



B Philosophy
B Philosophy of a Specific Discipline
Erasmus University Rotterdam

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Summary

Standard 1. Intended learning outcomes

The B Philosophy offered at Erasmus School of Philosophy (ESPhil) of Erasmus University Rotterdam introduces students to philosophical concepts and theories from all of the main traditions in philosophy. Its approach reflects the Rotterdam profile, which means it focuses on current social issues and on the relationship between philosophy and other academic disciplines. The panel appreciates this profile, which has been adjusted successfully since the previous site visit. The panel is positive about the concrete and hands-on formulation of the intended learning outcomes, which clearly take into account skills and roles that graduates are to apply in the various professional fields that they may end up in. The panel finds that the intended learning outcomes are sufficiently academic and that they clearly reflect the Dublin descriptors for academic bachelor's programmes.

The bachelor's programme Philosophy of a Specific Discipline (BPSD) combines training in philosophy with training in another scientific discipline (the "specific discipline") offered at EUR. Graduates learn to position their scientific discipline in relation to philosophy and to current societal issues. The panel finds that the programme fulfils a university-wide function by embodying the external orientation expressed in the university's Erasmian values. It encourages both the programme and the university to intensify and build upon this connectivity. The panel advises defining the profile of the BPSD more precisely in order to ensure that all those involved in the programme, both students and staff, have a clear understanding of how 'philosophy of a specific discipline' is understood at EUR. The panel approves of BPSD's intended learning outcomes, which are in line with the Dublin descriptors. They are sufficiently academic and refer to possible professional fields or follow-up master's programmes. The panel recommends revising them in line with the sharpened profile to clarify the specific expectations surrounding the philosophical level and content in the curriculum.

Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment

The panel considers the curricula of the B Philosophy and the BPSD to be well-designed and coherent. The courses build up logically and students progressively gain relevant knowledge and academic and professional skills. The courses deal with contemporary societal issues, while also providing a solid foundation in philosophical theory and practice. In the BPSD, the panel appreciates the fact that the programme has a structured yet flexible curriculum that offers students a unique opportunity to combine the programme with study of a specific discipline at any of the EUR's eight Schools. The panel recommends the chance to integrate the curriculum components centred on the study of a specific discipline with the training in philosophy at an earlier point in the curriculum to improve the BPSD's integrative theses.

Both programmes are preparing a redevelopment of their curricula, merging the current 3.75 EC courses into 7.5 EC courses. The panel agrees with the planned adaptation. It also encourages the BPSD to execute its plans to enhance skills tutorials for BPSD students as part of this overhaul. Furthermore, the panel advises a coherent and structured approach to the diversification of the curriculum to better include non-Western philosophy as part of the redevelopment.

The programmes are taught by expert staff with didactic expertise and a good command of the English language. The panel agrees with the choice of English for the BPSD, in preparation for its predominantly English-language academic and professional fields, and due to its combination with other English-language EUR bachelor's programmes. However, the panel concurs with the programme in the consideration that the external emphasis of the programme's profile might make bilingual offerings more logical. The panel advises the ESPhil to formulate a School-specific language and internationalization policy so that

decisions on the curricula concerning language and internationalization are taken in a coherent, well-founded, and clear manner.

The programmes are considered feasible thanks to a clear structure, a strong system of guidance and support, and a close-knit academic community that the students benefit from. The small size and relative autonomy of the faculty enhances the informal atmosphere in which collaborative learning takes place. The panel appreciates the efforts made to improve study success, and encourages the programmes to continue working on this. Teaching and support staff work hard to accommodate students who combine the philosophy programme with another programme or a job. While the panel realizes that such flexibility is crucial, especially in the part-time B Philosophy and BPSD, it notes that this may lead to the range of exceptions and extensions granted to students, for instance in the shape and intensity of thesis supervision. The panel encourages the programmes to streamline their guidelines on guidance and supervision, and to ensure they are implemented consistently.

Standard 3. Student assessment

The panel finds that assessment in the bachelor's programmes follows adequate procedures and uses fitting and sufficiently varied methods. Both programmes have worked on diversifying examination methods, which the panel appreciates. The panel also welcomes the fact that the bachelor's thesis has been reintroduced upon a recommendation of the previous panel. The Examination Board (EB) is clearly in control and fulfils its quality assurance duties proactively. The panel advises ensuring that assessment of the new 7.5 EC internship takes place in a more refined and focused manner than a simple pass/fail, to highlight its more prominent place in the curriculum.

Thesis assessment in both programmes is conducted according to a clear and well-designed protocol and with the use of clear assessment forms. Issues noted by the panel including high grading and in some cases departure from procedures by thesis assessors have also been discovered and addressed by the EB. In order to improve thesis assessment, the panel recommends simplifying the procedure (whereby supervisors now read many theses twice) in order to reduce the workload of supervisors, as well as organizing calibration sessions and instituting a dialogue on assessment among staff members of both programmes.

Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes

For the B Philosophy, the panel concludes that all theses were satisfactory in level, with one exception. The panel considers this an isolated case. The theses demonstrated the programme's societal profile by addressing topical issues. Alumni of the programme told the panel that they felt well-prepared for a follow-up master's programme. The panel therefore concludes that the intended learning outcomes for the B Philosophy are being achieved.

For the BPSD, the panel found that the highest graded theses were very well executed and made strong and often inspiring connections between philosophy and the student's specific discipline. The panel recognises the additional value provided by the programme in terms of the integration of the two disciplines, which was also attested by the alumni that it interviewed. Of the lower-graded theses, the panel concluded that two did not meet the expected quality standard for a bachelor's thesis in the philosophy of a specific discipline. They show methodological issues, such as the absence of a clearly demarcated research question or the lack of a motivated selection and use of relevant literature. They also failed to integrate philosophy with the specific discipline and demonstrated limited writing and editing skills. The panel has encountered similar issues in additional theses that received a lower grade. The panel concludes that not all BPSD theses demonstrate that students meet the intended learning outcomes.

Score table

The panel assesses the programmes as follows:

B Philosophy

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

B Philosophy of a Specific Discipline

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

The panel sets the following conditions, to be met within two years, for the bachelor's programme Philosophy of a Specific Discipline:

1. Only admit final theses that explicitly connect the student's specific discipline to the philosophy of that discipline. This implies that both the philosophical methods and perspective as well as the connection to the specific discipline are both clearly demonstrated.
2. Ensure that the theses of all graduates demonstrate a sufficient academic level. This means that the theses contain a clear and clearly demarcated research question, that graduates display sufficient writing and editorial skills, and that the selection and use of literature is well-motivated.

Prof. dr. Martin van Hees
Chair

Dr. Fiona Schouten
Secretary

Date: 18 March 2024

Introduction

Procedure

Assessment

On 21 and 22 November 2023, the bachelor's programmes Philosophy and Philosophy of a Specific Discipline of Erasmus University Rotterdam were assessed by an independent peer review panel as part of the Philosophy cluster assessment. The assessment cluster consisted of 29 programmes, offered by Leiden University, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Radboud University, University of Groningen, Tilburg University, University of Twente, Utrecht University, University of Amsterdam and Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. The assessment followed the procedure and standards of the NVAO Assessment Framework for the Higher Education Accreditation System of the Netherlands (September 2018).

Quality assurance agency Academion coordinated the assessment upon request of the cluster Philosophy. Fiona Schouten acted as both coordinator and secretary, and Irene Conradie, Mariette Huisjes, Marieke Schoots, and Anne-Lise Kamphuis acted as secretaries in the cluster assessment. They have been certified and registered by the NVAO.

Preparation

Academion composed the peer review panel in cooperation with the institutions and taking into account the expertise and independence of the members as well as consistency within the cluster. On 24 July 2023, the NVAO approved the composition of the panel. On 20 July 2023, the coordinator instructed the panel chair on his role in the site visit according to the Panel chair profile (NVAO 2016).

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

The programme provided the coordinator with a list of graduates over the period May 2020-August 2023. In consultation with the coordinator, the panel chair selected 15 theses per programme. They took the diversity of final grades and examiners into account, as well as the various specializations. Prior to the site visit, the programme provided the panel with the theses and the accompanying assessment forms. They also provided the panel with the self-evaluation reports and additional materials (see appendix 4). Upon request of the panel and based on their impressions of the theses received, the thesis selection for the BA Philosophy of a Specific Discipline was extended with 5 more theses just before the site visit, so that a total of 20 theses was read for this programme.

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

Site visit

During the site visit, the panel interviewed various programme representatives (see appendix 3). The panel also offered students and staff members an opportunity for confidential discussion during a consultation

hour. No consultation was requested. The panel used the final part of the site visit to discuss its findings in an internal meeting. Afterwards, the panel chair publicly presented the preliminary findings.

Report

The secretary wrote a draft report based on the panel's findings and submitted it within Academion for peer assessment. Subsequently, the secretary sent the report to the panel for feedback. After processing this feedback, the secretary sent the draft report to Erasmus School of Philosophy in order to have it checked for factual irregularities. The secretary discussed the ensuing comments with the panel chair and changes were implemented accordingly. The panel then finalised the report, and the coordinator sent it to Erasmus School of Philosophy at Erasmus University Rotterdam.

Panel

The following panel members were involved in the cluster assessment:

- Prof. dr. Martin van Hees, professor of Moral and Political Philosophy (VU Amsterdam) and Dean of Amsterdam University College (AUC) – chair;
- Prof. dr. Gerd Van Riel, professor of Ancient Philosophy and dean of the Institute of Philosophy, KU Leuven – chair and panel member;
- Prof. dr. Mariëtte van den Hoven, professor of Medical Ethics, Amsterdam UMC;
- Prof. dr. Thomas Reydon, professor of Philosophy of Science and Technology, Leibniz University Hannover;
- Em. prof. dr. Jos de Mul, professor of Philosophical Anthropology, Erasmus University Rotterdam;
- Prof. dr. Sonja Smets, professor in Logic and Epistemology, University of Amsterdam;
- Prof. dr. Bart Raymaekers, professor of Moral Philosophy and Philosophy of Law, KU Leuven;
- Prof. dr. Geert Van Eekert, professor of European Philosophy, University of Antwerp;
- Prof. dr. Martine Prange, professor of Philosophy of Humanity, Culture, and Society, Tilburg University;
- Prof. dr. Wybo Houkes, professor of Philosophy of Science and Technology, Eindhoven University of Technology;
- Prof. dr. Federica Russo, professor in Philosophy of Science and Technology, University of Amsterdam;
- Dr. Victor Gijsbers, assistant professor Philosophy, Leiden University;
- Prof. dr. Vincent Blok, professor of Philosophy of Technology and Responsible Innovation, Wageningen University;
- Prof. dr. Rein Raud, professor of Asian and Cultural Studies, Tallinn University;
- Prof. dr. Corien Bary, professor in Logical Semantics, Radboud University;
- Dr. Elsbeth Brouwer, assistant professor in Philosophy of Language and Cognition, University of Amsterdam;
- Prof. dr. Erik Weber, professor of Philosophy, Ghent University;
- Dr. Constanze Binder, associate professor Philosophy, Erasmus University Rotterdam – referee;
- Dr. Bruno Verbeek, assistant professor of Ethics and Political Philosophy, Leiden University – referee;
- Sarah Boer, MA student Philosophy, Politics, and Society, Radboud University – student member;
- Tim van Alten, MSc student Philosophy of Science, Technology and Society, University of Twente – student member;
- Christa Laurens, MA student Modern European Philosophy, Leiden University – student member.

The panel assessing the bachelor's programmes Philosophy and Philosophy of a Specific Discipline at Erasmus University Rotterdam consisted of the following members:

- Prof. dr. Martin van Hees, professor of Moral and Political Philosophy, VU University and Dean of Amsterdam University College (AUC) – chair;
- Prof. dr. Gerd Van Riel, professor of Ancient Philosophy and Dean of the Institute of Philosophy, KU Leuven – chair and panel member;
- Prof. dr. Mariëtte van den Hoven, professor of Medical Ethics, Amsterdam UMC;
- Prof. dr. Martine Prange, professor of Philosophy of Humanity, Culture, and Society, Tilburg University;
- Prof. dr. Vincent Blok, professor of Philosophy of Technology and Responsible Innovation, Wageningen University;
- Tim van Alten, MSc student Philosophy of Science, Technology and Society, University of Twente – student member.

Information on the programme

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

Programme name:	Philosophy
CROHO number:	56081
Level:	Bachelor
Orientation:	Academic
Number of credits:	180 EC
Specialisations or tracks:	-
Location:	Rotterdam
Educational minor:	Applicable
Mode(s) of study:	Fulltime, parttime
Language of instruction:	Dutch
Submission date NVAO:	1 May 2024

Programme name:	Philosophy of a Specific Discipline
CROHO number:	57084
Level:	Bachelor
Orientation:	Academic
Number of credits:	180 EC
Specialisations or tracks:	-
Location:	Rotterdam
Educational minor:	Applicable
Mode(s) of study:	Fulltime
Language of instruction:	English
Submission date NVAO:	1 May 2024

Description of the assessment

Reflection on the previous assessment

After the previous assessment in 2018, the bachelor's programme Philosophy of a Specific Discipline underwent an assessment of conditions on standard 2 (teaching-learning environment). At the time, the assessment panel concluded that its conditions, which relate to skills teaching, thesis guidance, and the offer of sufficient course content for the various specific disciplinary trajectories, had been addressed in a satisfactory way. The current panel confirms this.

Aside from these conditions, the 2018 assessment report included recommendations for the two bachelor's programmes. For the bachelor's programme Philosophy, these included adapting the ambitious intended learning outcomes, strengthening the place of theoretical and practical philosophy in the profile, placing a stronger emphasis on writing practice, replacing the option of the book assignment with an authentic final thesis, and improving variation in assessment and resit options for students. To the bachelor's programme, Philosophy of a Specific Discipline, the panel recommended that the personnel plan should reflect the growth in student numbers.

Based on the self-assessments and the interviews during the site visit, the panel concludes that these recommendations have since been followed up by the programmes. See the sections on standards 1, 2, and 3 below for a more detailed discussion.

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

B Philosophy

The bachelor's programme in Philosophy (henceforth: 'B Philosophy') offered at the Erasmus School of Philosophy (ESPhil) of Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR) aims to educate academically trained philosophers as professionals, providing them with skills that are of specific relevance to society, both within and beyond the university. It does so with a particular focus on current social issues and the relationship between philosophy and other disciplines. These aims reflect the 'Rotterdam profile' that all ESPhil programmes share, which focuses on current societal issues and on the relationship of philosophy to other disciplines. The 'Rotterdam profile' is currently being strengthened in the B Philosophy through a revision of the curriculum (see Standard 2, below).

In the B Philosophy, students are introduced to philosophical concepts and theories from all of the main traditions in philosophy, such as theoretical philosophy, practical philosophy, and the history of philosophy. The programme has adjusted its profile since the previous site visit to better balance the various subdisciplines specified in the domain-specific framework of reference. Students learn to weigh the various concepts and theories against each other and to interpret the study materials in the light of social, scientific and ethical issues to which philosophical forms of analysis may be applied. While the B Philosophy is strongly anchored in the philosophical tradition, it is also designed to address today's societal challenges. These are reflected in four primary themes, which correspond with ESPhil's main research themes: The Making of Modernity, Human Conditions, Colliding Worldviews, and Philosophy of Economics.

The panel appreciates the programme's profile. It finds that the programme covers all ground that can be expected in a general philosophy BA programme, and that a good balance is struck between the various subdisciplines. The B Philosophy stands out through its 'Rotterdam' profile, connecting philosophy to other disciplines but also focusing on societal challenges. This profile, which is currently being sharpened in the curriculum, brings professional orientation and skills more to the foreground. The panel supports this development. The panel notes that the programme's Rotterdam profile is very much in line with the 'Erasmian Values' which Erasmus University Rotterdam highlights in its vision for education, which encourages entrepreneurial, engaged, open-minded, and connecting attitudes. The B Philosophy programme already embodies many of these values. It is therefore well positioned to connect with and disseminate university-wide policies and practices.

The programme's profile has been translated into a set of intended learning outcomes (ILOs) for every year of the programme; the ILOs of the third and final year of the programme are the exit qualifications (see Appendix 1). The panel appreciates the concrete, hands-on phrasing of these outcomes, which clearly take into account the skills and roles that graduates will be able to apply in a variety of professional fields. It also finds that the ILOs are sufficiently academic and clearly reflect the Dublin descriptors for bachelor's programmes.

B Philosophy of a Specific Discipline (BPSD)

ESPhil's other bachelor's programme, Philosophy of a Specific Discipline (BPSD), combines 90 study credits (EC) in philosophy education with 90 EC in the study of another scientific discipline (the "specific discipline") offered at EUR. This allows students (who wish to do so) to obtain two bachelor's diplomas in four years. The BPSD focuses on the relationship between philosophy and specific academic disciplines, combining a grounding in a specific discipline with a philosophical frame of reference. The programme intends for its graduates to have acquired sufficient knowledge of the philosophy of their specific scientific discipline to be able to reflect both orally and in writing on the presuppositions of the discipline. They can also position their scientific discipline in relation to other scientific disciplines, as well as in relation to societal issues. In this manner, the BPSD programme reflects ESPhil's Rotterdam profile (see above). BPSD intends to give graduates an edge in the labour market by deepening their critical skills and stimulating an open attitude.

The panel appreciates the BPSD's profile, which is distinctive in the Netherlands: only one other BA Philosophy programme is offered that has a similar setup. The panel agrees with the programme management that the combination of Philosophy and another discipline strengthens the academic attitude and reflexive skills of graduates, rendering them attractive for future employers in their discipline. In offering the possibility to combine Philosophy with a more profession-oriented programme such as Law or Medicine, the programme is also attractive for students for whom entering a philosophy programme may not be an obvious route to employment, e.g. first-generation students. Moreover, through its connection with the other EUR Schools, the BPSD fulfils a university-wide function in operationalizing the external orientation emphasized in the Erasmian values (see above). The panel encourages both BPSD and the university to intensify and further build upon this outward orientation.

In order to sharpen the BPSD's profile, the panel advises clarifying for all those involved in the programme, both students and staff, how 'philosophy of a specific discipline' should be understood at the EUR. This phrase can either refer to philosophical reflection on the methodologies, concepts, or foundations of a discipline, or more generally to philosophical reflection on topics in the domain of study or pertaining to the subject matter of the discipline in question. The panel considers that the first option, a focus on the philosophy of the discipline in the stricter sense, would provide the clearest and sharpest definition.

The BPSD has a set of 13 ILOs that reflect the programme's profile. According to the panel, these ILOs are in line with the Dublin descriptors for bachelor's programmes, and are sufficiently detailed and academic in nature. The panel acknowledges the links with relevant professional fields and follow-up master's programmes. It recommends revising the ILOs in line with the more sharply defined profile to clarify the specific expectations surrounding the philosophical level and content of the curriculum, in order to create a clearer framework of what is expected of the students.

Considerations

The B Philosophy offered at Erasmus School of Philosophy (ESPhil) of Erasmus University Rotterdam introduces students to philosophical concepts and theories from all of the main traditions in philosophy. Its approach reflects the Rotterdam profile, in other words it focuses on current social issues and on the relationship between philosophy and other academic disciplines. The panel appreciates this profile, which has been adjusted successfully since the previous site visit. The panel is positive about the concrete and hands-on formulation of the intended learning outcomes, which clearly take into account skills and roles that graduates are to apply in the various professional fields that they may end up in. The panel finds that the intended learning outcomes are sufficiently academic and that they clearly reflect the Dublin descriptors for academic bachelor's programmes.

The bachelor's programme Philosophy of a Specific Discipline (BPSD) combines training in philosophy with training in another scientific discipline (the "specific discipline") offered at EUR. Graduates learn to position their scientific discipline in relation to philosophy and to current societal issues. The panel finds that the programme fulfils a university-wide function by embodying the external orientation expressed in the university's Erasmian values. It encourages both the programme and the university to intensify and build upon this connectivity. The panel advises defining the profile of the BPSD more precisely in order to ensure that all those involved in the programme, both students and staff, have a clear understanding of how 'philosophy of a specific discipline' is understood at EUR. The panel approves of BPSD's intended learning outcomes, which are in line with the Dublin descriptors. They are sufficiently academic and refer to possible professional fields or follow-up master's programmes. The panel recommends revising them in line with the sharpened profile to clarify the specific expectations surrounding the philosophical level and content in the curriculum.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programmes meet standard 1.

Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment

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

Findings

Curriculum: B Philosophy

The 180 EC B Philosophy (*B Filosofie*) is a Dutch-language bachelor's programme with a full-time and a part-time variant, with an average annual intake over the past six years (2017–2022) of 43 full-time and 35 part-time students, respectively. In the part-time programme, students study the same curriculum at half pace, so that it is completed over six years.

The contents of the curriculum (see Appendix 2) are structured with reference to the main areas of philosophy: theoretical philosophy, practical philosophy, and the history of philosophy. These are areas linked to the four research themes within ESPhil:

- ‘The Making of Modernity’ considers the history of early modern philosophy, notably in the Netherlands, from the Renaissance up to the Enlightenment, and the relevance of its legacy today.
- ‘Human Conditions’ reopens the question of who we are as human beings against the backdrop of the emergence of disruptive technologies and the global environmental crisis, challenging us to redefine our relationship with nature and with each other and to reconsider the question of human autonomy.
- ‘Philosophy of Economics’ addresses philosophical (e.g., epistemic and normative) issues emerging in contemporary economics, engaging with how economics is actually practiced by experts in this field.
- ‘Colliding Worldviews’ analyses drastic changes in contemporary scientific inquiry (e.g. the growing importance of interdisciplinarity and participatory research) and the fundamental clashes between competing worldviews opened up by these developments.

The first year of the programme (B1) focuses on establishing a common philosophical knowledge base and on developing academic and professional skills. This is achieved through thematic courses linked to the four main themes, as well as a skills trajectory named ‘Philosophical Studio’ (*Filosofisch Atelier*) (3.75 EC). The second year of the programme (B2) is similar in format and aims to further enable students to broaden and deepen their knowledge and skills. In the third and final year of the curriculum (B3), students take a minor (15 EC) and the final Philosophical Studio course (3.75 EC), in addition to two Advanced Academic Skills Courses (AASC, 7.5 EC twice, 15 EC total), the Philosophy in Practice course (7.5 EC), and the bachelor’s thesis (11.25 EC). A free elective component worth 7.5 EC allows students to add a personal philosophical focus.

The training of academic skills is integrated into the curriculum, with most courses in B1 and B2 contributing to the development of a specific skill. Seven courses in B1 and four courses in B2 offer a designated skills tutorial separately as part of the course. In B3, academic skills teaching is fully integrated into the courses, which have a seminar or workshop format. In the AASC, students are introduced to the research practice of a staff member, who offers in-depth lectures on the specific subject that is central to the course and lets students join and participate in the research practice. These courses were offered for the first time in the 2022–2023 academic year. The various AASCs rotate, so that a variety of lecturers can be offered the opportunity to introduce students to their research.

Professional skills are offered in the Philosophical Studio (*Filosofisch Atelier*). Throughout its trajectory, students in B1, B2, and B3 reflect on the role they may later play in their careers. Since there is no standard career path for philosophers, students are encouraged to develop their own philosophical profiles. This involves examining their own philosophical attitudes, philosophical skills, and preferences for roles and functions. From the academic year 2023–2024 onward, courses in the Philosophical Studio course line have been further deepened by combining them with Film and Philosophy (B1) and Public Philosophy (B2). Here, students are introduced to different ways of addressing specific audiences and positioning themselves as philosophers. Up until the academic year 2022–2023, B3 students could choose an internship instead of a minor. The internship comprised 15 EC and took place during the period in which students might otherwise take their minor. From the academic year 2023–2024 onward, students follow the course *Filosofie in de Praktijk* (7.5 EC). Students can either take part in a philosophical internship or investigate a societal issue. The reason for this change is that the programme wishes to further enhance the external orientation of the

programme, which as a result includes a society-related project as a standard part of the curriculum rather than as one of the options available to students as a minor.

The panel has studied the programme's curriculum and concludes that it is well designed. The courses build logically on each other and students progressively gain knowledge and skills. The programme uses a variety of didactic approaches, including the making of blog posts, a film critique, and close listening. In the courses with larger groups that are shared with the other bachelor's programme, tutorials in smaller groups are offered alongside the lectures. The courses deal with contemporary societal issues, while also providing a solid foundation in philosophical theory and practice. Students told the panel that they consider the programme to be coherent and well structured. They appreciate the role of the minor, the internship, and other elective possibilities in B3 in shaping their own learning trajectories. The panel applauds the fact that the programme works hard on translating its societally oriented profile into the curriculum. The smaller internship is a choice that matches the Rotterdam profile well.

The curriculum is currently undergoing a process of redevelopment. This has been completed for B3 and will now be undertaken in B1 and B2. As part of this process, the smaller courses worth 3.75 EC will be combined and redeveloped into 7.5 EC courses. There is a consensus among staff and students that the current blocks are too short. Both lecturers and students feel these are less suitable to achieve the level of in-depth treatment of topics required in philosophy. In addition, the smaller courses make it difficult to compensate for the possible (unforeseen) absences of both lecturers and students, while they also increase organizational complexity and thus the workload for teaching and support staff. The curriculum will be adapted gradually over the upcoming two academic years in order to ensure that there is enough time for the transition. In this way, students, staff and management can prepare adequately for the new courses.

The panel has discussed this process with students and staff members, and notes that the wish for larger courses is shared generally. Students feel that more time for reflection would lead to a better learning experience. Larger courses also create more room for cooperation, for instance between co-teaching staff members. The panel therefore agrees with the planned adaptation. It has studied an initial concept of the new curriculum and discussed its development with various staff members. It is also pleased to hear that many ideas for the new course formats have arisen from the bottom up. At the same time, the panel points out that the programme management and ESPhil as a whole need to ensure that the change is made in a coherent manner, which also requires top-down steering.

Curriculum: BPSD

The English-language BPSD curriculum is offered full-time only and comprises 180 EC. It currently attracts around 150-200 students per academic year. Students in the programme obtain 90 EC through the philosophy curriculum and another 90 EC through the successful completion of Specific Discipline Expertise Modules. The latter courses are offered by the seven other EUR Schools. These modules from other bachelor's programmes are taught at the B1 (60 EC), B2 (15 EC), and B3 (15 EC) levels. The philosophy curriculum comprises 63.75 EC in introductory and advanced courses, shared in common with B Philosophy, as well as 15 EC in Specific Discipline electives. Finally, students follow a Philosophy Bachelor's Thesis and Milestones Trajectory (11.25 EC). See Appendix 2 for a more detailed overview of how the programme may be combined with various other disciplines.

The content of the philosophical courses is divided into various distinct but interconnected sections. First, there is a section of introductory courses (30 EC), which are divided over year 1 and 2. These courses serve as entry points for students by allowing them to familiarize themselves with the content and direction of the themes. The second section consists of a set of advanced courses that are included in the skills learning line

(33.5 EC). These philosophical courses reflect ESPhil's profile in philosophy and offer students the philosophical ability to reflect on what is at stake in contemporary societal challenges. Third, there is a set of courses designated as Philosophy of a Specific Discipline (15 EC). These courses are often co-organized by one or more other Schools, are taught in small groups and in an interdisciplinary setting, and zoom in on certain cross-sections between philosophy and a specific discipline, or on certain themes adjacent to that discipline. This specific focus and the smaller-scale setting promote depth, discussion, and mutual exchange. Most of the courses are connected to specific programmes so as to ensure their quality and relevance, but students can deviate from this path and request to participate in a different course if they can justify why this course is better aligned with their research interests or field.

Since students may take courses in different programmes with deviating time schedules, tutorial attendance is not mandatory in the BPSD. The differences this creates between the various student groups is mitigated by mandatory assignments. All students need to hand in their work on specific dates, and these assignments may subsequently be used as a basis for further discussion. In the redevelopment of the BPSD, which follows that of the B Philosophy, additional measures are planned, specifically with a view to professionalizing the digitization of lectures and improving the consistency of tutorials throughout the programme for BPSD students.

The panel has studied the BPSD curriculum and discussed it with students and alumni from a variety of specific disciplines. The panel concludes that the BPSD has a structured yet flexible curriculum that offers students a unique opportunity to combine a study at any of the EUR's seven Schools with the BPSD. Students and alumni informed the panel that they consider their personal academic development to be enhanced through reflection on their specific discipline. The eight trajectories offered by the BPSD are tailored to the various Schools and much appreciated by the BPSD students. The panel applauds the BPSD for offering these trajectories and encourages ESPhil to actively invest in further strengthening the ties with the other Schools through the collaboration in these trajectories.

Regarding content, the panel agrees with the programme that it is necessary to provide students from a wide variety of academic backgrounds with a solid foundation in philosophy. It applauds the fact that the BPSD offers students a full 90 EC in Philosophy courses. At the same time, it considers the integrative parts of the programme to occur quite late (in the B3-level courses). By integrating the disciplines earlier on, the programme would enable students to more successfully integrate disciplines in their final theses (see Standard 4). The scheduled renewal of the curriculum and the introduction of larger course units offer a prime opportunity to effect such a change. The panel also encourages the BPSD to execute its plans to enhance skills tutorials for BPSD students. It expects that this will be beneficial for the academic quality of the final theses.

Both bachelor's programmes are considering creating a more diverse and inclusive curriculum, for example through adding more non-Western philosophy components. At present, students report that attention paid to this is dependent on the individual staff members teaching a course. Some actively juxtapose the Western canon with non-Western voices, while others take a more traditional approach. The panel acknowledges the intention to pay attention to diversity and inclusivity within the programmes and within ESPhil at large. It recommends embedding this development structurally by making the intended diversification of the curricula a more coordinated and coherent effort. Such an approach would not only take into account the content of the programme per se, but would also consider aspects such as the use of gender-neutral language.

Language of instruction

The language of instruction in the B Philosophy is Dutch, but the parts of the curriculum shared with BPSD are taught in English, with students having the option of being assessed in Dutch. By offering both Dutch and English components, the programme aims to prepare students in the best way possible for their next step, be it in Dutch society, in an international environment, or in the predominantly English-speaking academic world. The BPSD programme is taught in English and has an English programme name, since philosophy and the academic world in general increasingly rely on the English language and on proficiency in English as crucial conditions for academic as well as international careers. In addition, as members of the panel and programme managers discussed during the visit, the combination of the BPSD with other English-taught bachelor's programmes makes this a logical and necessary choice. At the same time, ESPhil is considering a further development of the Dutch-language aspects of the BPSD as a viable option in view of its increased societal orientation. This is also in line with the EUR Language Policy (2020).

The panel discussed the language of instruction with students, teaching staff and management of both programmes. It supports the inclusion of English-language courses in the B Philosophy curriculum, considering that Dutch-language tutorial and assessment options are available for students who prefer Dutch. As for the BPSD, the panel agrees with the choice for English based on the reasons specified above, especially the links with other English-language bachelor's programmes. The panel shares the programme's consideration that the external focus of the programme's profile might make bilingual offerings more desirable. The panel recommends formulating a School-specific language and internationalization policy so that decisions on the curricula regarding language of instruction and internationalization are taken in a coherent, well-founded and clear manner.

Guidance and feasibility

Bachelor students at ESPhil are supported by a dedicated study advisor, who offers individual support, and by two wellbeing officers. The latter run a programme with workshops and seminars and write a weekly wellbeing newsletter to inform students about various initiatives organized by the EUR. In addition, ESPhil has an international officer who collaborates with the EUR international office to provide support to international students. A dedicated study association, ERA, organizes activities for students as well as staff, including regular events such as monthly drinks and pub lectures. ERA also organizes study trips, film evenings and study and career-related activities.

Currently, students in the programmes are expected to complete B1, gaining all credits during the first year as part of the university-wide policy on nominal study success. This adds pressure to succeed in the first year of study. In order to alleviate the demands placed on the student, ESPhil has a compensation system which permits students to compensate for, at most, three insufficient marks in B1 and two insufficient marks in B2 (see also standard 3). This system is likely to be adapted as a consequence of new Dutch legislation, so that additional student pressure will be further reduced.

Specifically for the full-time B Philosophy programme, a mentor programme was introduced in 2022 to facilitate the initial transition to university. Students are assigned a mentor who is a (junior) member of staff and who organizes regular meetings that are mandatory during the first 100 days of B1. After the first three blocks, (informal) activities are encouraged, but no longer mandatory. The BPSD students and part-time B Philosophy students do not have this mentor system, as they require more flexibility in their planning and often have prior study and/or work experience when following ESPhil courses.

In their third year, students in both programmes are guided in their thesis trajectory. This phase is structured through four milestones that students should achieve: finding a tutor; handing in a thesis topic and being matched with a supervisor; filling out the thesis proposal form, co-signed by their supervisor, and submitting

it to the Examination Board; and handing in an outline of their thesis, which includes a writing schedule and, where applicable, deadlines as discussed with their supervisor. At the start of this trajectory, students receive guidance in preparing for their final assignment in a Thesis Working Group. In the B Philosophy, this is part of *Filosofisch Atelier III*. The Thesis Working Group is supervised by a tutor and focuses mainly on finding a thesis topic. Its main purpose is to give support to students before they are assigned a supervisor. As of the academic year 2023-2024, BPSD students are required to take part in the dedicated Thesis Working Groups. Previously students could join the milestones trajectory on a voluntary basis. Throughout the year, the tutor remains available to the students if there are practical problems with the thesis process. Part-time students in the B Philosophy programme follow a more individualized thesis guidance path, without the structure of a thesis working group. The programme is currently considering whether a more structured programme should be offered to them as well.

Besides these formal guidance and supervision structures, ESPhil is a small-scale School where students and teaching staff form an active academic community. Students from both programmes told the panel that they consider the staff members to be highly dedicated and approachable, and that this sense of community is one of the aspects of their programmes that they particularly cherish. For B Philosophy students, who form a smaller cohort, this is the case throughout the programme; part-time students are often less involved but state that they appreciate the efforts made by the programme to help them progress: for example, by making the courses fit with their other activities through attempting to schedule as many as possible on one weekday. BPSD students, who combine ESPhil with another programme, often have fewer options to actively participate in community activities, but feel greatly supported by the programme's staff. They particularly praise the individual and personal help and support they receive in the thesis trajectory.

The panel concludes that much effort is put into promoting study success and wellbeing among students. Students appreciate the personalized support and extensive feedback they receive. They generally consider their programmes to be feasible, although they would welcome the introduction of larger course units in the redesign. They expect this will lead to a less fragmented curriculum with more time for reflection. The panel agrees. However, it points out that the feasibility of the new setup for part-time B Philosophy students should be monitored. These students receive less guidance throughout their studies, and may be said to benefit most from the smaller units currently available, which are easy to schedule and complete.

In spite of the programmes' efforts to guide students and support feasibility, the panel found that the current success rates are on the low side. In recent years, the nominal percentage of full-time B Philosophy students graduating was between 33% and 41%, while on average 50% graduated after five years. Part-time students tend to take longer than the allotted six years. In the BPSD, about 30% graduated after five years. The panel discussed these numbers with representatives of the two programmes. It learnt that both programmes are investigating the underlying causes and working on improving these numbers. The introduction of the mentor programme in the B Philosophy provides one way of addressing this.

In both the BPSD and the part-time B Philosophy programmes, the combination with other programmes makes it harder to complete on time. Students often opt for a delay in order to be able to take more courses or fit the programme in with their other activities. Based on the guidance structures in place and conversations with students and alumni, the panel considers both programmes sufficiently feasible. It advises faculty to continue working on improving the graduation rates.

As mentioned before, the close-knit academic community and the involvement of staff members with the students is one of the strengths of the ESPhil programmes. Teaching and support staff work hard to accommodate students who combine the philosophy programme with another programme or a job. While

the panel realizes that such flexibility is crucial, especially for part-time B Philosophy and BPSD students, it notes that this may lead to more exceptions and extensions being granted, which may affect the shape and intensity of thesis supervision. This not only leads to increased work pressure among staff members, but can also result in students opting for thesis topics that do not match the BPSD profile entirely (see Standard 4). The panel encourages the programmes to streamline the guidelines on guidance and supervision to avoid this, and to ensure they are implemented consistently. The programmes should offer sufficient flexibility to students without compromising the equal treatment of students or the suitability of the thesis topic.

Staff

A total of 23 senior ESPhil staff members are involved in teaching in the BA programmes, as well as 16 PhD candidates and 10 junior staff members (tutors) who are available for tutorials. The B Philosophy programme is taught by a smaller team of 19 senior staff members. In addition, the BPSD has four extra senior staff members available from the Philosophy and Economics research theme. ESPhil requires its academic staff to have a University Teaching Qualification (UTQ, or *BKO*), which includes English language proficiency at level C1 (CEFR qualification), provided by the EUR's Language and Training Centre. Following this policy, a total of 33 staff members have obtained a UTQ, while a further 13 staff members have been exempt from the UTQ requirements in view of their previous teaching experience and/or other qualifications. Five members of staff are currently in the process of completing their UTQ.

ESPhil has a Tutor Academy for its course tutorials, with experienced and skilled tutors who guide students in actively processing the course content and in developing the skills linked to the course. The tutors have a UTQ or follow the training to obtain one. The tutors also have an initial role in the development of a thesis proposal by students. Through the permanent appointment of tutors, ESPhil has recently been able to add to the continuity of the Tutor Academy and its contribution to the educational programmes, making it a stable factor within the B Philosophy and BPSD. Tutors, moreover, will also be actively involved in upcoming curricular (re)developments.

The panel considers the staff to be well qualified for teaching the bachelor's programmes, both academically and in terms of didactic expertise. ESPhil ensures that staff members have sufficient fluency in English to teach in the English-language courses. The work of the Tutor Academy is appreciated by the panel: it solves prior staffing issues and meets the previous panel's advice to increase the teaching staff to meet the growth in student numbers. Offering fixed contracts to tutors will be beneficial for the sustainability of this system. Students interviewed by the panel were positive about the quality and approachability of their tutors.

Considerations

The panel considers the curricula of the B Philosophy and the BPSD to be well-designed and coherent. The courses build up logically and students progressively gain relevant knowledge and academic and professional skills. The courses deal with contemporary societal issues, while also providing a solid foundation in philosophical theory and practice. In the BPSD, the panel appreciates the fact that the programme has a structured yet flexible curriculum that offers students a unique opportunity to combine the programme with study of a specific discipline at any of the EUR's seven Schools. The panel recommends the chance to integrate the curriculum components centred on the study of a specific discipline with the training in philosophy at an earlier point in the curriculum to improve the BPSD's integrative theses.

Both programmes are preparing a redevelopment of their curricula, merging the current 3.75 EC courses into 7.5 EC courses. The panel agrees with the planned adaptation. It also encourages the BPSD to execute its plans to enhance skills tutorials for BPSD students as part of this overhaul. Furthermore, the panel advises a

coherent and structured approach to the diversification of the curriculum to better include non-Western philosophy as part of the redevelopment.

The programmes are taught by expert staff with didactic expertise and a good command of the English language. The panel agrees with the choice of English for the BPSD, in preparation for its predominantly English-language academic and professional fields, and due to its combination with other English-language EUR bachelor's programmes. However, the panel concurs with the programme in the consideration that the external emphasis of the programme's profile might make bilingual offerings more logical. The panel advises the ESPhil to formulate a School-specific language and internationalization policy so that decisions on the curricula concerning language and internationalization are taken in a coherent, well-founded, and clear manner.

The programmes are considered feasible thanks to a clear structure, a strong system of guidance and support, and a close-knit academic community that the students benefit from. The small size and relative autonomy of the faculty enhances the informal atmosphere in which collaborative learning takes place. The panel appreciates the efforts made to improve study success, and encourages the programmes to continue working on this. Teaching and support staff work hard to accommodate students who combine the philosophy programme with another programme or a job. While the panel realizes that such flexibility is crucial, especially in the part-time B Philosophy and BPSD, it notes that this may lead to the range of exceptions and extensions granted to students, for instance in the shape and intensity of thesis supervision. The panel encourages the programmes to streamline their guidelines on guidance and supervision, and to ensure they are implemented consistently.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programmes meet standard 2.

Standard 3. Student assessment

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

Findings

Assessment system and practice

The programmes' student assessment system is based on the principles outlined in the ESPhil Assessment Policy. These principles include clear assessment criteria for students; constructive alignment of assessment to ensure that test methods match the learning objectives and teaching methods in a course; and support for the student's learning trajectory through frequent formative as well as summative testing. These principles have been translated into an assessment plan for each programme.

Core philosophy courses in both programmes are assessed using two or more types of mostly summative assessment methods: written exams, essays, and assignments. Parts of an examination that are collectively examined (for groups of two students or more), and/or parts not examined in the Examination Hall on campus or in proctored exams, may not account for more than 30% of the total exam. The 2021 mid-term evaluation recommended that students should be given more opportunities to practise their writing skills during the programme, and also noted the need to diversify the types of assessment. In response to these findings, a skills line has been integrated that includes new and different forms of assessment, including a literature (mini-)review, a research paper, a group project, a presentation, a poster, and a video. The panel is

pleased with the variety of exam types undertaken by the programme. It concludes that the assessment of courses is performed well and that the system of assessment is well designed.

The current EUR policy requires students to obtain 60 EC in their first bachelor year. In order to alleviate the pressure that this entails, ESPhil has a compensation system that permits students to compensate for a maximum of three insufficient marks (grades 4.5–5.4) in B1 and two insufficient marks in B2 in three compensation clusters. In B3, students cannot compensate for insufficient marks. In the BPSD, there is a compensation system in place that permits BPSD students to compensate for one insufficient mark (grades 4.5–5.4) across all BPSD courses (compensation for courses in the other chosen discipline is not permitted). The thesis is excluded from this rule. The panel understands the reasoning behind this assessment practice and appreciates that motivated choices are made on how to compensate. It also understands that a policy change is likely to be adopted as a consequence of new Dutch legislation, so that the system may disappear in the short term.

Assessment in the tutorials is conducted by the tutors, under the supervision of the senior staff member coordinating the course. When discussing this practice with junior and senior staff members, the panel has learnt that it is possible for senior staff members to be non-Dutch speakers, while students can opt for Dutch-language testing. It is therefore possible in both programmes for the tutor to act *de facto* as the assessor, when the senior staff member is not fluent in Dutch. The programme administrators expect this issue to be solved shortly by formally appointing tutors as examiners. The panel agrees that this would be a good solution, especially since the tutors now have more permanent positions, hold a UTQ or are in the process of obtaining one, and are capable of carrying out assessment independently.

In the B Philosophy, the optional 15 EC internship used to be assessed on a pass/fail basis, and its main aim was to let students gain professional experience. This elective course has now been replaced by the mandatory course *Filosofie in de Praktijk* (7.5 EC), which requires all students to follow an internship or investigate a societal issue. The panel recommends ensuring that assessment of this internship takes place in a more refined and focused manner than was the case in its previous form (when the assessment was mainly based on its completion). Now that the internship occupies a more prominent role in the programme, its aims and assessment procedure need to be clarified for all those involved, including the students, the EUR supervisor, and the advisor in the internship organization. During the site visit, the panel was under the impression that this was still in development.

Examination Board

All ESPhil programmes share the same Examination Board (EB). Based on the recommendations of the previous accreditation panel, ESPhil has improved the quality assurance of assessment. The EB regularly evaluates assessments, paying particular attention to new or unusual forms of assessment. Where appropriate, it reports its findings to the course examiner, and/or the Vice-Dean of Education. In addition, there is an annual ‘thesis review procedure’ by a panel consisting of board members. The EB performed a quality check on the theses. It drew conclusions similar to those arrived at by the panel, but did not conclude from its selection (unlike the panel) that the standard was not met. As a result of this process, measures have been taken to improve quality assurance, specifically in relation to the assessment of bachelor theses. The assessment form, for example, was revised in 2022. With this revision, it was determined that the research question or statement of each thesis should be explicitly assessed by both the supervisor and advisor. In addition, the Examination Board critically surveys incoming assessment forms in order to ensure that these have been submitted in a complete and conscientious manner.

In light of the recent challenges to thesis assessment posed by generative AI, the Examination Board has also been monitoring the plagiarism scores of all theses handed in and taken further action where deemed appropriate. At the request of the Examination Board, the ESPhil Board has set up an ESPhil working group on AI to formulate principles to safeguard assessment.

The panel met with the Examination Board and discussed assessment practices with its members. Based on this conversation, and on the basis of the documentation, the panel concludes that the EB is clearly in control and proactive in fulfilling its quality assurance duties.

Thesis assessment

Following the recommendations of the previous assessment, a standard bachelor's thesis form was reintroduced in the philosophy programmes to replace the previous practice of encouraging book reviews. Each thesis has a supervisor who acts as first assessor. After they approve a thesis with a preliminary grade, a second reader is involved. This reader provides a second preliminary grade and feedback. The first supervisor then returns feedback of both assessors to the student, who has the chance to review their thesis based on this feedback. Once the final version is handed in, the first and second assessors independently complete a thesis assessment form. The final grade is the unweighted average of these two grades, except in cases when the second reader judges the thesis unsatisfactory, in which case the lowest grade counts. In cases in which there is a significant difference (1.5 points or more) between the grades awarded by supervisor and advisor, a third examiner is appointed. The thesis is then graded as the average of the three (or in case of two unsatisfactory grades, the average of those two).

Standardized assessment forms and procedures are employed in order to ensure that assessment is consistent and in line with clear and explicit criteria. The form features unweighted criteria in three main categories: (1) structural components, (2) scope and choice of literature, and (3) quality of argumentation. The BSPD forms have an additional criterion which requires the thesis to have a 'clear relation to the topic of the student's specific discipline' and that the thesis is 'sufficiently philosophical' in nature.

The panel is pleased with the reintroduction of the bachelor's thesis, which constitutes a clear improvement in assessing students' final level. Based on the theses and assessment forms it examined, the panel concludes that the thesis assessment procedure is in order. It does notice that for both programmes, the theses receive higher grades than the panel would expect on the basis of its own assessment or the comments on the assessment forms: in some cases the comments do not seem to match well with the given grade. According to the panel, supervisors and assessors should better align what counts towards a certain grade, for instance through calibration sessions. The assessment form, which the panel considers clear and well-designed in itself, could be adapted by adding a rubric specifying what constitutes a certain grade. In addition, thesis supervisors should be encouraged to motivate their final assessment extensively, since this is currently not always the case.

Regarding the supervision and assessment procedure, the panel is pleased that the first and second reader act independently, as this heightens the impartiality of their assessment. The option for students to improve their thesis before handing in the final version is a great service to the students. However, the panel wonders whether this practice should be continued in view of the extra workload for supervisors, who have to read a thesis twice. It advises investigating whether this procedure could be simplified. Finally, the panel noticed that in certain cases the assessment procedures have not been followed. The panel encountered a BSPD thesis where an unsatisfactory assessment by one of the readers had not led to an unsatisfactory final evaluation, and found a number of cases where the maximum word count was surpassed without any consequence. The panel also found BSPD theses where the 'clear relation to the topic of the student's

specific discipline' could be considered debatable or lacking, or where the philosophical level of the thesis demonstrated shortcomings that were also remarked upon by at least one of the assessors (see also Standard 4, below).

The panel learnt that the programmes' Examination Board (EB) encountered these same issues before (high grading and occasional departure from protocol) and addressed them in its annual report of 2022. The EB consequently took action by adapting the thesis assessment form. Among other modifications, the EB included a word-count criterion and adapted the form to ensure that all assessors for the BPSD correctly fill out the criterion on philosophical content and the link to the specific discipline. The panel highly appreciates the analysis and subsequent actions taken by the EB. It encourages the programme management to support the EB in its efforts to heighten the quality of assessment by enforcing procedures where necessary and organizing an ongoing dialogue with all staff members on thesis assessment.

Considerations

The panel finds that assessment in the bachelor's programmes follows adequate procedures and uses fitting and sufficiently varied methods. Both programmes have worked on diversifying examination methods, which the panel appreciates. The panel also welcomes the fact that the bachelor's thesis has been reintroduced upon a recommendation of the previous panel. The Examination Board (EB) is clearly in control and fulfils its quality assurance duties proactively. The panel advises ensuring that assessment of the new 7.5 EC internship takes place in a more refined and focused manner than a simple pass/fail, to highlight its more prominent place in the curriculum.

Thesis assessment in both programmes is conducted according to a clear and well-designed protocol and with the use of clear assessment forms. Issues noted by the panel including high grading and in some cases departure from procedures by thesis assessors have also been discovered and addressed by the EB. In order to improve thesis assessment, the panel recommends simplifying the procedure (whereby supervisors now read many theses twice) in order to reduce the workload of supervisors, as well as organizing calibration sessions and instituting a dialogue on assessment among staff members of both programmes.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programmes meet standard 3.

Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes

The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Findings

For the B Philosophy, the panel read a selection of 15 theses from full-time as well as part-time students. In one case, the panel found that the thesis did not meet the standards. It concluded that while this thesis showed some shortcomings in methodology and build-up, this did not indicate a larger issue and constituted an isolated case. The panel found that the other theses were of a satisfactory level. In many cases, they demonstrated the programme's societal profile by addressing topical issues. Alumni of the programme told the panel that they felt well-prepared for a follow-up master's programme.

For the BPSD, the panel also read a selection of 15 final theses. It found that the highest graded theses made strong and sometimes inspiring connections between philosophy and the student's specific discipline. The panel found that these theses reflect the added value that the programme can provide by integrating

philosophy and a specific discipline. This value was described as high and enriching by the alumni that the panel interviewed.

Of the lower-graded theses, the panel concluded that two did not meet the expected quality standard for a bachelor's thesis in the philosophy of a specific discipline. They showed methodological issues such as the absence of a clearly demarcated research question or a motivated selection and use of relevant literature. They also failed to fully relate philosophy to the specific discipline. The theses also demonstrated limited writing and editing skills. The panel investigated the extent of this issue by selecting five more theses in the lower grade range (between 6 and 6.9). Of these five, three showed similar shortcomings.

The panel discussed this issue with programme management and staff. It concludes from these conversations that there are different expectations among staff members regarding the integration of philosophy and the specific discipline. Also, the panel understood that there may be a tendency towards leniency among some staff members with regard to BPSD students, in order to help and support them in combining two programmes. The panel finds that the programme should improve the level of its final theses by specifying the type and degree of integration needed and seeing to it that this is achieved through clear and well-enforced supervision regulations and practices. Introducing such integration earlier in the programme and strengthening the skills tutorials for BPSD students might also contribute to raising the quality of the theses. The panel is nevertheless confident that the issues it encountered can be addressed within a two-year period. At present, however, the panel concludes that not all BPSD theses demonstrate that students meet the intended learning outcomes.

Considerations

For the B Philosophy, the panel concludes that all theses were satisfactory in level, with one exception. The panel considers this an isolated case. The theses demonstrated the programme's societal profile by addressing topical issues. Alumni of the programme told the panel that they felt well-prepared for a follow-up master's programme. The panel therefore concludes that the intended learning outcomes for the B Philosophy are being achieved.

For the BPSD, the panel found that the highest graded theses made strong and often inspiring connections between philosophy and the student's specific discipline. The panel recognises the additional value provided by the programme in terms of the integration of the two disciplines, which was also attested by the alumni that it interviewed. Of the lower-graded theses, the panel concluded that two did not meet the expected quality standard for a bachelor's thesis in the philosophy of a specific discipline. They show methodological issues, such as the absence of a clearly demarcated research question or the lack of a motivated selection and use of relevant literature. They also failed to integrate philosophy with the specific discipline and demonstrated limited writing and editing skills. The panel has encountered similar issues in additional theses that received a lower grade. The panel concludes that not all BPSD theses demonstrate that students meet the intended learning outcomes.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the bachelor's programme Philosophy meets standard 4 and that the bachelor's programme Philosophy of a Specific Discipline partially meets standard 4.

General conclusion

The panel's assessment of the bachelor's programme Philosophy is positive. The panel's assessment of the bachelor's programme Philosophy of a Specific Discipline is conditionally positive.

The panel sets the following conditions, to be met within two years, for the bachelor's programme Philosophy of a Specific Discipline:

1. Only admit final theses that explicitly connect the student's specific discipline to the philosophy of that discipline. This implies that both the philosophical methods and perspective as well as the connection to the specific discipline are both clearly demonstrated.
2. Ensure that the theses of all graduates demonstrate a sufficient academic level. This means that the theses contain a clear and clearly demarcated research question, that graduates display sufficient writing and editorial skills, and that the selection and use of literature is well-motivated.

Development points

1. *BPSD*: Sharpen the profile in order to ensure that all those involved in the programme, both students and staff, have a clear understanding of what is meant by 'philosophy of a specific discipline'. Revise the intended learning outcomes in line with this refined profile to clarify the specific expectations surrounding the philosophical level and contents in the curriculum.
2. *BPSD*: Begin the integration of the specific discipline with philosophy at an earlier moment in the curriculum.
3. *BPSD*: Execute the current plans to enhance skills tutorials for BPSD students.
4. *Both programmes*: Formulate a coherent and structured approach to the diversification of the curriculum.
5. *Both programmes*: Formulate a School-specific language and internationalization policy so that decisions on the curricula concerning language and internationalization are taken in a coherent, well-founded and clear manner.
6. *Both programmes*: Streamline the guidelines on guidance and supervision, and ensure they are implemented consistently while still accommodating the students' needs for flexibility.
7. *Both programmes*: Simplify the procedure where supervisors read every thesis twice to reduce their workload. Organize calibration sessions and a dialogue on assessment among staff members of both programmes.

Appendix 1. Intended learning outcomes

B Philosophy

Eindkwalificaties bachelor Filosofie in voltijd, 2023-2024

Aan het eind van bachelor 1 moet de student blijk hebben gegeven te voldoen aan de volgende eisen:

1. het beschikken over en kunnen problematiseren van een elementair inzicht in de systematische filosofie en haar geschiedenis alsook in de contemporaine filosofie;
2. het mondeling en schriftelijk kunnen weergeven van relevante begrippen en opvattingen van bestudeerde auteurs;
3. het begrijpend (= analyserend en samenvattend) kunnen lezen: het filosofisch probleem in een tekst identificeren, de argumentatieve structuur blootleggen, achterhalen met wie de auteur in gesprek is en wat de bijdrage van de auteur is aan het permanente gesprek dat filosofie is;
4. het kunnen vinden en hanteren van geselecteerde primaire bronnen en secundaire literatuur;
5. een oefening in debatteren;
6. het kunnen schrijven van een 'peer review' van het werk van medestudenten;
7. het kunnen schrijven van een kort filosofisch essay voor een breed publiek;
8. het kunnen houden van een korte presentatie van vijf minuten.

Voor bachelor 2 gelden de volgende eindtermen:

1. het beschikken over een vermogen om uiteenlopende filosofische posities met een positief-kritische houding tegemoet te treden en met elkaar te vergelijken;
2. ontvankelijk zijn voor de maatschappelijke, wetenschappelijke en ethische relevantie van filosofische vraagstukken en over het vermogen beschikken om de bestudeerde stof in dat licht te interpreteren;
3. het kritisch kunnen lezen van een filosofische tekst, i.e. de positie van de auteur zo sterk mogelijk maken en onder kritiek stellen, en nagaan hoe men zich verhoudt tot de tekst;
4. de toegang weten tot en beschikken over een kritisch begrip van primaire en secundaire literatuur en het kunnen uitvoeren van een bibliografisch onderzoek naar relevante vakliteratuur;
5. het kunnen schrijven van een kritische samenvatting (recensie) van een filosofische tekst;
6. het kunnen formuleren van een kritische vraag of beredeneerde stelling over opgegeven literatuur;
7. het kunnen schrijven van een filosofisch paper;
8. het kunnen houden van een referaat (i.e. een presentatie ter voorbereiding van een discussie) van 15 minuten;
9. het kunnen presenteren, mondeling argumenteren en discussiëren.

Voor bachelor 3 gelden de volgende eindtermen:

1. het verwerven van een vermogen tot logisch redeneren, analytisch denken,

argumenteren en rapporteren, waarmee de intellectuele basis is gelegd voor zowel een vervolgstudie (Master) als een, de genoemde vermogens vereisende, functie in desamenleving;

2. het beschikken over de bereidheid om af te zien van voorbarige oplossingen en waar nodig indringend verder te vragen;
3. het in staat zijn tot onderzoekend lezen, i.e. een filosofisch probleem vanuit verschillende invalshoeken aan de orde stellen; een filosofisch hoofdprobleem opsplitsen in deelproblemen; mogelijke oplossingen voor deelproblemen kunnen genereren, formuleren, overzien en afwegen; de oorspronkelijke hoofdvraag van de auteur tot eigen probleem maken en zelf van een coherent antwoordvoorzien;
4. het zich schriftelijk kunnen uitdrukken op een academisch niveau;
5. het zich oriënteren op een bepaaldevakwetenschap;
6. in staat zijn tot een verdiepende exploratie in één van de specialisaties van de Erasmus School of Philosophy(afstudeeronderzoek);
7. het kunnen schrijven van een bachelorscriptie;
8. (indien van toepassing) het succesvol kunnen doorlopen van een stagetraject en het kundig rapporteren over de(eind)resultaten.

Intended Learning Outcomes Bachelor in Philosophy of a Specific Discipline, 2023-2024

Knowledge and understanding

1. To possess elementary knowledge of the scientific discipline involved;
2. to have general knowledge of systematic philosophy, the history of philosophy, in particular the period of the Enlightenment, and contemporary philosophy;
3. to have obtained such a knowledge of the philosophy of one's own scientific discipline that they are able to explain the concepts and ideas of relevant authors (by speech as well as in writing) and knows how to gain access to primary and secondary sources;
4. to have an understanding of the presuppositions and position of one's own scientific discipline compared to other scientific disciplines.

Skills and communication

Besides the skills the student acquires within their own scientific discipline, within the philosophy curriculum the following skills are trained:

5. to think and reason in a logical, analytical and critical way;
6. to make a report, a summary and/or an argumentative text;
7. to do a brief literature study and do some research in preparation of the writing of the thesis;
8. to write a short thesis for the philosophy curriculum;
9. to be able to reflect on one's main scientific discipline, thereby deepening and broadening the knowledge of that specific scientific discipline, which can be of later use in further studies (master, postdoc, PhD) and/or in a professional career.

Attitude and judgmental capabilities

10. A positive and critical attitude with respect to the relation between philosophy and the scientific discipline involved;
11. receptivity/receptiveness to the societal, scientific and ethical importance of philosophical issues in relation to the scientific discipline involved and be able to interpret the relevant literature and collected data from that perspective;
12. the ability to reflect on one's own scientific discipline in an attentive and thoughtful manner.

Learning skills

13. To be better prepared for further studies (master, postdoc, PhD) because of the acquired learning outcomes mentioned above.

Appendix 2. Programme curriculum

B Philosophy

Bachelor Filosofie

Course code	Name	EC	Offered by: Research theme / collaboration
Bachelor 1 courses (60 EC)			
FW-WB3924	The Early Enlightenment	3,75	Making of Modernity
FW-WB3925	Essential Contemporary Challenges	3,75	Human Conditions
FW-WB3926	Human Conditions I	3,75	Human Conditions
FW-WB3927	Thought Experiments	3,75	Colliding Worldviews
FW-FMC1006	Human Conditions II	3,75	Human Conditions
FW-VAA1014	Filosofisch Atelier I	3,75	Skills course
FW-FMC1007	Ecophilosophy	3,75	Human Conditions
FW-FMC1005	Het (modern en postmoderne) subject	3,75	Human Conditions
FW-HIS1019	The High Enlightenment	3,75	Making of Modernity
FW-TF1011	Analytical Philosophy	3,75	Colliding Worldviews
FW-HIS1020	Immanuel Kant	3,75	Making of Modernity
FW-TF1012	Inleiding Logica	3,75	Colliding Worldviews
FW-PF1010	Social and Political Philosophy	3,75	Human Conditions
FW-HIS1021	Negentiende Eeuw I	3,75	Making of Modernity
FW-PF1011	Moral Philosophy	3,75	Human Conditions
FW-HIS1022	Negentiende Eeuw II	3,75	Making of Modernity
Bachelor 2 courses (60 EC)			
FW-WB3928	Epistemologie	3,75	Colliding Worldviews
FW-WB3931	Technology and Social Change	3,75	Human Conditions
FW-WB3929	Philosophy of Science	3,75	Colliding Worldviews
FW-WB3930	Critique	3,75	Human Conditions
FW-TF2011	Metafysica en Predicatenlogica	3,75	Colliding Worldviews
FW-HIS2001	Classical Thought	3,75	Making of Modernity
FW-VAA2014	Filosofisch Atelier II (spreken)	3,75	Skills course
FW-HIS2021	Middeleeuwen en Renaissance	3,75	Making of Modernity
FW-FMC2006	Ontologie en Metafysica I	3,75	Human Conditions
FW-TF2012	Creativity and Discovery in Science	3,75	Colliding Worldviews
FW-FMC2010	Ontologie en Metafysica II	3,75	Human Conditions
FW-HIS2022	Pre-Enlightenment Modernity	3,75	Making of Modernity
FW-FMC2011	Ontologie en Metafysica III	3,75	Human Conditions

FW-TF2014	Taalfilosofie	3.75	Colliding Worldviews
FW-TF2013	Bewustzijnsfilosofie en Modale Logica	3.75	Colliding Worldviews
FW-FMC2012	Aesthetics	3.75	Human Conditions
Bachelor 3 courses (48.75 EC)			
	Minor or Exchange	15	
FW-BA3005B	AASC: Wittgenstein	7.5	Colliding Worldviews
FW-BA3005A	AASC: Philosophy of Culture. Postmodernism and Metamodernism	7.5	Human Conditions
FW-BA3005D	AASC: Normality & Resilience	7.5	Human Conditions
FW-VAA3014	Filosofisch Atelier III (thesis milestones)	3.75	Skills course
FW-VAA3021	Filosofie in de Praktijk	7.5	Skills course
FW-ED3005	Values, Welfare and Cooperation	3.75	Philosophy of Economics
FW-BA3001	Ethics, Emotions and Rationality	7.5	Human Conditions
FW-ED3017	Philosophy of History	7.5	Human Conditions
FW-ED3006	Philosophy of Science and Medicine	3.75	Human Conditions & Erasmus MC
FW-ED3018	Theatre of the Human	7.5	Human Conditions
FW-ED3004	Ethical Aspects of Economics	7.5	Philosophy of Economics
FW-ED3007	Oefeningen in perspectivisme (EMC, ESHPM)	3.75	Human Conditions & Erasmus MC
FW-ED3008	Biomedische Ethiek	7.5	Erasmus MC
FW-ED3013	History of Political Thought	3.75	Human Conditions
FW-ED3012	Advanced Social Theory	7.5	Erasmus School of Social & Behavioural Sciences
FW-ED3022	Being an Erasmian	3.75	Making of Modernity
Thesis course (11.25 EC)			
FW-AFS3201	Bachelor Thesis	11.25	Skills course

Bachelor in Philosophy of a Specific Discipline

Module	Name	EC	Offered by: Research theme / collaboration
Bachelor level 1 courses (37.5 EC)			
FW-WB3924	The Early Enlightenment	3.75	Making of Modernity
FW-WB3925	Essential Contemporary Challenges	3.75	Human Conditions
FW-WB3926	Human Conditions I	3.75	Human Conditions
FW-WB3927	Thought Experiments	3.75	Colliding Worldviews
FW-FMC1006	Human Conditions II	3.75	Human Conditions
FW-FMC1007	Ecophilosophy	3.75	Human Conditions
FW-HIS1019	The High Enlightenment	3.75	Making of Modernity
FW-HIS1020	Immanuel Kant	3.75	Making of Modernity
FW-PF1010	Social and Political Philosophy	3.75	Human Conditions
FW-PF1011	Moral Philosophy	3.75	Human Conditions
Bachelor level 2 courses (26.25 EC)			
FW-TF2015	Foundations of Philosophy	3.75	Colliding Worldviews
FW-PF1010	Technology and Social Change	3.75	Human Conditions
FW-WB3929	Philosophy of Science	3.75	Colliding Worldviews
FW-WB3930	Critique	3.75	Human Conditions
FW-TF2012	Creativity and Discovery in Science	3.75	Colliding Worldviews
FW-HIS2022	Pre-Enlightenment Modernity	3.75	Making of Modernity
FW-FMC2012	Aesthetics	3.75	Human Conditions
Specific Discipline courses (15 EC)			
RL24	Legal Theory and Methods (ESL)	5	Erasmus School of Law
FW-ED3005	Values, Welfare and Cooperation (ESE, RSM)	3.75	Philosophy of Economics
FW-ED3017	Philosophy of History (ESHCC, EUC)	7.5	Human Conditions
FW-ED3018	Theatre of the Human (ESSB, ESL, ESHCC)	7.5	Human Conditions
FW-ED3004	Ethical Aspects of Economics (ESE, RSM, ESSB)	7.5	Philosophy of Economics
FW-ED3007	Oefeningen in perspectivisme (EMC, ESHPM)	3.75	Human Conditions & Erasmus MC
FW-ED3006	Philosophy of Science and Medicine (EMC, ESHPM)	3.75	Erasmus MC
FW-ED3008	Biomedische Ethiek (EMC, ESHPM)	7.5	Erasmus MC
FW-ED3020	Advanced Social Theory (ESL, ESE, RSM, ESSB)	7.5	Erasmus School of Social & Behavioural Sciences
FW-ED3022	Being an Erasmian (ESE, RSM, ESSB, ESL, ESHCC)	3.75	Making of Modernity
Thesis course (11.25 EC)			
FW-AFS3201	Bachelor Thesis and Milestones	11.25	Skills Course
Courses from their specific discipline (90 EC) ¹			

Appendix 3. Programme of the site visit

beschikbaar).

Overzicht programma

21 November		
10.00	Welcome panel	NL (of EN)
10.15	Preparation meeting panel & open virtual 'walk in'	
11.45	Meeting with programme management	EN
12.30	Lunch	
13.00	Meeting on BPSD theses	NL
13.15	Meeting B Philosophy students & (recent) alumni	NL (of EN)
13.45	Meeting B Philosophy of a Specific Discipline students & (recent) alumni	NL (of EN)
14.15	Meeting B Philosophy & B Philosophy of a Specific Discipline staff	NL (of EN)
15.00	Break	
15.30	Meeting M Philosophy students & (recent) alumni	EN
16.15	Meeting M Philosophy staff	EN
17:00	End	
22 November		
09.00	Meeting Examination Board	NL (of EN)
09.45	Meeting M Philosophy (research) students & (recent) alumni	EN
10.30	Break	
11.00	Meeting M Philosophy (research) staff	EN
11.45	Internal meeting panel	
12.15	Lunch	
13.00	Final meeting programme management	EN
13.45	Internal meeting panel	
15.30	Development meeting programme management	EN
16.15	Report and conclusion by panel	EN
17:00	End	

Appendix 4. Materials

Prior to the site visit, the panel studied 15 theses for the B Philosophy and 20 for the BPSD. Information on the theses is available from Academion upon request. The panel also studied other materials, which included:

0. Self evaluations
 - Part I – ESPhil general information and reflections
 - Part II – Self evaluation B Philosophy
 - Part II – Self evaluation B Philosophy of a Specific Discipline
 - Part II – Self evaluation M Philosophy
 - Part II – Self evaluation M Philosophy (research)
1. ESPhil general appendices
 - Appendix 1.01 – Domeinspecifiek referentiekader Wijsbegeerte 2016
 - Appendix 1.02 – All courses ESPhil
 - Appendix 1.03 – ESPhil academic staff overview
 - Appendix 1.04 – Collaborations
 - Appendix 1.05 – Alumni portraits
 - Appendix 1.06 – EUR taalbeleid 2020
 - Appendix 1.07 – Reflection Covid pandemic
 - Appendix 1.08 – Programme Committee year report 2022 – 2023

2. Programme specific appendices

B Philosophy

- Appendix 2.01 – Filosofische profielen Filosofisch Atelier
- Appendix 2.02 – Eindreflecties Filosofische Stage 2021 – 2022

B Philosophy of a Specific Discipline

- Appendix 2.07 – BPSD Erasmus MC courses
- Appendix 2.08 – BPSD Erasmus School of Economics courses
- Appendix 2.09 – BPSD Erasmus School of Health and Management courses
- Appendix 2.10 – BPSD Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication courses
- Appendix 2.11 – BPSD Erasmus School of Law courses
- Appendix 2.12 – BPSD Erasmus School of Social and Behavioural Sciences courses
- Appendix 2.13 – BPSD Erasmus University College courses
- Appendix 2.14 – BPSD Rotterdam School of Management courses
- Appendix 2.15 – Full overview all EUR programmes

M Philosophy

- Appendix 2.03 – Elective course clusters

M Philosophy (research)

- Appendix 2.04 – International benchmarks ReMA
- Appendix 2.05 – ReMA core staff and expertise
- Appendix 2.06 – ReMA student self-evaluation MP3

3. Assessment

- Appendix 3.01 – Assessment policy ESPhil
- Appendix 3.02 – Examination protocol ESPhil
- Appendix 3.03 – Jaarverslag EC ESPhil 2020-2021
- Appendix 3.04 – Jaarverslag EC ESPhil 2021 – 2022
- Appendix 3.24 – Review theses EB 2022

Assessment plans

- Appendix 3.05 – Assessment plan BA 2023-2024
- Appendix 3.06 – Assessment plan BPSD 2023-2024
- Appendix 3.07 – Assessment plan MA 2023-2024
- Appendix 3.08 – Assessment plan ReMA 2023-2024

Intended learning outcomes

- Appendix 3.09 – Eindkwalificaties- Bachelor Filosofie Voltijd
- Appendix 3.10 – Eindkwalificaties Bachelor Filosofie Deeltijd
- Appendix 3.11 – ILOs Bachelor Philosophy of a Specific Discipline
- Appendix 3.12 – ILOs Master Philosophy Now
- Appendix 3.13 – ILOs Research Master Philosophy and Economics

TER and R&G 2023-2024

- Appendix 3.14 – OER Bachelor Filosofie Voltijd
- Appendix 3.15 – OER Bachelor Filosofie Deeltijd
- Appendix 3.16 – TER Bachelor Philosophy of a Specific Discipline
- Appendix 3.17 – TER Master Philosophy Now full-time and part-time
- Appendix 3.18 – TER Research Master Philosophy and Economics
- Appendix 3.19 – Regels en Richtlijnen BA VT
- Appendix 3.20 – Regels en Richtlijnen BA DT
- Appendix 3.21 – Rules and Guidelines BPSD
- Appendix 3.22 – Rules and Guidelines MA
- Appendix 3.23 – Rules and Guidelines ReMA

4. Theses

- Appendix 4.14 – Rapportage scriptie review EC januari 2022

Manuals and grading forms

- Appendix 4.01 – Bachelor thesis manual
- Appendix 4.02 – Thesis assessment form bachelor
- Appendix 4.03 – Master thesis manual
- Appendix 4.04 – Thesis assessment form master
- Appendix 4.05 – ReMA thesis milestones
- Appendix 4.06 Thesis assessment form ReMA
- Appendix 4.07 – Formal requirements + grading criteria ReMA
- Appendix 4.08 – Instructions for thesis examiners ReMA

Theses 2019 – 2023

- Appendix 4.09 – All theses ESPhil

- Appendix 4.10 – Theses B Filosofie
 - Appendix 4.11 – Theses B Philosophy of a Specific Discipline
 - Appendix 4.12 – Theses M Philosophy
 - Appendix 4.13 – Theses M Philosophy (research)
5. Research
- Appendix 5.01 – Research review Philosophy
 - Appendix 5.02 – Rapportage mid term research review ESPhil
 - Appendix 5.03 – Action plan ESPhil research
6. Accreditation reports
- Appendix 6.01 – Rapport accreditatie BA – BPSD – MA 2028
 - Appendix 6.02 – Rapport accreditatie ReMA 2018
 - Appendix 6.03 – Rapport accreditatie na herstel BPSD – MA 2020
 - Appendix 6.04 – Panelrapport TOE 2021