the programme and fine-tune the focus of the programme in line with this.
2. Continue monitoring whether lectures are the most suitable teaching method or determine whether another teaching method could be more appropriate or interactivity can be included more within current teaching methods.
3. Make the build-up of the programme – the progression from year 1, to 2, and to 3 – more explicit, for both students and others.
4. Explore whether assessment of professional skills can be better integrated into the programme.
5. Ensure that thesis topics are sufficiently related to safety and security issues.
6. As programme management, explore the extent to which its actions to keep student numbers in check are effective, and for all involved parties, reflect on, debate, and analyse what size best fits the programme.

Appendix 1. Intended learning outcomes

Knowledge and skills	Intended learning outcomes
Knowledge and understanding	<p>Graduates:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. have acquired knowledge and understanding of the significance and the historical, cultural and political development of security in a globalised world. 2. have acquired knowledge of theoretical principles, empirical findings and analytical models in the field of security and safety, informed by various disciplines. 3. have acquired knowledge and understanding of important contemporary and emerging security challenges, viewed from global, national, regional and local perspectives and their interconnections. 4. identify and understand how actors, approaches, consequences and possible impact are interlinked in the field of security studies in a globalised world.
Applying knowledge and understanding	<p>Graduates:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. are able to identify and contextualise upcoming trends and threats in the field of security, and place them in a broader societal context. 6. are able to analyse complex incidents and threats to security and safety, and identify various strategies derived from related disciplines. 7. are able to translate a security and/or safety issue into a research project suited for academic research and are able to translate findings into recommendations for factual problems.
Making judgements	<p>Graduates:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. are independent, responsible, critical thinkers who are aware of social and cultural differences and ethical dilemmas, and are open to different security and safety related approaches across disciplines. 9. are able to find relevant (research-based) information, and to organise, analyse and evaluate findings with clarity and precision. 10. are able to identify and evaluate different (research) methods and strategies and value their applicability for different security and/or safety challenges. 11. are able to identify and construct informed, considered and logical judgements in both academic and professional contexts.
Communication	<p>Graduates:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. can construct and articulate arguments (in oral forms on site and in written forms) about security and/or safety theories and contemporary security and /or safety challenges in both professional, public and academic settings. 13. can effectively communicate on site to/with a range of professional, public and academic audiences.
Lifelong learning skills	<p>Graduates:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. contribute to an active learning and working community, and to partnerships with members of the academic community and others (such as representatives from business, industry, government and professional associations). 15. appreciate the importance of the practice of lifelong learning in either an academic or professional context. 16. respect and practise intellectual integrity and ethical scholarship.

Appendix 2. Programme curriculum

Security Studies Curriculum



Appendix 3. Programme of the site visit

Site visit B BaSS and M CSM 2 and 3 november 2023

Thursday 2 November

15:45 - 16:00 Arrival panel and welcome

16:00 – 16:30 Intern panel meeting

16:45 - 17:15 Interview BaSS teachers

17:30 - 18:00 Interview BaSS tutors

18:30 Panel dinner

Friday 3 November

08:30 - 09:15 Interview Management

09:30 - 10:00 Interview CSM teachers

10:00 - 10:30 Internal panel meeting

10:30 - 11:00 Interview Board of Examiners

11:15 - 12:00 Interview Students and alumni

12:00 - 13:30 Interactive tour and lunch

13:30 - 14:15 Internal panel meeting

14:30 - 15:15 Concluding session Management

15:15 - 16:30 Preparing preliminary findings and preparing oral report

16:30 – 17:00 Development dialogue

17:00 - 18:00 Oral report preliminary findings + with a drink afterwards

Appendix 4. Materials

Prior to the site visit, the panel studied 15 theses. Information on the theses is available from Academion upon request. The panel also studied other materials, which included:

- Appendix 1a. Overview of current curriculum 2021 - now
- Appendix 1b. Overview of the curriculum until 2020 - 2021
- Appendix 2. Overview of the BaSS teaching staff 2022-2023
- Appendix 3. Domain Specific Framework ISGA
- Appendix 4. Schematic overview of learning outcomes, course objectives and assessments
- Appendix 4a. Intended learning outcomes
- Appendix 4b. Course objectives
- Appendix 4c. Modes of instruction
- Appendix 4d. Assessment methods
- Appendix 5a. Decision on the institutional quality assessment
- Appendix 5b. Decision on the postponement of accreditation from the Ministry Education, Culture and Science
- Appendix 6a. Midterm committee review report BaSS and CSM 2021
- Appendix 6b. ISGA's response to recommendations of the review committee
- Appendix 7a. Opleidingskaart Security Studies BaSS 2021 - 2022
- Appendix 7b. Opleidingskaart Security Studies BaSS 2020 – 2021
- Appendix 8. Student Chapter
- Appendix 9a. NSE 2023
- Appendix 9b. NSE 2022
- Appendix 10. Overview staff meetings and workshops BaSS
- Appendix 11a. Board of Examiners manual
- Appendix 11b. Board of Examiners course evaluation template
- Appendix 12a. Overview of projects quality agreements
- Appendix 12b. ISGA participants teacher professionalisation
- Appendix 13a. Course and Exam Regulations
- Appendix 13b. Rules and Regulations of the Board of Examiners
- Appendix 14a. Alumni Survey 2021
- Appendix 14b. Alumni Survey 2023
- Appendix 15a. Internship manual
- Appendix 15b. Internship organisations
- Appendix 16. Overview of the educational landscape BaSS

- Appendix 17. Possibilities for further education
- Appendix 18. The Learn-Anywhere pilot
- Appendix 19a. Thesis grading criteria
- Appendix 19b. Thesis grading form
- Appendix 20. Student handbook Security Studies 2022-2023
- Appendix 21. Student Support Navigator