accreditaties@rug.nl

Aan het bestuur van de NVAO
t.a.v. Luut Kroes, directeur Afdeling Nederland
Postbus 85498
2508 CD Den Haag

Behandeld door
C.H. Santing

Datum
2 7. OKT 2021

Ons kenmerk
SER 21 / 06058

Onderwerp
Aanvraag verlenging accreditatie Research Master Linguistics

Geachte heer Kroes,

Hierbij zenden wij u de aanvraag voor verlenging van accreditatie van onze research master Linguistics. Het visitatierapport is als bijlage toegevoegd. De opleiding heeft van het panel als oordeel 'positief onder voorwaarden' ontvangen. Derhalve is een herstelplan opgesteld.
Dit plan, dat wij op korte termijn hopen vast te stellen, sturen wij u zo spoedig mogelijk na.

Wij verzoeken u de rekening voor verwerking van dit dossier te richten aan:

Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, Financial Shared Service Centre (fssc@rug.nl)
t.a.v. Faculteit der Letteren
Postbus 3
9700 AA Groningen

Onder vermelding van kostenplaats 158501101.

Met vriendelijke groet,
namens het College van Bestuur van de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen,

s/a

prof. dr. J. (Jouke) de Vries

RESEARCH MASTER'S PROGRAMME LINGUISTICS

FACULTY OF ARTS

UNIVERSITY OF GRONINGEN

CONTENTS

This report was finalised on 18 October 2021.

REPORT ON THE RESEARCH MASTER'S PROGRAMME LINGUISTICS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GRONINGEN

This report takes the NVAO's Assessment Framework for the Higher Education Accreditation System of the Netherlands for limited programme assessments as a starting point (September 2018).

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE PROGRAMME

Research master's programme Linguistics

Name of the programme:	Linguistics
CROHO number:	60817
Level of the programme:	master's
Orientation of the programme:	academic
Number of credits:	120 EC
Specializations or tracks:	Language and Cognition (L&C)
	Language and Communication Technologies (LCT)
	Clinical Linguistics (EMCL)
Location:	Groningen
Mode of study:	full time
Language of instruction:	English
Programme specific details:	
Erasmus Mundus:	*Track Language and Communication Technologies (LCT)*
partner institutions involved:	*Saarland University (Saarbrücken) (coordinator), University of Trento, University of Malta, University of Lorraine (Nancy), Charles University in Prague, University of the Basque Country (San Sebastian).*
type of degree awarded:	*Double degree*
Joint programme:	*Track Clinical Linguistics (EMCL)*
partner institutions involved:	*University of Potsdam, University of Eastern Finland and (from September 2021) Ghent University*
type of degree awarded:	*Joint degree, accompanied by joint diploma supplements*
Submission deadline NVAO:	Extended submission date 1 November 2021 due to legislation WHW art 5.31 lid 3

The visit of the assessment panel to the Faculty of Arts of the University of Groningen took place on 17 and 18 May 2021.

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE INSTITUTION

Name of the institution:	University of Groningen
Status of the institution:	publicly funded institution
Result institutional quality assurance assessment:	positive

COMPOSITION OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

The NVAO approved the composition of the panel on 25 May 2021 and met with the Groningen panel on 17 May 2021. The panel that assessed the research master's programme Linguistics consisted of:
- Prof. dr. M.P.G.M. (Maarten) Mous, professor of African Linguistics at Leiden University [chair];
- Prof. dr. A. (Ad) Neeleman, professor of Linguistics at University College London (United Kingdom);
- Prof. dr. H.E. (Henriette) de Swart, professor of French linguistics and semantics at Utrecht University;
- S. (Suze) Geuke BA, research master's student Linguistics at Leiden University.

The panel was supported by dr. F. (Fiona) Schouten, who acted as secretary.

WORKING METHOD OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

The assessment of the research master's programme Linguistics at the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Groningen was part of the cluster assessment RMA Linguistics and Literature. Between May 2021 and December 2021 the panel assessed nine programmes at six universities. The following universities participated in this cluster assessment: the University of Groningen, Leiden University, Utrecht University, the University of Amsterdam, Radboud University and Tilburg University. The site visits to Groningen and Leiden were held online due to Covid-19 restrictions.

On behalf of the participating universities, quality assurance agency Qanu was responsible for logistical support, panel guidance and the production of the reports. After 1 August 2021, this responsibility was transferred by Qanu to quality assurance agency Academion. Dr. Fiona Schouten was project coordinator for Qanu as well as Academion, and acted as secretary in the cluster assessment. Peter Hildering MSc acted as secretary during the site visit to Utrecht University.

Panel members
The members of the assessment panel were selected based on their expertise, availability and independence. The panel consisted of the following members:
- Prof. dr. M.P.G.M. (Maarten) Mous (panel chair)
- Prof. dr. H.E. (Henriette) de Swart (panel chair/panel member)
- S. (Sannah) Debreczeni BA (student member)
- Prof. dr. Y. (Yra) van Dijk (panel member)
- S. (Suze) Geuke BA (student member)
- Prof. dr. B. (Birgit) Hellwig (panel member)
- Dr. N.H. (Nivja) de Jong (panel member)
- Prof. dr. B.L.J. (Bettelou) Los (panel member)
- Em. prof. dr. M.J.H. (Maaike) Meijer (panel member)
- Prof. dr. A. (Ad) Neeleman (panel member)
- J. (Julia) Neugarten BA (student member)
- Prof. dr. D.M. (Diederik) Oostdijk (panel member)
- Prof. dr. H. (Hugo) Quené (panel member)
- Prof. dr. D. (Dominiek) Sandra (panel member)

Preparation
On 14 December 2020, the panel chair was briefed by Qanu on his role, the assessment framework, the working method, and the planning of site visits and reports. A preparatory panel meeting was organised on 12 April 2021.

During this meeting, the panel members received instruction on the use of the assessment framework. The panel also discussed their working method and the planning of the site visits and reports.

The project coordinator composed a schedule for the site visit in consultation with the Faculty. Prior to the site visit, the Faculty selected representative partners for the various interviews. See Appendix 3 for the final schedule.

Before the online site visit to University of Groningen, Qanu received the self-evaluation reports of the programmes and sent these to the panel. A thesis selection was made by the panel's chair and the project coordinator. The selection consisted of 15 theses and their assessment forms for the programmes, based on a provided list of graduates between 2014 and 2021. A variety of topics and tracks and a diversity of examiners were included in the selection. The project coordinator and panel chair assured that the distribution of grades in the selection matched the distribution of grades of all available theses.

After studying the self-evaluation reports, theses and assessment forms, the panel members formulated their preliminary findings. The secretary collected all initial questions and remarks and distributed these amongst all panel members.

Before the online site visit, the panel discussed its initial findings on the self-evaluation reports and the theses, as well as the division of tasks during the site visit.

Site visit
The assessment of the programme of the University of Groningen took place on 17 and 18 May 2021. Before and during the site visit, the panel studied the documents provided by the programme. An overview of these materials can be found in Appendix 4. The panel conducted interviews with representatives of the programmes: students and staff members, the programme's management, alumni and representatives of the Board of Examiners. It also offered students and staff members an opportunity for confidential discussion during a consultation hour. One request for private consultation was received.

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 panel's preliminary findings and general observations. At the end of the site visit, programme and panel held a development dialogue. The outcomes of the development dialogue are published in a separate document that is not part of the application for accreditation.

Consistency and calibration
In order to assure the consistency of assessment within the cluster, various measures were taken:
1. The panel composition ensured regular attendance of (key) panel members, including the chair;
2. The project advisor attended parts of all site visits and acted as secretary in almost all of them.

Report
After the site visit, the secretary wrote a draft report based on the panel's findings and submitted it for peer assessment. Subsequently, the secretary sent the report to the panel. After processing the panel members' feedback, the secretary sent the draft report to the Faculty in order to have it checked for factual irregularities. The secretary discussed the ensuing comments with the panel's chair and changes were implemented accordingly. The report was then finalised and sent to the Faculty and University Board.

Definition of judgements standards
In accordance with the NVAO's Assessment framework for limited programme assessments, the panel used the following definitions for the assessment of the standards:

Generic quality

The quality that, from an international perspective, may reasonably be expected from a higher education Associate Degree, Bachelor's or Master's programme.

Meets the standard
The programme meets the generic quality standard.

Partially meets the standard
The programme meets the generic quality standard to a significant extent, but improvements are required in order to fully meet the standard.

Does not meet the standard
The programme does not meet the generic quality standard.

The panel used the following definitions for the assessment of the programme as a whole:

Positive
The programme meets all the standards.

Conditionally positive
The programme meets standard 1 and partially meets a maximum of two standards, with the imposition of conditions being recommended by the panel.

Negative
In the following situations:
- The programme fails to meet one or more standards;
- The programme partially meets standard 1;
- The programme partially meets one or two standards, without the imposition of conditions being recommended by the panel;
- The programme partially meets three or more standards.

SUMMARY JUDGEMENT

Intended learning outcomes
The panel considers the setup and focus of the research master's programme in Linguistics of the University of Groningen to be clear and distinctive. The programme as a whole is characterised by its emphasis on statistics and quantitative methods, in addition to linguistic theory. The three tracks all teach students a basic knowledge in research and data analysis methodologies. They also show overlap in the attention to linguistic analysis and corpus linguistics. The L&C track focuses on processing approaches. The panel appreciates the fact that this track allows flexibility to incorporate students' own interests in the field of language and cognition, while drawing on the CLCG's unique expertise. The LCT Erasmus Mundus double degree track focuses on language in a digital world and aims to adapt the programme to rapid new developments such as the current trend towards computing, while actively retaining and promoting linguistics aspects as well. The panel applauds the track for doing so. Finally, the EMCL track has a very clear orientation towards the subfield of clinical linguistics and cooperates with partners who each have their own specialisms. The track has a clear academic as well as a professional orientation. The panel concludes that this makes the EMCL track stand out nationally as well as internationally.

The panel studied the programme's two sets of intended learning outcomes: one for the L&C and LCT tracks and another for the EMCL track. It concludes that they clearly reflect the Dublin descriptors for master's programmes and match the profile, content and academic orientation of the programme and the various tracks. The panel particularly appreciates the professional orientation and specific attention to research ethics in the EMCL outcomes.

Teaching-learning environment
According to the panel, the curricula of the various tracks have been carefully designed and structured, enabling students to move from foundational courses where a level playing field is created through the necessary skills and content modules to an individual research internship and thesis. The tracks vary in the amount of freedom that is offered (L&C students have most freedom to design their own study paths, whereas EMCL students follow a more fixed programme). The programme is internationally oriented, providing unique opportunities for students in all tracks to travel to other universities and research institutes. All tracks are offered at the adequate level and student guidance is well-organised.

The international collaborations in the LCT and EMCL tracks are well-designed, carefully organised and constantly monitored by all partners. The Covid pandemic affected the EMCL track in particular, but the programme dealt with it adequately and used the experience to improve the curriculum. The teaching staff consists of high-quality senior researchers and thanks to curriculum innovations, students are offered ample opportunities to work closely with them. Working methods are apt and varied and the choice of English as a language of instruction is supported by the panel. The panel also appreciates the facilities offered to students and finds the admission procedures conducive to the programme's feasibility. The panel suggests that the programme point out more explicitly the professional orientation and the importance of transferable skills to students. It also recommends LCT to investigate whether certain combinations of universities had best be offered in a fixed order to avoid overlaps. On the whole, however, the panel praises the programme for the unique and well-designed teaching-learning environment it offers students.

Student assessment
The panel considers assessment in the programme to be varied and well-designed, reflecting the level of the research master's programme and demonstrably matching the programme's learning outcomes. It appreciates the way in which the internship and thesis are assessed. It found that the grades given to theses were usually within the range it would expect, and sufficiently clarified on the assessment forms. The panel did notice that in practice, the second supervisor is not always independent. In a number of cases in EMCL, both the local and the Groningen supervisor act not only as assessors, but also support the student in his or her thesis procedure. Since the programme and the Board of Examiners aim at including an independent second assessor in thesis assessment, the

panel recommends aligning all thesis supervision in the various tracks to reflect this approach and thus create internal coherence. If this proves too complicated in the joint degree setup, the panel recommends explicitly exempting the track from this rule in order to provide clarity.

The panel is pleased with the way the Board of Examiners of the Groningen Faculty of Arts assures the quality of the L&C and LCT tracks, as well as of the Groningen parts of the EMCL track. It concludes, however, that the Board of Examiners cannot fully safeguard the quality of the international parts of the EMCL joint degree track in a satisfactory manner, in spite of the fact that the previous committee formulated recommendations to this effect.   The panel recognises the attempts that the program has made in making sure that there is quality control, and it has no indication that the quality control of these parts by the consortium is insufficient, but one additional step needs to be made that provides the Groningen Board of examiners with the formal means to ascertain that this is the case. The panel recommends addressing this formal issue by letting the local board delegate responsibility for assessment quality to the EMCL Consortium Examination Board, while arranging for the local board to be fully informed of assessment practices in the international parts of the programme by the EMCL board. In this situation, the Dutch legal requirements would be satisfactorily met. The panel also advises peer review between consortium partners at the level of course assessment to boost assessment quality; and recommends ensuring that at least one member of the local Dutch Board of Examiners is also a member of the EMCL Examination Board.

Achieved learning outcomes
The panel finds that the high level of the theses and the clear alumni success demonstrate that students from all three tracks achieve the intended learning outcomes of the programme.

The panel assesses the standards from the *Assessment framework for limited programme assessments* in the following way:

Research master's programme Linguistics

Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes   meets the standard
Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment   meets the standard
Standard 3: Student assessment   partially meets the standard
Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes   meets the standard

General conclusion   conditionally positive

The panel recommends the NVAO to grant the programme a 6-month period in which to meet the following condition:

> Have the local Board of Examiners delegate responsibility for the assessment of the parts of the EMCL track taught outside Groningen to the EMCL Examination Board, on the condition that the local board is fully informed by the EMCL Examination Board of assessment practices in these parts.

It also advises the programme to ensure that the two boards share one member, and recommends peer review at the level of course assessments between consortium partners to enhance assessment quality.

The chair, prof. dr. Maarten Mous, and the secretary, dr. Fiona Schouten, of the panel hereby declare that all panel members have studied this report and that they agree with the judgements laid down in the report. They confirm that the assessment has been conducted in accordance with the demands relating to independence.

Date: 18 October 2021.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STANDARDS FROM THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK FOR LIMITED FRAMEWORK ASSESSMENTS

> **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 research master's programme in Linguistics, organised by the Graduate School of Humanities (GSH) of the University of Groningen, aims to train talented and motivated students to carry out independent research in the field of linguistics. The profile of the program is determined to a large extent by the expertise of the research groups contributing to it. In this way, a close connection between current developments in linguistic research and the contents of the programme is achieved. The programme consists of three tracks: Language and Cognition (L&C), Language and Communication Technologies (LCT), and European Master's in Clinical Linguistics (EMCL).

The Language and Cognition (L&C) track has grown out of the Center for Language and Cognition (CLCG) research institute and represents an opportunity for students to obtain a research-oriented degree related to any of the broad range of topics represented by the linguists in the Faculty of Arts. This is a selective admissions track focusing on the dynamics of language in many subfields of linguistics. It addresses psycho- and neurolinguistic processing and language development, processes and interactions in discourse and communication, and variation and change in linguistic structure and meaning. While this track allows for students to specialize in different areas, it maintains a distinct profile linked to the specific areas of expertise at the University of Groningen. More than other Dutch programmes, the Groningen L&C curriculum includes a decidedly quantitative approach to language that is grounded in linguistic theory and highlights the relation between language and various aspects of cognition. The programme includes additional dimensions that are not prominent in other Linguistics programs in the Netherlands, such as neurolinguistics, language development throughout the lifespan and bilingualism.

The Language and Communication Technologies (LCT) track is an Erasmus Mundus double degree programme, offered in cooperation with six other European Universities: Saarland University (Saarbrücken) (coordinator), University of Trento, University of Malta, University of Lorraine (Nancy), Charles University in Prague, and University of the Basque Country (San Sebastian). The programme concentrates on Natural Language Processing, the discipline at the intersection of linguistics, computer science, and artificial intelligence that studies applications such as machine translation, automatic speech recognition and synthesis, dialogue systems, question answering, information extraction and web search systems. The LCT track offers a curriculum that not only concentrates on applications but also on the linguistic principles underlying these applications. By combining the strengths of its seven partners, the LCT track is able to offer a wide range of specializations that cater to students with an interest or background in linguistics, computer science, or cognitive science. Groningen is one of the partners with a strong linguistics profile.

The European Master's in Clinical Linguistics (EMCL) track is a joint degree programme which aims to attract, select, and fund excellent (i.e., talented and motivated) students to carry out original research in the field of clinical linguistics, psycholinguistics, and neurolinguistics for academic and industry purposes. To reach these goals, a consortium of three universities has been formed (i.e., the University of Groningen, the University of Potsdam, and the University of Eastern Finland), with the University of Groningen as the coordinating institute. The consortium also includes 15 associated partners from the academic (4), R&D (5) and clinical sector (6). Clinical linguistics is a relatively niche discipline that is closely related to other subfields of linguistics and cognitive sciences such as neurolinguistics and psycholinguistics. The track is set up as a *peregrinatio studiorum* whereby students receive

successive training at three academic centres. At the University of Groningen (RUG) the emphasis is on crosslinguistic studies of language-impaired children and adults, on language testing in neurosurgical settings, and the usage of neurotechnology and IT for the diagnosis and treatment of language impairments. At the University of Potsdam, the focus is on statistics and psycholinguistics, particularly reading, language acquisition, and eye tracking. From 2020/2021 onwards, UP has been replaced by Ghent University, where students will be familiarized with advanced topics in statistics and psycholinguistics, particularly bilingualism, dyslexia, and eye tracking. Finally, at the University of Eastern Finland (UEF), the main focus is on speech technology and programming with Python, both fundamental theory and methods and their application to assessment of and adaptive solutions for speech impairments.

The panel appreciates the master programme's unique setup and focus. In general, the Groningen Linguistics research master is characterized by its emphasis on statistics and quantitative methods, in addition to linguistic theory. The three tracks each have a separate and specific focus. What unites them is that they all teach students a basic knowledge in programming and data analysis methodologies. They also show overlap in the attention to linguistic analysis and corpus linguistics. According to the panel, the Groningen Research Master in Linguistics is an internationally focused and clearly defined programme.

The L&C track is closely linked to the CLCG research group and focuses on processing approaches. The track offers a broad programme with cognition accents, but also goes beyond these aspects. The panel appreciates the fact that this track allows flexibility to incorporate students' own interest in the field of language and cognition, while drawing on the CLCG's unique expertise. The LCT track focuses on language in a digital world, and as such covers a research area that is changing at a high pace. The panel discussed this with track representatives and learned that they adapt to the current trend towards computing, but actively retain and promote linguistics aspects as well. The panel applauds the track for doing so. Finally, the EMCL track has a very clear orientation towards the subfield of clinical linguistics and cooperates with partners that each have their own specialisms. The track has a clear academic as well as a professional orientation, preparing its students to pursue a career either in the academic field or in non-academic positions (e.g., data visualization and analysis for IT companies, speech therapy, policy and advocacy), or a combination of the two. The panel concludes that this makes the EMCL track stand out nationally as well as internationally.

Intended learning outcomes
The L&C and LCT tracks share a set of intended learning outcomes. The EMCL track has a separate set, which shows partial overlap but also reflects the specific international and clinical nature of the track. The panel studied these sets of intended learning outcomes (see Appendix 2) and concluded that they clearly reflect the Dublin descriptors for master's programmes and match the profile and content of the programme and the various tracks. The learning outcomes have been phrased in a concrete manner and reflect both the academic orientation and the possible professional field they prepare for. The panel particularly appreciates the professional orientation and specific attention to research ethics described in the EMCL outcomes.

Considerations
The panel considers the setup and focus of the research master's programme in Linguistics of the University of Groningen to be clear and distinctive. The programme as a whole is characterised by its emphasis on statistics and quantitative methods, in addition to linguistic theory. The three tracks all teach students a basic knowledge in research and data analysis methodologies. They also show overlap in the attention to linguistic analysis and corpus linguistics. The L&C track focuses on processing approaches. The panel appreciates the fact that this track allows flexibility to incorporate students' own interests in the field of language and cognition, while drawing on the CLCG's unique expertise. The LCT Erasmus Mundus double degree track focuses on language in a digital world and aims to adapt the programme to rapid new developments such as the current trend towards computing, while actively retaining and promoting linguistics aspects as well. The panel applauds the track for doing so. Finally, the EMCL track has a very clear orientation towards the subfield of clinical linguistics and cooperates with partners who each

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Conclusion
Research master's programme Linguistics: the panel assesses Standard 1 as 'meets the standard'.

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

Admission
Each track in the Linguistics research master has its own selection procedure. In L&C, prospective students must have some background in linguistics, overall good grades, documentation of advanced proficiency in English and a grade of 8.0 or higher for their bachelor thesis, if applicable. The admissions committee, composed of the Director of Studies and three CLCG staff members from different research groups, also examines the students' motivations for graduate studies in general and the University of Groningen programme in particular. They seek students who clearly show a research interest, have a clear idea of what aspects of linguistics they would like to explore, and for whom there is a match between this desired focus and the offerings of the programme.

In LCT, students are admitted for both a September and February start date, but most students choose to start in September. The LCT Consortium is responsible for admission of students and the allocation of Erasmus Mundus grants. Eligibility is decided on the basis of CV, transcript of records, English certification, two recommendation letters and completion of a bachelor's degree. The Consortium has formulated joint assessment guidelines specifying how the various criteria are to be assessed. Applications are considered by a representative of each of the participating universities, and decisions are made in a series of online meetings. The consortium reports its decisions to the EACEA (the EU agency responsible for Erasmus Mundus) along with a motivation and description of the admission process. Allocation of students to partner programs is done on the basis of student preferences and a match between student motivation and background and partner profile, in such a way that there is a balanced distribution of students over the various partners.

In EMCL, the EMCL Selection Committee is responsible for the selection procedure. This committee consists of one local director from each of the universities and is chaired by the local director of the University of Groningen. It also includes one representative from the associated partners and one external peer who knows the programme but does not collaborate directly with it. The Selection Committee runs an initial selection on the basis of eligibility and file completeness and rates the selected applications on (1) academic quality (40%); (2) motivation (25%); (3) English proficiency (i.e., internet based TOEFL ≥ 100; IELTS ≥ 7); and (4) two recommendation letters (10%). The highest ranked applicants are admitted to the main list (the exact number depends on the number of Erasmus Mundus scholarships available) or to the reserve list.

The panel appreciates the careful selection process in all tracks. It noticed that in LCT, only 25% of applicants (50 out of 200), are admitted, showing the attraction of the programme and the possibility for the programme to be selective. EMCL, too, has a relatively strict procedure, selecting 25-30 out of 100 applicants. L&C admits two-thirds

of applicants (20 out of 30), and usually intake is between 10 and 13 students per year since not all students who are admitted end up joining the programme. The track focuses less on a specifically linguistic background and more on the student's level and interests. The panel concludes that such differences match the nature and aims of the various tracks and that admission procedures in all tracks are well-designed and balanced.

Curriculum design
L&C and LCT students begin their studies in the first semester with three compulsory courses (see Appendix 2 for a curriculum overview). Here, the students gain a deeper understanding of linguistic theories, with a focus on formal semantics and syntax. They also have a course in Statistics (5 ECs). As linguists have moved over to R as the overall preferred statistics package, students now learn R in the Basic Statistics course and develop their R-skills in subsequent research projects, most notably in the course Corpus Linguistics (5 ECs). In this course, the students are introduced to standard techniques to use corpora for linguistic research. They also train their own programming skills in R and learn which simple, statistical measures are often used in corpus linguistic research. The Corpus Linguistics course is an important part of both tracks; it provides students with a toolkit for quantitative research on any aspect of linguistics they pursue.

After this common grounding in the first semester, the two tracks diverge, while still potentially overlapping. A trademark feature of the L&C track is a great deal of flexibility and a wide range of options for specialization. The track also includes a semester-long research internship during which students often experience all steps in a research project (from research design and the creation of experimental stimuli or corpora, through data collection and analysis, to reporting research results in conference abstracts and posters). Students pursue their specific interests through electives: 10 EC in the first semester, 20 in the second semester and 10 at the Netherlands Graduate School of Linguistics, LOT, or a national equivalent. The remaining 60 EC are dedicated to the compulsory course Designing Your Research Project (5 EC), a compulsory internship (25 EC) and the research master thesis (30 EC). The students can also choose Natural Language Processing, the specialization of the LCT track, as their focus, and participate in this specialization without following the Erasmus Mundus double degree programme. They may follow their internship abroad, but don't study at two universities and only receive a degree from Groningen.

LCT students starting in Groningen follow one year at a partner institution and one year in Groningen. This may either be the first or the second year. In their Groningen year, students first follow the mandatory first semester courses (20 EC) described above. After this first semester, LCT students follow two more compulsory courses: Natural Language Processing (5 EC) and the Language Technology Project (5 EC). In addition, students select courses from a list of 14 approved specialization courses for a total of 30 EC. Most of these courses (such as Semantic Web Technology, Learning from Data, Computational Semantics, Shared Task Information Science) are from the Information Science track of the Communication and Information Sciences master program. Others are courses from the L&C track (Methodology and Statistics, Designing Your Research Project), from other tracks in CIS, or part of the MSc Artificial Intelligence. The other year is spent abroad, where students follow specialisation courses (30 EC) and write their thesis in the final semester. Students starting abroad and then coming to Groningen follow equivalent introductory courses at the partner institutions and follow specialisation courses in Groningen, where they write the thesis.

The EMCL joint degree track offers students successive training at three universities. All students start at the same university and travel to the different universities together. Up until 2020-2021, the students started at the University of Eastern Finland (UEF), then moved to Groningen and did their third semester at the University of Potsdam. The final semester was spent at one of the partner institutions (chosen by them) for an internship and thesis. Per 2021-2022, the students will start in Groningen, then move to Ghent University and spend their third semester at the UEF. During the final two months of the third semester, they do a fixed seven-week internship (10 EC) at one of the associated partners. The final semester is dedicated to the thesis and can be spent at any one of the partner institutions.

To make sure that the different subdisciplines of linguistics central to EMCL are represented equally in the programme, while also seeing to it that students are acquainted with tools and methods to understand and apply these subdisciplines, the programme is divided into eight modules: Start Up classes (0 EC); Language and Culture classes (9 EC); Methods (16 EC); Neuro-, psycho-, clinical linguistics (37 EC); Neurotechnology and IT for clinical linguistics (14 EC); Internship (10 EC); Thesis (30+4 EC); and Research extras (0 EC). Appendix 2 contains a more detailed description of the elements and courses per module, both in the old and the new programme.

The panel looked at the curricula of the tracks and the various subjects and elective elements. In all three tracks, the students are offered a set of mandatory courses to serve as a common starting point. In L&C and LCT, Linguistic analysis, Corpus Linguistics and Statistics provide theoretical and methodological foundations upon which the students can build. Increasingly, students get to shape their own programmes through electives and/or their research internship, and the thesis. In EMCL, students are brought up to speed in start-up sessions and follow a fixed order of courses at the various locations. Students have less freedom to choose between subjects but pursue their own interests in the internship and thesis during the second year. The panel is pleased with this overall design.

The order of EMCL is about to change as the collaboration partners change and Ghent takes Potsdam's place. The change of order has been carefully designed by the programme, not only taking into account a good and logical order of all the various elements and the specialties of each institution, but also such practicalities as the desirability to avoid placing students in Finland in the darkest period of the year. EMCL management plans to closely monitor the new setup over the coming years. The panel concludes that the programme has a clear image and grasp of its organisation, content and learning trajectories.

The panel is pleased with the choice of partners in LCT, who offer a variety of research specialisms and languages, courses and electives, and internship possibilities. All partners follow ESG quality assessment standards and guidelines, and coordination and monitoring between the various partner institutions is constant (see also *Feasibility and student guidance*). The panel did learn that there were some concerns voiced by LCT students about courses followed in partner institutions which they considered less suitable for the second, research and thesis-oriented year of the programme and more fitting for the first year in terms of reach and content. They felt that repetition could occur and regretted this possible overlap. Students also shared this concern with their teachers in the annual consortium meeting, where all partners get together to discuss the programme and improve it based on student feedback. The panel suggests investigating whether certain combinations of universities had best be offered in a fixed order to avoid this type of complaint.

Curriculum content and orientation
The panel learned from the students and alumni it interviewed that all tracks, especially L&C and LCT, are strongly research-oriented and that their professional orientation is more implicit. Yet, thanks to the attention paid in all tracks to the acquisition and development of transferable skills, such as research methods, programming (in LCT and EMCL) and statistics, students are well-prepared for the professional field, where the majority ends up finding employment. The panel noticed that not all students had been made aware of this fact and thinks that the importance of transferable skills outside academia could be communicated better to students. The internship of LCT offers the possibility to work in the industry, but students and alumni pointed out that this could be advertised wider. EMCL internships also offer such opportunities, and guest lecturers from clinical partners or the R&D field are invited into the classroom. The panel concludes that the tracks balance an academic and a professional orientation, but that all three and especially L&C and LCT could do more to point out the non-academic possibilities and non-academic preparation to students.

Since the previous site visit, the tracks each adapted their curriculum based on recommendations of the panel. In the case of L&C and LCT, it was recommended to include more top researchers in the teaching of the research master. This has been addressed by adding two new courses. 'Discourse Analysis' incorporates more staff from the Discourse and Communication and Empirical and Theoretical Linguistics research groups and 'Research Training'

(first given in 2019-20) invites all researchers in the CLCG to submit ongoing projects in which research master students can participate in the way of lab rotation and develop specific research skills for 5 or 10 EC. This latter option also meets requests by students to work more closely with CLCG scholars. The students the panel interviewed were pleased with this already popular option. EMCL started offering the start-up courses as bound electives to tailor to the need of incoming students and provide more flexibility in the course programme. The panel is positive about these alterations.

With the exception of the introductory courses, which are designed to bring students up to speed and on the same level, the courses interweave content and research skills. The panel learned from students and staff members that the Groningen teaching staff dedicates attention and effort to this integration, pointing out possible methods to be used when approaching certain content in class. The panel also discussed the inclusion of research ethics with the management, teaching staff and students. It learned that this is dealt with throughout the curriculum, both explicitly and implicitly. In LCT and L&C, research ethics is most clearly present in the Research Methods course. It is also dealt with when the research proposal for the thesis is written. In EMCL, the Groningen course Neuroimaging dedicates ample attention to the subject. The panel noticed that the attention paid to ethics throughout the programme is reflected in the master's theses, which in many cases explicitly deal with such topics as data management and permissions.

The panel also ascertained whether the curricula were sufficiently oriented towards the research master's level. This is clear in EMCL, where the curriculum is relatively fixed and selected in such a way that students attain a complete grasp of the niche research field and its practice. In L&C and LCT, students have electives to choose from, and many of them are taught at master's level. In L&C, students follow a maximum of 30 EC in electives, which the panel deems acceptable in a research master's programme. In LCT, the total number of elective points varies depending on the choices made by students and the order in which they follow the programme, but it is usually greater than 30 EC.

The panel discussed this fact with students, alumni, management, and staff, including various staff members who teach some of the regular master courses frequently selected by the LCT (as well as L&C) students. They told the panel that while administratively, these are regular MA level courses, the teaching staff ensures that research master students do follow these courses at a higher level. RM students will for instance be provided with extra challenges such as reading lists, or with more challenging options for writing their papers. Students confirmed that they experienced a clear difference in level in relation to their peers from regular master programmes. The panel is impressed with the careful and thoughtful way in which the teaching staff caters to the research master students in such shared courses. It also learned that the track coordinator plays a role in the selection of courses, both in Groningen and abroad, and that certain restrictions are in place (for instance, students are only allowed to follow courses with a research component). The panel concludes that in practice, students from all tracks are consistently taught at research master's level.

Teaching methods and language of instruction
In all three tracks, the panel encountered a good variety of fitting teaching methods. It is positive about the research-oriented internship and noticed that many courses require students to execute small research projects, for instance re-doing published research with other methods. In LCT, challenge-based (group) project learning is organised. L&C and LCT also offer the 'tutorials', individual projects where students work on under supervision of a researcher. EMCL offers a gaming course where students develop games and write scripts. In the courses, students are invited to share their own input, research interests and experiences and discuss them with the teaching staff as well as with peers. The students told the panel that they were pleased with this open and stimulating environment. They also appreciate the LOT summer and winter schools (obligatory for L&C students, optional for LCT students), organised by the national research school, where they meet other linguistics students, PhD candidates and teaching staff. According to the students, these summer and winter schools provide the necessary breadth of vision in a curriculum that allows them to choose courses according to their own interests, causing them to specialize quickly. Since students

appreciate this (partly mandatory) part of the programme and its networking function, the panel suggests looking into ways to avoid students having to pay for their travel and accommodation themselves.

The programme benefits from the international influx of students in realising an international classroom, particularly but not exclusively in the LCT and EMCL tracks. The panel considers English as a language of instruction a logical choice for all tracks, taking into account the international orientation of both the research and the professional field. It learned from L&C students that some of the electives they can take are not offered in English, which limits options for non-Dutch speaking students. It recommends investigating if there are possibilities to change this or provide alternatives.

The EMCL track offers students introductory MOOCs to create a level playing field at the start of the programme. It has added a new one on ethics, which the panel approves of. It noticed, however, that there are no credits attached to the MOOCs. As a consequence, there is no extra budget or support from the faculty and university to offer these. The panel points out that the MOOCs have an important function at the outset of the programme and recommends providing more support for developing and offering them.

Impact of the Covid pandemic
Since the research master in Linguistics is an internationally oriented programme whose three tracks all offer students the possibility to go abroad, the Covid pandemic had a clear impact. In the case of regular course work, the tracks developed online or hybrid forms of teaching. Students were offered the option to do online or hybrid research internships. According to the students the panel spoke with, the programme worked hard to adapt to the new situation.

The corona crisis affected the ECML track particularly. When the corona regulations were issued, the second-year students (cohort 2018-2020) were doing their internships all over the world and the first-year students (cohort 2019-2020) were in Groningen. The first-year students were informed immediately about the social isolation in the Netherlands and the possibility to go home without loss of scholarship or health care coverage. All physical classes were digitised immediately, including the guest lectures by local researchers. Additionally, a series of digital lectures was offered during the summer. In October, these students went to Potsdam University for their third term. The University of Potsdam was able to offer the courses in a hybrid fashion. The Groningen programme contacted all second-year students individually to hear about their physical and emotional condition, and about the internship (most were cancelled). A solution was offered to compensate for the parts of the internship they missed by providing a course on digital behavioural testing.

The panel praises the programme and staff for the solutions they came up with. It learned that the programme plans to develop a course on online experiments, which came to the foreground as an important topic due to Covid 19. The panel appreciates this positive and constructive attitude to the challenges faced by all, but especially by the EMCL track.

Feasibility and student guidance
Due to their different setup, the three tracks all have different mechanisms in place to provide students with the necessary guidance. In L&C, the flexibility and breadth of the curriculum is one of the reasons why students opt for the master's programme: they get to pick and choose their own learning trajectory. However, the number of options and the need to specialise eventually can also end up weighing on students and impacting their study success. Therefore, the L&C track organises a mentoring system: each student is assigned a mentor at the start of the programme, who is a member of the CLCG with expertise in the area in which the student wishes to specialise. The mentor system also helps students make international connections with potential external internship supervisors. The panel learned that students who are not certain of their specialisation at the start of the programme or who want to change it later, are able to do so. They will either be appointed a new supervisor or stay with the first one, depending on individual preferences. Students and alumni told the panel that they are pleased with this individual

help and guidance in putting together a coherent curriculum, and feel free to share doubts or issues when they arise.

L&C students also feel well-supported in their internship and thesis processes. They select a thesis topic and research methodology in the Designing Your Research Project course in the second semester of the first year. Subsequently, students do an internship, where they continue to develop their research focus. In most cases, thesis projects are related to the topic of the internship, with input from the external internship supervisor and other researchers on that project. The panel was told by students and alumni that the programme proactively supports them in finding internship and thesis placements as well as supervisors. The programme also started organising online thesis classes to support the students in their thesis process during the Covid pandemic. The one thing slightly lessening the track's feasibility, according to students, has been the timing of the LOT Winter School, which coincided with a period of many deadlines. The programme responded to student complaints by redistributing the course load, which the panel appreciates.

In the LCT track, the Groningen Director of Studies takes on an informal mentoring role by helping the students make programme choices. Together with the study advisor, the Director fulfils a pivotal role in student support: they are the two familiar 'faces' of the programme in Groningen. The Director of Studies discusses and gives advice on how to select courses, and (in the case of first year students) ensures that the first-year curriculum is compatible with the rules and regulations of the second-year partner. In the other parts of the programme, support and supervision are similarly arranged: all LCT partners have a local Director of Studies, who makes sure that students are properly enrolled, that grades are registered timely, and that students start the graduation process on time. The small number of students in the LCT track makes it possible to monitor study progress constantly. The approach has proven to be effective, given the high number of students that complete the program on time. Students told the panel they found the role of the Directors of Study valuable and felt supported by them. Feasibility is much improved by the quality assurance system that the track and its consortium partners have set up, with monthly online and annual physical meetings. A student representative (not necessarily from Groningen but representing all students in the program) is also invited to all meetings, and multiple students provide feedback at the annual meeting.

The biggest issue regarding feasibility in LCT is the mismatch in academic calendars between first and second year universities. When students finish late, this is often due to the fact that not all European countries have the same academic calendar. The situation has improved in recent years as local coordinators have become more aware of this fact, university curricula have been aligned, and the curriculum of individual students is now monitored by a coordinator from both partners at the beginning of year one. This matter will require ongoing attention.

In EMCL, supervision is organised by the various partners. Students receive help in all practical matters by the local administrator. Upon arrival all students sign a Student Agreement, a contract including the regulations, rules, and policies of the university. Each of the partner universities has a student support centre offering psychological or financial support, workshops and trainings, and help in case of extraordinary circumstances. To help students identify mental health or stress related problems early on and seek help if needed, a mental health and resilience section has been added to the start-up classes. In Groningen there is a specific study advisor for EMCL students.

Study progress is monitored carefully by the local directors of EMCL in regular one-on-one meetings with the students. In addition, two group representatives for each cohort are appointed to easily share information and input. Students are guided in seeking arrangements for internships and participate in Meet-the-employer events (internship preparation) in situ. EMCL students who write their thesis in Groningen have thesis group meetings under supervision of the senior staff members. Additionally, weekly online group meetings are organised with two or more members of the teaching staff to streamline the thesis writing procedure, present ideas, and troubleshoot data analysis or interpretation problems. Finally, the EMCL programme has an elaborate internal and external quality assurance system. All courses are evaluated on a yearly basis, and so are guest lecturers and provisions such as

housing, support from the international offices, computer and library facilities, the application process, and the coordinating team. As the panel learned from students, they feel supported throughout the programme. They appreciate the programme's emphasis on cohort formation.

The panel concludes that feasibility and support are well organised in each of the tracks, depending on the specific needs of the students and the nature of the curriculum. The panel compliments L&C with the close collaboration between students and staff in the mentorship project. It concludes from the often highly specialised theses it read (see Standard 4) that the programme manages to help students navigate the many options and arrive at a clear profile. The panel also appreciates the personal involvement of staff and management in LCT and EMCL, where much work is done both in Groningen and with the international partners to ensure students receive the necessary support and complete the programme on time.

Teaching staff
All members of the Groningen teaching staff in the programme have a PhD and are research active; the large majority have obtained their University Teaching Qualification (BKO). According to students, their command of English as a teaching language is up to standard. Staff members pertain to the CLCG research institute, whose research quality was assessed as 'very good' in the last research evaluation (2016). Thanks to curriculum updates such as the tutorials and Research Training (in L&C and LCT), students clearly benefit from the research environment and work beside senior researchers. The panel also looked at the LCT and EMCL staff members' profiles and asked students and alumni about their experiences abroad. It gained a favourable impression of the quality and quantity of the international staff members and their research environments.

The panel is impressed with the quality of the teaching staff and the breadth of their expertise. The research master makes sure to include all necessary specialisations in its team. The panel learned that the number of senior staff members teaching in the programme has been increasing over the last period of time, which it considers a positive development. The panel wondered whether the organisation in educational clusters within the Faculty provided an impediment to attracting the right kind of teachers for the small research master programme. It established to its satisfaction that this is not the case. The Faculty management has prioritised the staffing of research master programmes over other MA and BA programmes to ensure that top experts are available to teach at this level.

Programme-specific facilities
The CLCG Linguistics Laboratory offers research master students in Linguistics various opportunities for research on language production, comprehension, and acquisition. The Articulography Lab allows researchers to study speech production by recording speech, tongue movements via electromagnetic articulography and ultrasound tongue imaging. The Eye Tracking Lab enables researchers to study language processing and language acquisition by analysing head and eye movements. The Psycholinguistics lab provides soundproof research rooms to run experimental studies on language comprehension and production. Students also have the opportunity to design experiments in the ERP lab connected to an Erasmus Mundus program. The university supports experimental programming software such as E-Prime. In the LCT track, students need to have access to data sets and programming environments that are available under Linux. All computers in the computer labs have a dual boot option, giving access to both Windows and Linux. For heavy computing jobs, students can request access to the High Performance Cluster of the University or make use of the Virtual Reality facilities at the Center for Information Technology (RUG-CIT). The panel appreciates the facilities offered to students and is pleased with the fact that a lab manager has been appointed to help students around. It was also glad to learn that the separate labs will be combined in the near future.

Considerations
According to the panel, the curricula of the various tracks have been carefully designed and structured, enabling students to move from foundational courses where a level playing field is created through the necessary skills and content modules to an individual research internship and thesis. The tracks vary in the amount of freedom that is

offered (L&C students have most freedom to design their own study paths, whereas EMCL students follow a more fixed programme). The programme is internationally oriented, providing unique opportunities for students in all tracks to travel to other universities and research institutes. All tracks are offered at the adequate level and student guidance is well-organised.

The international collaborations in the LCT and EMCL tracks are well-designed, carefully organised and constantly monitored by all partners. The Covid pandemic affected the EMCL track in particular, but the programme dealt with it adequately and used the experience to improve the curriculum. The teaching staff consists of high-quality senior researchers and thanks to curriculum innovations, students are offered ample opportunities to work closely with them. Working methods are apt and varied and the choice of English as a language of instruction is supported by the panel. The panel also appreciates the facilities offered to students and finds the admission procedures conducive to the programme's feasibility. The panel suggests that the programme point out more explicitly the professional orientation and the importance of transferable skills to students. It also recommends LCT to investigate whether certain combinations of universities had best be offered in a fixed order to avoid overlaps. On the whole, however, the panel praises the programme for the unique and well-designed teaching-learning environment it offers students.

Conclusion
Research master's programme Linguistics: the panel assesses Standard 2 as 'meets the standard'.

Standard 3: Student assessment
The programme has an adequate system of student assessment in place.

Findings

Student assessment and assessment system
The programme's student assessment aligns with the Faculty of Art's focus on dialogue and learning. Courses in the research master Linguistics are interactive and their assessment requires students to use a range of media, including digital tools, to express their ideas and show their ability to theorize and do research. In line with this approach, the panel noticed a variety of assessment types in the various courses. In most of the theoretically oriented courses, students are required to take a written exam or write an essay, while courses that include lab sessions are often assessed with a report on an experiment or demonstration system (including code). The tests and grading criteria developed by staff members are usually checked by a colleague. For each course, an assessment portfolio is composed, consisting of the syllabus, an overview of all assignments, model answers and grading forms, examples of feedback on assignments, and an overview of the final grades.

The programme recently developed an Assessment Plan, which outlines the assessment cycle in detail and demonstrates that all learning outcomes are assessed throughout the programme, independent of individual learning trajectories. The L&C track recently introduced Tutorials, whose content, setup and thus learning outcomes may vary from case to case. For each Tutorial, the Director of Studies and the Board of Examiners have to approve the suggested learning outcomes. The panel appreciates this flexible approach. It concludes that the programme's assessment system is well-designed.

Internships
For internships within the programme, one of the local staff members functions as assessor, after collecting information from the internship provider and reading the student's internship report. The internship is assessed by an internal academic supervisor as well as an external supervisor at the internship location. For students who do their internships in Groningen, there are also internal and external supervisors to assure objective assessment of this module. The panel learned from students that this working method usually functions well. In practice, the various

partners have often established a long-term collaboration in internship placements, and the students benefit from these tried and tested arrangements.

Thesis assessment
The thesis is assessed by the supervisor plus a second reader who is also a member of the CLCG with a relevant area of expertise. The second assessor has not participated in the supervision of the thesis and thus provides an independent assessment. In the LCT track, students are supervised by a staff member of the local programme as well as a supervisor from the partner university where the student spent his or her first or second year of study. The two assessors first make their own separate evaluations and then meet to agree on the grades for each criterion, thus creating a single, final version of the assessment report. While the overall grade is usually an average of the two grades, supervisors do not arrive at it through mathematical calculation but through discussion of the merits and weaknesses of the work. If the two assessors cannot reach an agreement, a third assessor is appointed to make a final decision. In the double degree LCT track, both supervisors have to agree on a grade that aligns with their national grading system.

The panel is pleased with the procedure for thesis assessment. It studied the assessment forms of 15 theses and found that the grades given were usually within the range it would expect, and sufficiently clarified on the forms. The panel did notice that in practice, the second supervisor is not always independent. In the EMCL track, two supervisors from two institutions are appointed. In a number of cases, both the local and the Groningen supervisor act not only as assessors, but also support the student in his or her thesis procedure. Also, in the case of interdisciplinary thesis topics, the second assessor doubles as supervisor due to their complementary expertise. Since the programme and the Board of Examiners aim at including an independent second assessor in thesis assessment, the panel recommends aligning all thesis supervision in the various tracks to reflect this approach and thus create internal coherence. If this proves too complicated in the joint degree setup, the panel recommends explicitly exempting the track from this rule in order to provide clarity.

Board of Examiners
Quality of assessment within the Linguistics research master's programme is assured by the Board of Examiners of the Faculty of Arts, which checks to make sure course assessment is valid, reliable, and transparent. As of January 2019, the Board of Examiners oversees six expert teams for different disciplines within the Faculty. The research master falls under the remit of the expert team for the research masters. The expert team consists of four staff members and is chaired by a member of the central Board of Examiners. The Board of Examiners is responsible for evaluating theses and courses, but also approves all modules and elements which are not a permanent part of the program – that is, tutorials, courses from outside of approved programs, internship contracts, and thesis proposals.

In its interview with the Board of Examiners, the panel noticed that the Board has a clear view of its legal tasks and works hard to check assessment quality in all programmes that fall under its responsibility. It also found out, however, that the board does not provide the necessary quality assurance for the international parts of the programme. In the case of LCT as a double degree, the panel does not consider this problematic, since the quality of the Groningen degree is satisfactorily checked. Courses followed elsewhere by students from Groningen must always be approved by the Director of Studies and the Board of Examiners, who have a clear view of their content and assessment.

In the case of the EMCL joint degree, quality is assured by the Examination Board of the EMCL consortium. The track's Partnership Agreement states that the legal responsibilities of the local Boards of Examiners of the partner universities have been transferred to this EMCL Examination Board. The EMCL Examination Board consists of one teacher of each of the consortium partners and is chaired by the local director of UEF. This Examination Board supervises the quality of all assessment in the program and decides on the feasibility of the internships. It also monitors whether all rules and regulations have been implemented correctly and grants internship approvals. The

chair of the Examination Board signs all supervision agreements and the final degree. In case of fraud and plagiarism, the examination board takes appropriate steps. The Examination Board reports back to the local examination boards.

The panel discussed the quality assurance of assessment with the foreign partners of EMCL present at the site visit, with the local Board of Examiners, and with the track management. It also studied the Partnership agreement. The panel learned that the EMCL Examination Board does not look into individual courses or their assessment and does not perform quality checks on past assessments. Assessment is not a topic at the annual consortium meetings. Since the Faculty of Art's Board of Examiners, which is formally responsible for the assurance of assessment quality in all parts of the EMCL joint degree programme, does not do so either, the panel has to conclude that the assessment quality in the parts of the EMCL track offered abroad is not assured by the responsible Board of Examiners in the way that is demanded of it by the Dutch Law.

The panel received no signs that assessment practices fail to meet research master standards. What is more, based on the theses produced in this track it has reason to assume that student assessment within EMCL is adequately executed. At the same time, the previous assessment panel already pointed out that the EMCL examination board does not function entirely in accordance with Dutch legal provisions and recommended adapting quality assurance practices. The panel therefore stresses the need to formally arrange procedures so that legal demands are met once and for all. It discussed this with the various consortium members, who seemed willing to assist the Groningen EMCL track in achieving this goal.

According to the panel, the programme can solve this formal issue by creating a clear division of roles between the local and the EMCL boards of examiners. It recommends the local board to delegate its responsibility for the foreign parts of the programme to the EMCL Board, while at the same time ensuring it is fully and transparently informed of assessment practices by the EMCL Board. The panel learned that the local board had already arranged a meeting with the consortium board in order to receive information on assessment outside Groningen, but this was postponed due to Covid. According to the panel, this initiative is a step in the right direction. If the Dutch Board of Examiners is informed of assessment practices by the responsible EMCL Board, it will gain the ability to raise its voice when it thinks assessment quality might be compromised. In this situation, the Dutch legal requirements would be satisfactorily met.

The panel also recommends the consortium to let external peers (possibly from partner institutions) look at each other's assessments. Quality of assessment throughout the programme could be enhanced through such a peer review process. At the moment, consortium partners share the responsibility of thesis assessment, but they could also ensure that every exam in the programme is discussed with a colleague from another institution according to the four-eyes principle. Finally, the panel advises to ensure at least one member of the local Dutch Board of Examiners is also a member of the EMCL Examination Board, so that information on international assessment is automatically passed on to the Dutch local board.

Considerations
The panel considers assessment in the programme to be varied and well-designed, reflecting the level of the research master's programme and demonstrably matching the programme's learning outcomes. It appreciates the way in which the internship and thesis are assessed. It found that the grades given to theses were usually within the range it would expect, and sufficiently clarified on the assessment forms. The panel did notice that in practice, the second supervisor is not always independent. In a number of cases in EMCL, both the local and the Groningen supervisor act not only as assessors, but also support the student in his or her thesis procedure. Since the programme and the Board of Examiners aim at including an independent second assessor in thesis assessment, the panel recommends aligning all thesis supervision in the various tracks to reflect this approach and thus create internal coherence. If this proves too complicated in the joint degree setup, the panel recommends explicitly exempting the track from this rule in order to provide clarity.

The panel is pleased with the way the Board of Examiners of the Groningen Faculty of Arts assures the quality of the L&C and LCT tracks, as well as of the Groningen parts of the EMCL track. It concludes, however, that the Board of Examiners cannot fully safeguard the quality of the international parts of the EMCL joint degree track in a satisfactory manner, in spite of the fact that the previous committee formulated recommendations to this effect. The panel recognises the attempts that the program has made in making sure that there is quality control, and it has no indication that the quality control of these parts by the consortium is insufficient, but one additional step needs to be made that provides the Groningen Board of examiners with the formal means to ascertain that this is the case. The panel recommends addressing this formal issue by letting the local board delegate responsibility for assessment quality to the EMCL Consortium Examination Board, while arranging for the local board to be fully informed of assessment practices in the international parts of the programme by the EMCL board. In this situation, the Dutch legal requirements would be satisfactorily met. The panel also advises peer review between consortium partners at the level of course assessment to boost assessment quality; and recommends ensuring that at least one member of the local Dutch Board of Examiners is also a member of the EMCL Examination Board.

Conclusion
Research master's programme Linguistics: the panel assesses Standard 3 as 'partially meets the standard'.

Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes
The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Findings
The panel studied 15 final theses of the Linguistics research master (5 from each track). It is impressed with the level attained in these final theses and found that they would serve as a good basis for a publishable article. The range of topics and research methodology touched upon match the profiles of the tracks, and in the case of L&C demonstrates that students manage to become specialised in spite of the track's broad setup.

The theses are usually well-written and match the expected level of the research master without exception. The panel learned that a number of final theses from the programme were turned into publications in various national and international journals. This testifies to their overall high level, the panel finds.

The alumni of the programme usually end up either in PhD positions or in R&D departments of companies. EMCL graduates tend to end up in industry positions rather than as PhD candidates. Alumni informed the panel that they feel well-prepared for entering the labour market and that the transferable skills they learned are especially useful for entering the non-academic world. PhD students graduating from the programme consider themselves very well trained.

Considerations
The panel finds that the high level of the theses and the clear alumni success demonstrate that students from all three tracks achieve the intended learning outcomes of the programme.

Conclusion
Research master's programme Linguistics: the panel assesses Standard 4 as 'meets the standard'.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The panel assessed Standard 3 of the NVAO Assessment framework as 'partially meets the standard', and as a result the overall conclusion of the assessment is 'conditionally positive'. The panel regrets this conclusion since the

programme has a unique profile, a well-designed teaching-learning environment, and a high output level. According to the panel, the issue of Standard 3 is formal in nature, and the programme should be able to solve this in the short term. It therefore recommends the NVAO to grant the programme a 6-month period in which to meet the following condition:

> Have the local Board of Examiners delegate responsibility for the assessment of the parts of the EMCL track taught outside Groningen to the EMCL Examination Board, on the condition that the local board is fully informed by the EMCL Examination Board of assessment practices in these parts.
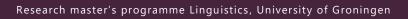
It also advises the programme to ensure that the two boards share one member, and recommends peer review at the level of course assessments between consortium partners to enhance assessment quality.

The panel assesses the *research master's programme Linguistics* as 'conditionally positive'.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Tracks Language and Communication (L&C) and Language and Communication Technologies (LCT)

Description of Master's level according to the Dublin Descriptors	Learning outcomes of the Research Master's Programme in Linguistics A Master Degree in Linguistics is awarded to students who:
Knowledge and understanding Have demonstrated knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances the level that is typically associated with Bachelor's level, and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context.	1.1 have general knowledge and understanding of several subdisciplines in linguistics, their interpretations, methodologies and techniques 1.2 have a thorough knowledge of at least one theoretical and methodological approach within linguistics
Applying knowledge and understanding Can apply their knowledge and understanding, and problem solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study.	2.1 are able to formulate an academic problem independently, and in so doing, to select, apply and where necessary adapt an adequate theoretical framework and one or more relevant research methods 2.2 are able to make an original contribution to knowledge in at least one subdiscipline in linguistics 2.3 are able to independently formulate a research proposal
Making judgements Have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements with incomplete or limited information, but that include reflecting on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgements.	3.1 make use of the research results of others and evaluate these critically 3.2 are able to make connections between their own specialist knowledge of a subdiscipline of linguistics and other subdisciplines of linguistics or and other related disciplines, for example, psychology, neurology or information science
Communication Can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously.	4.1 are able to participate actively in a research group working on an academic project 4.2 are able to work with other students and lecturers on an academic project 4.3 are able to participate in international academic debate in the chosen area of specialization and to present an academic problem convincingly in appropriate English, both orally and in writing
Learning Skills Have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous.	5.1 are able to keep abreast of the latest developments in linguistics and broaden and deepen their own knowledge and understanding 5.2 are able to reflect on the implications of one's work for the development of linguistic theories

Track Clinical Linguistics (EMCL)

Dublin Descriptors – Master's level	Learning outcomes of EMCL
Knowledge and understanding Have demonstrated knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances the level that is typically associated with Bachelor's level, and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within research context	1.1 Acquired a thorough and up-to-date knowledge of the field of neurolinguistics, psycholinguistics and clinical linguistics 1.2 Have familiarity with the formulation of neurolinguistics, psycholinguistic and clinical linguistic theories and the ability to evaluate them critically 1.3 Acquired knowledge and understanding of how experiments are designed and data are analyzed to answer the research questions, 1.4 Acquired knowledge and understanding of how to apply to an ethical committee and which rule and regulations need to be followed
Applying Knowledge and understanding Can apply their knowledge and understanding, and problem-solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study.	2.1 Able to independently formulate a research proposal 2.2 Able to formulate an academic or clinical problem independently, and in so doing, to select, apply and where necessary adapt an adequate theoretical framework and one or more relevant research methods 2.3 Able to make an original contribution to knowledge and applications thereof in neurolinguistics, psycholinguistics and clinical linguistics in academic and non-academic settings (e.g., hospitals and rehabilitation clinics, companies designing and developing neuroimaging tools and computer applications, science communication, journalism) 2.4 Able to apply knowledge to apply to an ethical committee
Making Judgements Have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements with incomplete or limited information, but that include responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgements	3.1 Able to make use of the research results of others and evaluate these critically 3.2 Able to make connections between their own specialist knowledge of neurolinguistics, psycholinguistics and clinical linguistics, and related disciplines such as neurology, neuroscience, psychology and speech and language pathology 3.3 Able to critically evaluate test and treatment materials used in clinical practice
Communication Can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialists and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously	4.1 Able to collaborate on research projects in academic and non-academic environments 4.2 Able to participate in international academic debate in the chosen area of specialization and to present an academic problem convincingly in English, both orally and in writing

	4.3	Able to communicate the results of research projects to a lay audience, through science communication and popular science techniques
Learning skills Have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous	5.1	Able to keep abreast of the latest developments in neurolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and clinical linguistics and broaden and deepen their own knowledge and understanding
	5.2	Able to reflect on the implications of their own work for the development of neurolinguistic, psycholinguistic and clinical linguistic theories and applications

APPENDIX 2: OVERVIEW OF THE CURRICULUM

Track Language and Cognition (L&C)

L&C

No.	Course unit	Student workload in ECTS	Compulsory
1	Basic Statistics	5 ECTS	C
2	Corpus Linguistics	5 ECTS	C
3	Linguistic Analysis	10 ECTS	C
4	Designing your Research Project	5 ECTS	C
5	LOT Course 1	5 ECTS	C
6	LOT Course 2	5 ECTS	C
7	Course units (30 ECTS) to be selected from:		
	Discourse Analysis	10 ECTS	
	Language, Brain and Cognition	10 ECTS	
	Methodology and Statistics for Linguistic Research (GSH)	10 ECTS	
	Summer School/Winter School/Tutorial*	5 or 10 ECTS	
	Language Development	10 ECTS	
	Debates in Linguistics	10 ECTS	
	Writing: Context, Process and Text	10 ECTS	
	Or other relevant course units in consultation with the *Director of Studies* and with permission from the Board of Examiners		
8	Research Training	5 or 10 ECTS	
9	Research Internship in Linguistics	25 ECTS	C
10	Research Master Thesis in Linguistics, including Thesis Class	30 ECTS	C

* Tutorials need to be approved by the Board of Examiners through a tutorial contract form.

Track Language and Communication Technologies (LCT)

Linguistic Theory = Linguistic Analysis

Language and Communication Technologies

No.	Course unit	Student workload in ECTS	Compulsory
1	Basic Statistics	5 ECTS	C
2	Corpus Linguistics	5 ECTS	C
3	Linguistic Theory	10 ECTS	C
4	Course units (70 ECTS) to be selected from:		
	Designing your Research Project	5 ECTS	
	Language, Brain and Cognition	10 ECTS	
	Methodology and Statistics for Linguistic Research (GSH)	10 ECTS	
	Summer School/Winter School/Tutorial	5 or 10 ECTS	
	Computer-Mediated Communication	10 ECTS	
	Natural Language Processing	5 ECTS	
	Semantic Web Technology	5 ECTS	
	Learning from Data	5 ECTS	
	Computational Semantics	5 ECTS	
	Multichannel Management	5 ECTS	
	Language Technology Project	5 ECTS	
	Shared Task Information Science	5 ECTS	
	Machine Learning (FSE)	5 ECTS	
	Web and Cloud Computing (FSE)	5 ECTS	
	Language Modelling (FSE)	5 ECTS	
	Computational Simulations of Language (FSE)	5 ECTS	
	or relevant course units at a different university within the consortium, in consultation with the *Director of Studies* and with permission from the Board of Examiners		
5	Research Master Thesis in Language and Communication Technologies	30 ECTS	C

Track Clinical Linguistics (EMCL)

Program with UP (2016-2021)			New program with UGENT (2021-2026)			
Course	ECTS	Methods	Course	ECTS	Methods	Module
START-UP CLASSES: UEF (0 ECTS)			START-UP CLASSES: RUG (0 ECTS)			
Statistics	0	MOOC (with supervision)	Statistics and methods	0	MOOC (with supervision)	M1
Linguistics	0	MOOC (with supervision)	Introduction to clinical linguistics	0	MOOC (with supervision)	M1
Neurolinguistics	0	MOOC (with supervision)	Introduction to theoretical linguistics	0	MOOC (with supervision)	M1
			Ethics and resilience	0	MOOC (with supervision)	M1
FIRST TERM: UEF (30 ECTS)			FIRST TERM: RUG (30 ECTS)			
Language and culture (Finnish)	3	Classes, excursions, practice	Language and culture (Dutch)	3	Classes, excursions, practice	M2
Statistics 1	5	Class exercises	Language and speech disorders in adults	5	Research class	M4
Psycholinguistics	3	Classes	Language and speech disorders in children	5	Research class	M4
Neurolinguistics	3	Classes	Language testing in during awake brain surgery	6	MOOC, Research class*	M4
Acoustic analysis	5	Projects, research class	Neuroimaging and language	5	Research class*	M5

OR Speech production and perception experiments OR Speech synthesis						
Autism and language OR language change in neurodegenerative diseases OR Speech motor disorders	3	Research classes, excursions*	Development of serious games, apps and virtual reality for language impaired populations	6	Research class+	M5
			Meet the employers event (Internship preparation)++	0	Virtual lab visits, excursions to industrial and clinical partners, talks from alumni	M6
Brain imaging	3	Research class	Research extras	0		M8
SECOND TERM: RUG (30 ECTS)			SECOND TERM: UGENT (30 ECTS)			
Language and culture (Dutch)	3	Classes, excursions, practice	Language and culture (Dutch)	3	Classes, excursions, practice	M2
Aphasiology	5	Research class	Statistics and Research Methods in Psycholinguistics	9	Research class and hands-on practicum	M3
Disorders in the development of spoken and written language	5	Research class	Bilingualism	4	Research class+	M4
Neurotechnology and language testing: EEG and rTMS	5	MOOC, Research class+	Dyslexia	4	Research class+	M4
Language testing during awake brain surgery	6	Research class+	Eye-tracking in language research	3	Research class+	M5

Development of serious games, apps and VR for language impaired populations	6	Flipped classroom*	Advances in psycholinguistics	3	Research class	M4
			Computational models in psycholinguistics	4	Research class	M4
			Research extras	0		M8

THIRD TERM: UNIVERSITY OF POSTDAM (30 ECTS)			THIRD TERM: UEF (30 ECTS)			
Language and culture (German)	3	Classes, excursions, practice	Language and culture (Finnish)	3	Classes, excursions, practice	M2
Statistics 2	6	Classes, exercises	Language and autism	2	Research classes, excursions*	M4
Language processing AND/OR Evidence based practice AND/OR Multilingual language acquisition and processing	6 & 6	Classes, research classes	Speech technology for speech impairment research	4	Flipped classroom, projects, research class	M3
Digital language learning	5	Classes, lab-visits, excursions, practice	Articulatory, acoustic and perceptual analysis of speech motor disorders	4	Flipped classroom, research classes, excursions*	M4
Academic writing (Thesis preparation)	4	Classes, practice, reviewing process	Python programming for linguistic research	3	Projects, research class	M3
Meet the employers event (Internship preparation)**	0	Virtual lab visits, excursions to industrial and clinical partners	Academic writing (Thesis preparation)	4	Classes, practice, reviewing process	M7
			Research extras	0		M8
			Internship	10		M6

FOURTH TERM: ASSOCIATED PARTNERS (40 ECTS)			FOURTH TERM: ASSOCIATED PARTNERS (30 ECTS)			
Internship	10		Thesis	30		M7

Thesis	30		Research extras	0		M8
Research extras	0					

*(Partially) taught by R&D partners and guest scholars from the clinical sector; **Taught by associated partners; 1At UGENT, this course is called "Low Countries Studies". We kept the name Language and Culture here for the sake of homogeneity with the courses taught at RUG and UEF.

APPENDIX 3: PROGRAMME OF THE SITE VISIT

Monday 17 May 2021

09.00-09.15	Welcome by Faculty Board
09.15-11.30	Preparatory meeting & open office
11.30-12.15	Interview management (responsible for content)
12.15-13.45	Lunch
13.45-14.15	Interview students and alumni track Language and Cognition (L&C)
14.15-14.30	Internal meeting
14.30-15.00	Interview students and alumni track Language and Communication Technologies
15.00-15.15	Internal meeting
15.15-15.45	Interview students and alumni track EMCL++
15.45-16.15	Internal meeting
16.15-17.00	Interview international partners EMCL++ (management and teachers)
17.00-17.30	Internal meeting

Tuesday 18 May 2021

09.00-09.30	Internal meeting
09.30-10.15	Interview teachers
10.15-10.30	Internal meeting
10.30-11.15	Interview Board of Examiners
11.15-11.45	Internal meeting
11.45-12.30	Interview management (formally responsible)
12.30-14.00	Lunch
14.00-16.00	Preparation preliminary findings
16.00-16.30	Presentation preliminary findings
16.30-17.00	Development dialogue

APPENDIX 4: THESES AND DOCUMENTS STUDIED BY THE PANEL

Prior to the site visit, the panel studied 15 theses of the research master's programme Linguistics (5 per track). Information on the selected theses is available from QANU upon request.

During the site visit, the panel studied, among other things, the following documents (partly as hard copies, partly via the institute's electronic learning environment):

University & Faculty
- General strategy and policy
    - Education policy University of Groningen
    - Strategic plan University of Groningen 2015-2020
    - Strategic Plan Faculty of Arts 2016-2020
    - Vision for Education Faculty of Arts 2018
- Education
    - Institute of Education
    - Teaching and Examination Regulations
    - Faculty Committees
- Cluster organisation Faculty of Arts - Organisation Faculty of Arts
    - Memo Towards a flexible Faculty of Arts
- Work pressure
    - Kwaliteitsafspraken Faculteit der Letteren
- NVAO assessment and accreditation 2015
    - Accreditation degree programmes
- Employability
    - Advisory boards at the Faculty of Arts
- Minors at the Faculty of Arts
    - Minors manual Faculty of Arts
- Internal quality assurance
    - Examination Board
    - Programme Committee
    - Educational quality in the Faculty (general)
- Assessment
    - Assessment policy University of Groningen (in Dutch)
    - Regels en verantwoordelijkheden toetsing Faculteit der Letteren
    - Assessment plan Faculty of Arts
- Internationalisation - Internationalization
    - Language policy
      Internationalization policy

Programme
- Annual reports BoE and PC
- Update Linguistics regarding impact of Corona
- Recommendations of the 2015 assessment committee
- Program intended learning outcomes
- Programme overview
- Teaching and coordination teams
- Quantitative data of teaching-learning environment
- Teaching and examination regulations
- Overview of final assignments

- Assessment Plan
- Sample courses syllabus
- Publications by students in the Research Master Linguistics (L&C and LCT tracks)
- Corpus Linguistics 2020-2021
- Quantitative data of teaching-learning environment
- Rules and regulations internship and thesis
- Overview of final projects
- Partnership, scholarship, and student agreements
- Survey on student experience