

Besluit

Besluit strekkende tot het verlengen van de geldigheidsduur van het accreditatiebesluit van 19 januari 2009 zoals bedoeld in artikel 5a.12a van de Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek (WHW) van de opleiding wo-master Criminal Law and Criminology van de Universiteit van de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen tot en met 28 augustus 2016

	datum	Gegevens
	29 augustus 2014	Naam instelling : Rijksuniversiteit Groningen
	onderwerp	Naam opleiding : wo-master Criminal Law and Criminology (60 ECTS)
	Besluit	Datum aanvraag : 20 november 2013
accreditatie wo-master		Variant opleiding : voltijd
Criminal Law and Criminology		Locatie opleiding : Groningen
Rijksuniversiteit Groningen		Datum goedkeuren
(002665)		panel : 9 september 2013
uw kenmerk		Datum locatiebezoeken : 2 oktober 2013
-		Datum visitatierapport : 12 december 2013
ons kenmerk		Instellingstoets kwaliteitszorg : ja, positief besluit van 29 juli 2014
NVAO/201429451/AH		
bijlagen		

3 **Aanvullende informatie**

Aan de aanvraag om accreditatie waren gevoegd een herstelplan voor de opleiding alsmede het oordeel van het panel over dat herstelplan van 17 maart 2014.

Beoordelingskaders

Beoordelingskader voor de beperkte opleidingsbeoordeling van de NVAO (Stcrt. 2010, nr 21523);

Artikel 5a.12a van de WHW (Stb. 2010, 293);

Accreditatiebesluit WHW (Stb. 2011, 536).

Advies van het visitatiepanel

Samenvatting bevindingen en overwegingen van het panel.

This report reflects the assessment panel's findings and considerations on the Criminal Law and Criminology programme at the University of Groningen. The evaluations are based on interviews conducted with staff, students and graduates of the programme and on information provided in the critical reflections, selected theses, course files and additional material supplied during the site visit.

In its assessment, the panel observed positive aspects as well as ones which could be improved. The panel is positive about the integration of criminal law in the programme and the assessment; the didactical principle of the international classroom; facilities; quality of

Inlichtingen

Monique in't Veld
+31 (0)70 312 23 17
m.intveld@nva

Parkstraat 28 | 2514 JK | Postbus 85498 | 2508 CD Den Haag
P.O. Box 85498 | 2508 CD The Hague | The Netherlands
T + 31 (0)70 312 2300 | F + 31 (0)70 312 2301
info@nva

Pagina 2 van 17 staff and the Examination Boards. It is, however, critical about other aspects of the programme. The panel concludes that the intended learning outcomes, the programme and the assessment are insufficiently linked in terms of the criminology part of the programme; the ambitious intended learning outcomes for criminology are not covered in the programme, are not assessed and students do therefore not achieve all intended learning outcomes in this respect. The low intake rates and the thesis assessment form are also points of concern.

Taking all its findings into consideration, the panel decides that the programme does not fulfill the requirements set by the NVAO for re-accreditation. Following the NVAO framework for assessment and argumentation, the panel recommends the implementation of an improvement period on Standard 2 and 3. The panel considers an improvement period on these Standards important, but would also like to stress that it has seen many positive aspects in programme, encouraging confidence of the panel in the programme, its graduates and the management. The criminal law part of the programme is adequate and the panel is confident that graduates obtain all the requirements for a career in academia (PhD) or a profession in the field in criminal law. Therefore, the panel recommends a 'light' improvement period, including that the programme management redefine the exact relation between criminal law and criminology in the intended learning outcomes and amend the programme and the assessment to match the newly developed intended learning outcomes. Furthermore, the programme management should take action of the low intake rates and the thesis assessment form. The panel advises that, after a period of reparations, the programme is reassessed.

Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes satisfactory

The master's degree programme Criminal Law and Criminology focuses on international, cross-border and comparative aspects of criminal law and procedure. It aims at combining the disciplines of criminal law and criminology. It is taught in English and targets both Dutch and foreign students who intend to work in criminal law or criminology or who are already established practitioners in one of these fields.

The panel studied the stated mission and profile of the programme. It finds that the international, comparative and multidisciplinary approach to law is of great value to students as it stimulates them to look beyond their own paradigms. The profile and mission of the programme are adequate for criminal law; the panel concludes, however, that the position of criminology described in the critical reflection is too ambitious for a one-year master's programme. During the site visit, the management and teachers explained that the emphasis of the programme is first and foremost on criminal law. The main target of the programme was described as making students aware of criminology aspects within criminal law topics and of the differences between the two disciplines. The panel strongly recommends that the programme management redefine the exact relation between criminal law and criminology and their roles within the programme more clearly in the future. This should include a discussion of the position of the programme with respect to other master's programmes in the field of criminal law (benchmarking).

The panel studied the intended learning outcomes of the programme and ascertained that they reflect the level of an academic master's programme. The learning outcomes are clearly formulated and specific. They adequately cover the domain-specific framework of reference for law and are applicable to the working field of criminal law. Like the profile and mission, the intended learning outcomes are, however, far too ambitious for a one-year

Pagina 3 van 17 programme targeting bachelor graduates in law. At the moment, they reflect the position of criminology as being equal to criminal law. Although they have adequately been concretised with regard to content, level and orientation, the panel strongly advises the programme management to adjust the position of criminology in the learning outcomes.

Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment unsatisfactory

The master's programme Criminal Law and Criminology has a workload of 60 EC and consists of compulsory courses (5 courses of 6 EC), optional courses (2 courses of 6 EC) and a thesis (18 EC). The panel observed that the programme is organised in a clear and coherent manner. The courses show an obvious development in terms of level and difficulty.

The programme has implemented the didactic principle of the 'international classroom'. The panel established that this principle fits well with the international student population of the programme. It concludes that the principle is well implemented and of great added value to dealing with comparative criminal law.

The panel studied the facilities, staff, intake, feasibility and tutoring system of the programme. It concludes that the programme is feasible and the study load is evenly distributed. The facilities and tutoring system are well organized, and the teaching staff consists of accessible, enthusiastic and professional experts offering students a safe and challenging learning environment. The teacher-student ratio is acceptable, and adequate attention is paid to course and programme evaluations. The low intake of the programme is, however, a point of serious concern.

The panel evaluated the realisation of the intended learning outcomes in the programme. It concludes that adequate attention is paid to criminal law issues, academic skills and professional orientation. It is more concerned, however, with the position of criminology in the programme. It recommends that the programme management adjusts the learning outcomes for criminology (see Standard 1); amend the programme and assessment to match these newly developed learning outcomes; if possible, increase the attention paid to criminology in individual courses; and introduce an extra course in basic criminology. A basic criminology course is of great value to a programme focusing upon any form of integration between criminal law and criminology. The panel prefers the introduction of a separate course in basic criminology over the option of implementing criminology in every criminal law course. The reason for this is that students, firstly, already have a background in law and need to further enhance this expertise, and secondly, that students need more basic knowledge in criminology to be able to write a thesis with a criminology accent. Ensuring the input of a criminology expert with a solid academic background should be part of the adjustment process of the programme and assessment to match newly developed learning outcomes, which are consistent with ideas of the programme management about the orientation of the programme in terms of criminology. Recent events have resulted in a shortage of expertise in criminology. The panel strongly advises the programme management to recruit a criminology expert as soon as possible. It believes the programme needs a professor with a solid academic profile to back up the criminology part of the programme. Furthermore, the programme management must develop an action plan addressing the low intake rates. The panel believes that these changes can result in a future-proof and focused programme, educating open-minded, academic professionals in the field of criminal law.

Therefore, it recommends the implementation of an improvement period for Standard 2.

The panel studied the assessment policy and procedures of the programme. It concludes that an adequate assessment policy has been put into place by the Faculty of Law. On a programme level, the forms of examination are varied, and the assessment is consistent with the educational goals of the courses. The panel is more critical about the thesis assessment form. It strongly recommends that the Board of Examiners implement a standardized form with clear criteria for assessment.

There are two Boards of Examiners responsible for the Criminal Law and Criminology programme, a central board and a board for the five international master's programmes of the Faculty of Law. The latter Board of Examiners deals with requests for dispensation, special exam regulations and fraud. The central Board focuses on general assessment procedures within the Faculty of Law and is responsible for guaranteeing the realisation of the final attainment levels. The panel spoke to members of both boards and concludes that they are aware of their responsibilities. The central Board analyses outcomes and samples of exams, and studies theses with high and low marks from every department. The panel recommends that the central Board of Examiners enhance its professionalism even further by implementing an evaluation cycle for exams and theses.

To evaluate the achieved academic level of the master's students, the panel studied a selection of theses. It established that all theses, except for one, represent an academic master's level in criminal law. All incoming students have the ambition to continue with a career in the field of criminal law. From the perspective of criminal law, academic outlook and professional skills, the panel concludes that the theses fulfil all of the criteria. It is more than confident that graduates of this programme obtain all the requirements for a career in academia or a profession in the field in criminal law.

The panel also concludes that students do not have the right background to write a thesis that extensively integrates criminology, and until this moment nobody has done so. Strictly speaking, the theses do therefore not test the students' knowledge and skills in criminology and the intended learning outcomes are not tested or achieved. Consequently, the panel assesses Standard 3 as unsatisfactory. Yet, the panel is confident that the problems can be solved adequately if the assessment is aligned with newly developed intended learning outcomes. The panel strongly advises the implementation of an improvement period for Standard 3.

Response of the panel to additional information

On 18 November 2013, the draft report of the panel was sent to the University of Groningen to check for factual errors. Following this, the panel received a letter from the Board of the Faculty of Law and the programme management of Criminal Law and Criminology on 28 November 2013. The panel established that the University of Groningen did not find factual errors in the report, but did include in their letter an overview of the most important points of criticism of the panel and concrete suggestions for improvement.

The panel is very pleased to notice that the University of Groningen recognizes its comments and suggestions and takes them seriously. It studied the revised intended learning outcomes of November 2013 and concludes that they are in line with the suggestions of the panel in this report. The panel has taken account of plans of the programme management to improve the programme. It, however, also finds that the introduction and effectiveness of these improvements cannot be assessed at this moment.

Pagina 5 van 17 Furthermore, the exact content of the extra compulsory course 'Introduction to Criminology' is not yet completely clear, as is the attractiveness of the new programme for future students.

In conclusion, the panel maintains its recommendation that the programme should be reassessed after a period of reparations. The constructive reaction of the Faculty Board and the programme management, the reparation of the position of criminology in the intended learning outcomes, the many confidence-building aspects in the programme, and the fact that the programme delivers students ready for a profession in criminal law, create confidence that the programme can be improved in a reasonable time-span.

Advies van het panel over het herstelplan

Het panel is van mening dat uit het verbeterplan blijkt dat de opleiding de kritiek uit het beoordelingsrapport serieus neemt en op een voortvarende manier gebruik maakt van zijn suggesties. De voorgestelde maatregelen beogen tegemoet te komen aan de cruciale kritiek van het panel ten aanzien van het herformuleren van de eindkwalificaties van criminologie, het verplicht stellen van een inleidend vak Criminologie en het aantrekken van een criminoloog.

Conclusie NVAO

Op basis van het herstelplan en het positieve advies van het panel daarover besluit de NVAO tot toepassing van het bepaalde in artikel 5a.12a van de WHW (herstelperiode). Naar het oordeel van de NVAO is met het herstelplan en het positieve oordeel van het panel daarover voldoende aannemelijk gemaakt dat de opleiding binnen de termijn van twee jaar alsnog aan het kader zal voldoen. De NVAO onderschrijft de adviezen van het panel in reactie op het herstelplan.

Ingevolge het bepaalde in artikel 5a.10, derde lid, van de WHW heeft de NVAO het college van bestuur van de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen te Groningen in de gelegenheid gesteld zijn zienswijze op het voornemen tot besluit van 30 juni 2014 naar voren te brengen.

Per e-mail van 28 augustus 2014 heeft de instelling van de gelegenheid gebruik gemaakt om te reageren. Dit heeft geleid tot aanpassingen in bijlage 2.

De NVAO besluit tot verlenging van de geldigheidsduur van het accreditatiebesluit van 19 januari 2009 van de opleiding wo-master Criminal Law and Criminology (60 ECTS; variant: voltijd; locatie: Groningen) van de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen tot en met 28 augustus 2016.

Ingevolge het bepaalde in artikel 5a.12a, vierde lid, van de WHW dient het instellingsbestuur een aanvraag om een besluit tot vaststelling dat de opleiding alsnog aan het toepasselijke kader voldoet, uiterlijk in te dienen op 26 februari 2016.

Den Haag, 29 augustus 2014

De NVAO
Voor deze:



R.P. Zevenbergen
(bestuurder)

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

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

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

Tabel 1: Rendement.

Cohort	2009	2010	2011	2012
Rendement *	80%	100%	100%	57%

Tabel 2: Docentkwaliteit.

Graad	Ma	PhD	BKO
Percentage	100%	83%	83%

Tabel 3: Student-docentratio.

Ratio	1:23,3
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Tabel 4: Contacturen.

Studiejaar	1	2
Contacturen	126	-

- Prof. L.M. Moerings, LL.M (chairman), emeritus professor of Penology at the Institute for Criminal Law and Criminology of Leiden University;
- Prof. H.G. van der Wilt, LL.M, professor of International Criminal Law at the University of Amsterdam;
- Prof. A. de Nauw, LL.M, emeritus professor of Criminal Law and Criminal Procedure at the University of Brussels (Vrije Universiteit Brussel);
- L.M. Noordam, LL.B, master's student in law at the VU University Amsterdam (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam).

The panel was supported by A.J. Wieldraaijer-Huijzer MA, who acted as secretary and project manager (certified).

Introduction

The Board of the Law Faculty of the University of Groningen as well as the Master's programme management would first like to thank the assessment panel for their complete and exhaustive report on the Master's degree programme Criminal Law and Criminology offered by the Faculty of Law at the University of Groningen (QANU report finalized on 12 December 2013, project number Q451).

The conclusion of the report was conditionally positive, the assessment panel having found that the programme did not fulfil the requirements set by the NVAO for re-accreditation. The panel nonetheless recommended the implementation of an improvement period during which the Faculty of Law could amend the programme before its early reassessment. As per the assessment panel,

'The improvement period should include that the programme management redefine the exact relation between criminal law and criminology in the intended learning outcomes (1), amend the programme and the assessment to match the newly developed intended learning outcomes (2), and, take action on the low intake rates and the thesis assessment form (3).' (page 27).

As described below, the Faculty of Law at the University of Groningen has carefully considered all the suggestions made by the assessment panel and has accordingly reviewed the Master's programme Criminal Law and Criminology to comply with these recommendations.

(1) Redefining the exact relation between criminal law and criminology in the intended learning outcomes

In reviewing the intended learning outcomes for the Master's programme Criminal Law and Criminology, the assessment panel emphasised that they 'describe the disciplines of criminal law and criminology as equivalent to one another [...]and do not reflect the current reality' (page 15). While noting that 'the profile and mission of the programme are adequate for the criminal law part', the panel recommended that 'the position of 2 criminology should be described better in order not to make the mission too ambitious for a one-year master's programme'(page 13).

The Faculty of Law took these comments into account and the final attainment levels have already been amended and re-written to better reflect the reality and provide a clear and adequate picture of the learning outcomes for the Master's programme Criminal Law and Criminology. In particular, the final attainment levels in terms of skills and attitudes now show a clear focus on criminal law rather than on criminology and are thus suitable for a one-year master's programme. More specifically, in addition to the existing criminology course, students on the programme will now also follow a compulsory introductory course in criminology, including criminological theories and the characteristics of empirical criminal research, without however receiving a full and exhaustive training in criminology. The intended learning outcomes have been accordingly revised and now read as follows:

A. Final attainment levels knowledge and insight

The final attainment levels of the LLM programme Criminal Law and Criminology in the field of knowledge and insight of the graduate are:

- A1. Thorough knowledge and understanding of substantive criminal law, procedural criminal law, international criminal law and basic knowledge and understanding of criminology in an international context through a deepening of the legal knowledge and understanding acquired during the Bachelor's phase and through an introduction at master level in criminology;
- A2. Specialized knowledge and understanding to solve problems in a new or unknown environment within broader or multidisciplinary context related to criminal law and criminology;

Pagina 11 van 17 A3. Well-developed comprehension and understanding of the wider international context in which criminal law and criminology function and the role they have to play in this regard.

B. Final attainment levels skills and attitude

The final attainment levels of the LLM programme Criminal Law and Criminology in the field of skills and attitude of the graduate are: 3

B1. The ability to independently collect, evaluate and apply relevant legislation, jurisprudence and literature related to a complex problem of criminal law, including in its criminological aspects;

B2. The ability to conduct independent academic legal research in the field of criminal law and to make a societally relevant contribution to the development of the law;

B3. The ability to independently engage in academic discourse with colleagues regarding criminal law;

B4. The ability to make a complex argument concerning criminal law understandable to a group of colleagues and the public in written and spoken English.

C. Final attainment level study orientation and careers guidance

The final attainment levels of the LLM programme Criminal Law and Criminology in the field of study orientation and careers guidance of the graduate are:

C1. Knowledge and insight in the career perspective;

C2. Insight in the requirements that are needed, as a result of the permanent and quick development of positive law, for self-study and personal decision-making.

(2) Amending the programme and the assessment to match the newly developed intended learning outcomes

The assessment panel carefully reviewed the criminology component of the Master's programme and recommended 'that the programme management introduces an extra course in basic criminology', preferring 'the introduction of a separate course in basic criminology over the option of strictly implementing criminology in every criminal law course' (page 17). to complement the existing 'International and Comparative Criminology' course.

Following this recommendation, the Faculty of Law has decided to introduce a new compulsory 'Introduction to Criminology' course in the first semester, starting from the academic year 2014-15. This course will be based upon the existing Dutch course 'Inleiding Criminologie', but it will be taught separately and exclusively for the master students Criminal Law and Criminology. For the description and the learning outcomes of the course see Appendix A.

The new introductory course will familiarise students with the basic knowledge and methodology in criminology, enabling them to develop these acquired skills in the course 'International and Comparative Criminology', which will from now on be scheduled in the second semester. This will also counter the assessment panel's concern (page 17) that the 'International and Comparative Criminology' course is too advanced for students who enter the programme with no academic background in criminology. To avoid too heavy a second semester, the course 'International Criminal Tribunals' will be delivered in the first semester. See Appendix B for the set up of the new programme.

The assessment panel further noted that 'ensuring the input of a criminology expert with a solid academic background should be part of the adjustment process of the programme' and strongly advised 'the programme management to recruit a criminology expert as soon as possible' (pages 10-11).

Agreeing that the Master's programme Criminal Law and Criminology can only benefit – both in terms of academic quality and in terms of increasing the student intake – from the contribution of a criminology expert in the teaching curriculum, the Faculty of Law has decided to involve an academic with strong experience in criminology to deliver the new compulsory 'Introduction to Criminology' course.

Pagina 12 van 17 **(3) Taking action on the low intake rates and the thesis assessment form**

The Faculty of Law is confident that the assessment panel's consideration that backing up the criminology part of the programme through the creation of a new compulsory 'Introduction to Criminology' course coupled with the recruitment of a criminology expert is part of a much needed 'action plan addressing the low intake rates' (page 11). Thus, the changes described above should reflect positively on the number of students enrolling on the Master's programme Criminal Law and Criminology.

With respect to the thesis assessment form, the assessment panel noted that, in its current format, it 'was very limited, including only a short justification of the mark and the signature of the supervisor and the second assessor.' The panel regretted that it 'contains no explicit criteria for assessment [and does not] provide students with a clear and balanced justification for their grade' (page 24). The panel thus urged 'the Board of Examiners to implement thesis assessment forms with explicit criteria as soon as possible', explaining that the 'introduction of standardized thesis assessment forms with explicit criteria enhances the comparability of the thesis grades and supports a discussion about the minimum level of a master's thesis' (ibid.). Explicit marking criteria for assessing and grading Master theses do exist and are explicitly listed in Article 8 of the Faculty of Law's Thesis Regulation. They also figure on the current thesis assessment form (see figure below) and are thus visible to both the student and the examiner(s):

The screenshot shows a mobile browser interface for a thesis assessment form. The browser address bar displays 'dos-rechten.webhosting.rug.nl'. The form is titled 'Beoordeling' and contains the following sections:

- Plagiatcontrole heeft plaatsgevonden**
- Student heeft digitale versie ingeleverd**
Dit moet bijken uit een door u ontvangen mail (.cc) gericht aan scriptie.rechten@rug.nl met de scriptie als bijlage
- Totstandkoming van het cijfer is met student besproken**
- Cijfer ***
U dient een punt (.) te gebruiken wanneer u halve cijfers wilt toekennen
- Motivering ***
Het cijfer wordt bepaald aan de hand van de volgende criteria: inhoud, argumentatie, structuur en opbouw, begripelijkheid en aantrekkelijkheid taalgebruik, correctheid van taalgebruik, zelfstandigheid in het onderzoek, originaliteit van het onderzoek en beheersing van (specifieke) onderzoeksvaardigheden.
- Datum beoordeling ***
DD MM JJJJ

At the bottom of the form, there is a 'Verzenden' button and a warning: 'CONTROLEER VOORDAT U OP 'VERZEND' KLIJKT OF U ALLE GEGEVENS CORRECT HEBT INGEVULD'.

It is however correct that, in its present format, the thesis assessment form does not explicitly require examiner(s) to elaborate on these criteria and/or to separately grade them (even if good academic practice does demand that examiners do so in filling out the 'comments' box).

In this context, the Faculty of Law does take the remarks and suggestions made by the assessment panel very seriously and the thesis assessment form is to be amended in the very near future so as to explicitly request from examiners that they assess and mark each criteria individually.

Pagina 13 van 17 **Appendix A: Description and learning outcomes**
Introduction to Criminology.

Learning outcomes of the course:

After completing this course, students have obtained the following qualifications:

- Knowledge of the most important concepts from criminology;
- Knowledge of policy implications of criminological research;
- Understanding of the surplus value of criminology compared to a mono-disciplinary legal approach.

Description:

Offering a first acquaintance with several fields and themes of interest to criminology. After participating in this course, the student is able to name and describe the following fields and subjects within criminology, also on the basis of current developments in the field of crime and crime control:

- ☑ Criminal legal and criminological questions: normative and empirical thinking
- ☑ Criminology, politics and policy
- ☑ The domain of criminology
- ☑ Nature and size of crime
- ☑ Explanations for crime
- ☑ Victim issues
- ☑ Public discourse about crime

Next to this students are stimulated to form their own opinion about the topics discussed.

During the lectures, the topics will be illustrated as much as possible based on concrete crime forms. Next to this a number of core criminology concepts will be introduced for each theme.

Teaching method: Lecture (seven 2-hour lectures (weeks 1-7))

Assessment: Written exam (essay questions)

Pagina 14 van 17 **AppendixB: Compulsory courses and set-up of the programme**

The following table provides an overview of the curriculum for the LLM in Criminal Law and Criminology, including the additional compulsory course in criminology. For each course, the table indicates in which semester (Sem) it is taught, how many ECTS each course is worth, how many contact hours are scheduled, and whether it is compulsory or optional. It also mentions which teaching methods and forms of assessment are adopted in each course. The following abbreviations are used:

Teaching form:	l s	Lecture Seminar
Type of assessment:	oqe a(w)	Open question examination Assignment (written)
Compulsory / optional	cc oc	Compulsory course Optional course

Sem	Module name	ECTS	Type	Assessment	Contact hours	Compulsory/ optional
1	Introduction to criminology	6	l	oqe	14	cc
1	Comparative Criminal Law	6	l	oqe	20	cc
1	International Criminal Tribunals	6	l	oqe	20	cc
1	Proof, Evidence and Law	6	l	oqe	20	cc
1/2	Optional Course	6	l/s			oc
2	International and Comparative Criminology	6	s	a(w)	20	cc
2	Seminar International Cooperation in Criminal Matters	6	s	a(w)	14	cc
2	Master's thesis in the field of Criminal Law and/or Criminology	18				cc

Pagina 15 van 17 **Response of the panel to the plan of improvement delivered by the University of Groningen**

Introduction

On 18 November 2013, the draft report of the panel was sent to the University of Groningen to check for factual errors. Following this, the panel received a letter from the Board of the Faculty of Law and the programme management of Criminal Law and Criminology on 28 November 2013. In its letter, the programme management included revised learning outcomes and suggestions for further improvement of the programme and assessment. The detailed reaction of the panel to these revised learning outcomes and the suggestions for further improvement have been taken up in the panel report (page 27 and 28). Overall, the panel concluded that the constructive reaction of the Faculty Board and the programme management, the reparation plans taken up in this reaction in November, and the fact that the programme delivers students ready for a profession in criminal law, create confidence that the programme can be improved in a reasonable time-span.

Findings of the panel about the plan of improvement

In February 2014 the panel received the plan of improvement for the Master's programme Criminal Law and Criminology which was to be sent to the NVAO (attached in Appendix 1). The University of Groningen asked for reaction of the panel to this complete plan of improvement. The panel studied it in detail and concludes that it is almost identical to the suggestions for improvements delivered to the panel on 28 November 2013 and deemed positive by the panel in the report (page 27 and 28 of the panel report). The panel recognizes the following changes in the plan of improvement as compared to the letter of the University of Groningen of 28 November 2013:

□ Attainment level B1 has been rephrased:

November 2013: "The ability to independently collect relevant legislation, jurisprudence and literature related to a complex problem of criminal law and criminology, and to evaluate and apply them" February 2014: "The ability to independently collect, evaluate and apply relevant legislation, jurisprudence and literature related to a complex problem of criminal law, including in its criminological aspects".

□ The text about the compulsory course 'Introduction to Criminology' has been changed:

November 2013: "Following this recommendation, the Faculty of Law has decided to introduce a new compulsory 'Introduction to Criminology' course in the first semester, starting from the academic year 2014-15. In their overwhelming majority, students on the Master's programme Criminal Law and Criminology have an academic background in law rather than in criminology and the

Pagina 16 van 17 assessment panel's concern that the existing 'International and Comparative Criminology' course be 'too advanced' for them (page 17) is thus justified. The new introductory course will familiarise students with the basic knowledge and methodology in criminology, enabling them to develop these acquired skills in the course 'International and Comparative Criminology', which will from now on be scheduled in the second semester. To avoid too heavy a second semester, the course 'International Criminal Tribunals' will be delivered in the first semester." February 2014: Following this recommendation, the Faculty of Law has decided to introduce a new compulsory 'Introduction to Criminology' course in the first semester, starting from the academic year 2014-15. This course will be based upon the existing Dutch course 'Inleiding Criminologie', but it will be taught separately and exclusively for the master students Criminal Law and Criminology. For the description and the learning outcomes of the course see Appendix A. The new introductory course will familiarise students with the basic knowledge and methodology in criminology, enabling them to develop these acquired skills in the course 'International and Comparative Criminology', which will from now on be scheduled in the second semester. This will also counter the assessment panel's concern (page 17) that the 'International and Comparative Criminology' course is too advanced for students who enter the programme with no academic background in criminology. To avoid too heavy a second semester, the course 'International Criminal Tribunals' will be delivered in the first semester. See Appendix B for the set up of the new programme." □ Appendix A (Description and learning outcomes Introduction to Criminology) has been included in the plan of improvement of January. This Appendix was not attached to the letter of 28 November 2013.

Conclusions of the panel about the plan of improvement

The panel establishes that the plan of improvement of February 2014 is almost identical to the suggestions for improvements delivered to the panel on 28 November 2013. Therefore, the confidence of the panel in the plans for improvement of the university is unchanged. This confidence is further strengthened by the addition of a more detailed description of the Introduction to Criminology course in Appendix A of the plan of improvement of February 2014. The panel concludes that the description of the course 'Introduction to Criminology' and its learning outcomes are now in line with the revised learning outcomes of the programme and with what can be expected of an introductory course of a master's programme in criminal law and criminology for law students. The comments of the panel about the vagueness of the exact content of the extra compulsory course 'Introduction to Criminology' (p12 and p28) have therefore lost their relevance.

Pagina 17 van 17 After studying the plan of improvement of February 2014, the panel reasserts its positive conclusions in the panel report about the improvement plans of the Faculty. It however also reasserts its general conclusion that the introduction and effectiveness of all improvements (including those for the Introduction to Criminology course) cannot be assessed at this moment. In conclusion, the panel maintains its recommendation that the programme is reassessed after a period of reparations.

Date: March 10, 2014

Prof. L.M. Moerings, LL.M A.J. Wieldraaijer-Huijzer