

**MASTER'S PROGRAMME**

**ARTS AND CULTURE**

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

**MAASTRICHT UNIVERSITY**

QANU  
Catharijnesingel 56  
PO Box 8035  
3503 RA Utrecht  
The Netherlands

Phone: +31 (0) 30 230 3100  
E-mail: [support@qanu.nl](mailto:support@qanu.nl)  
Internet: [www.qanu.nl](http://www.qanu.nl)

Project number: Q0721  
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This report was finalised on 29 November 2019.





# REPORT ON THE MASTER'S PROGRAMME ARTS AND CULTURE OF MAASTRICHT UNIVERSITY

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

## ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE PROGRAMME

### Master's programme Arts and Culture

Name of the programme:	Arts and Culture (Kunst- en Cultuurwetenschappen)
CROHO number:	60087
Level of the programme:	master's
Orientation of the programme:	academic
Number of credits:	60 EC
Specialisations or tracks:	- Arts and Heritage: Policy, Management and Education (AHE)/Kunst, Cultuur en Erfgoed (KCE) - Politics and Society (PSE)/Politiek en Samenleving (PSN) - Art, Literature and Society (ALS)/ Kunst, Literatuur en Samenleving (KLS)
Location:	Maastricht
Mode of study:	full time
Language of instruction:	Dutch, English
Submission deadline NVAO:	01/05/2020

The visit of the assessment panel Arts and Culture to the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of Maastricht University took place on 13 and 14 June 2019.

## ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE INSTITUTION

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

## COMPOSITION OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

The NVAO has approved the composition of the panel on 28 January 2019. The panel that assessed the master's programme Arts and Culture consisted of:

- Prof. dr. J. (Jan) Baetens, professor in Literary Theory and Cultural Studies at KU Leuven (Belgium) [chair];
- Dr. J. (Jeroen) Boomgaard, lecturer in Art & Public Space at Gerrit Rietveld Academie and head of the research master Artistic Research at the University of Amsterdam;
- Prof. dr. K. (Karel) Vanhaesebrouck, professor and chair of Theatre Studies at the Université Libre de Bruxelles (Belgium);
- Drs. M. (Marlous) Willemsen, director of Imagine IC, an organisation and project that documents, presents and discusses everyday life in the neighbourhood and in the city and senior researcher and lecturer in Cultural Heritage at the Reinwardt Academie;
- E.M. (Eeke) van der Wal MA, research master's student Cultural Analysis at the University of Amsterdam [student member].



The panel was supported by P. (Petra) van den Hoorn MSc and drs. L. (Lieke) Ravestein MBA, who acted as secretaries.

## WORKING METHOD OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

The site visit to the master's programme Arts and Culture at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of Maastricht University was part of the cluster assessment Arts and Culture. Between February and December 2019, the panel assessed 34 programmes at 10 universities. The following universities participated in this cluster assessment: Erasmus University Rotterdam, Leiden University, Open University, University of Groningen, Maastricht University, University of Amsterdam, Tilburg University, Radboud University Nijmegen, Utrecht University, and Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.

On behalf of the participating universities, quality assurance agency QANU was responsible for logistical support, panel guidance and the production of the reports. Dr. Fiona Schouten was project manager for QANU. Dr. Fiona Schouten and Petra van den Hoorn MSc acted as secretaries in the cluster assessment.

### *Panel members*

The members of the assessment panel were selected based on their expertise, availability and independence. The panel consisted of the following members:

- Prof. dr. J. (Jan) Baetens (chair)
- Prof. dr. A. (Annick) Schramme (chair)
- Prof. dr. P.B.M. (Paul) van den Akker
- Dr. J. (Jeroen) Boomgaard
- Prof. dr. R.L. (Rosemarie) Buikema
- Prof. dr. A.S. (Ann-Sophie) Lehmann
- Prof. dr. K. (Karel) Vanhaesebrouck
- Prof. dr. H.J.G. (Henri) Beunders
- Em. prof. dr. S.L. (Sible) de Blaauw
- Drs. A.N. (Lex) ter Braak
- Em. prof. dr. C.A. (Claudine) Chavannes-Mazel
- Prof. dr. P.A.J.M. (Peter-Arno) Coppen
- Drs. P.H.G.J. (Patrick) Cramers
- Prof. dr. M. (Mark) Delaere
- Prof. dr. M. (Mark) Deuze
- Prof. dr. A. (Alexander) Dhoest
- Drs. M.J. (Marie-José) Eijkemans
- Em. prof. dr. R.E.O. (Rudi) Ekkart
- Prof. dr. phil. W.D. (Wolf-Dieter) Ernst
- Prof. dr. J.B.H. (Johan) de Haan
- Prof. dr. K. (Koenraad) Jonckheere
- Prof. dr. S. (Susan) Legêne
- Prof. dr. P. (Philippe) Meers
- Drs. Y.H.M. (Yoeri) Meessen
- Prof. dr. J. (Joost) Raessens
- Dr. M. (Margriet) Schavemaker
- Drs. E.A.M. (Liesbeth) Schöningh
- Prof. dr. C.B. (Cas) Smithuijsen
- Dr. M.T.A. (Marie-Thérèse) van Toor
- Prof. dr. E. (Lies) Wesseling
- Drs. M. (Marlous) Willemsen
- M. (Mirjam) Deckers BA (student member)
- S.W.J. (Stef) van Ool MSc (student member)
- V.L. (Vivian) van Slooten MA (student member)

- E.M. (Eeke) van der Wal MA (student member)

#### *Preparation*

On 10 September 2018, the panel chair was briefed by QANU on his role, the assessment framework, the working method, and the planning of site visits and reports. A preparatory panel meeting was organised on 14 January 2019. During this meeting, the panel members received instruction on the use of the assessment framework. The panel also discussed their working method and the planning of the site visits and reports.

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

Before the site visit to the Maastricht University, QANU received the self-evaluation reports of the programmes and sent these to the panel. A thesis selection was made by the panel's chair and the project manager. The selection consisted of 17 theses and their assessment forms for the programme as a whole, based on a provided list of graduates between June 2016 and August 2018. A variety of topics and tracks and a diversity of examiners were included in the selection. The project manager and panel chair assured that the distribution of grades in the selection matched the distribution of grades of all available theses.

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

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

#### *Site visit*

The site visit to the Maastricht University took place on 13 and 14 June 2019. Before and during the site visit, the panel studied the additional documents provided by the programmes. An overview of these materials can be found in Appendix 4. The panel conducted interviews with representatives of the programmes: students and staff members, the programme management, alumni and representatives of the Board of Examiners. It also offered students and staff members an opportunity for confidential discussion during a consultation hour. No requests for private consultation were received.

The panel used the final part of the site visit to discuss its findings in an internal meeting. Afterwards, the panel chair publicly presented the panel's preliminary findings and general observations.

#### *Consistency and calibration*

In order to assure the consistency of assessment within the cluster, various measures were taken:

1. The panel composition ensured regular attendance of (key) panel members, including the chair;
2. The manager was present at the panel discussion leading to the preliminary findings at all site visits.

#### *Report*

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



### *Definition of judgements standards*

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

#### **Generic quality**

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

#### **Meets the standard**

The programme meets the generic quality standard.

#### **Partially meets the standard**

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

#### **Does not meet the standard**

The programme does not meet the generic quality standard.

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

#### **Positive**

The programme meets all the standards.

#### **Conditionally positive**

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

#### **Negative**

In the following situations:

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



## SUMMARY JUDGEMENT

### *Intended learning outcomes*

The panel appreciates the choice of the master's programme Arts & Culture for an interdisciplinary and broad profile aimed at complex societal challenges in the fields of arts, literature and politics. The generic programme is imbedded in a large network (including international) and produces graduates for a wide spectrum of professional careers in the arts and cultural sectors (international, national and local).

The panel values the changes in the generic profile as positive: the strengthened academic and international orientation of the programme and the attention for learning skills. The international aspect is not yet completely articulated. With regard to the specialisation specific profiles, the panel concluded that the profile of AHE is clearly defined professionally as well as academically. The profiles of ALS and PSE are in the opinion of the panel too broad to be combined. For both specialisations a clearly defined own professional and academic orientation is desirable. For all the specialisations the panel feels that the specific ILOs are too ambitious for a one-year programme. The panel therefore advises the programme to redefine the current profiles of the three specialisations and suggested several options.

The panel appreciates the specific way in which the ILOs are formulated together with relevant stakeholders, in particular the External Advisory Board. The ILOs represent the profile and the changes in it, are formulated on a master's level and are in line with the Dublin descriptors. They include a professional, academic and international orientation. Nevertheless, the panel suggests differentiating between the ILOs of the Dutch and the English track, and between the ALS and PSE specialisations. For all Dutch specialisations, but especially for Kunst, Cultuur en Erfgoed (KCE), the panel recommends formulating extra content-oriented ILOs related to the Dutch context, to strengthen the added value of the Dutch tracks. The panel suggests fine-tuning the ILOs to connect them more to the specific profiles of each specialisation.

### *Teaching-learning environment*

The panel concluded that the master's programme Arts & Culture has a clear structure, content and coherence for the three specialisations AHE, ALS and PSE, with relevant core and elective modules that are in line with the generic and specific ILOs. While the modules for AHE mainly represent the profile of 'reflective practitioner', those for ALS and PSE mainly represent becoming 'critical generalists'. The specialisations are relevant to the academic fields; the students are well-trained in academic, professional and learning skills and in practising their own independent research.

Since the last accreditation, the programme has undertaken serious efforts to strengthen the academic orientation, and over the past years more relevant improvements have been implemented (advised by The External Advisory Board, The Educational Programme Committee and the Board of Examiners). For all specialisations, the panel supports the programme's plans to strengthen the international orientation further and to improve the general alignment of the different types of theses and internships between the specialisations.

Specifically, for AHE the panel appreciated the strong connection to the professional field and at the same time advises giving more weight to the professional orientation and deepening the academic orientation. This also would support, together with the large number of specific ILOs (see Standard 1), the possible transformation to a dual programme. Specifically, for ALS and PSE, the panel advises focussing more on the academic orientation and strengthening the structural relationship with the professional field (e.g. by promoting internships). To increase the professional orientation even more, the panel advises improving the involvement of alumni in the programme.

The panel concluded that the increasing international orientation, together with an increasing international population of students and teachers, justifies the chosen English name and English programme. The Dutch track still attracts Dutch students, which is worthwhile for the programme.



Nevertheless, in line with better positioning of the programme, the panel recommends either binding the Dutch track more to Dutch culture and adding content for it or using the Dutch track more as a purely additional skill (as a surplus on the English track).

The panel appreciates the didactic learning concept of PBL and supports the students' view that this approach is in line with the interdisciplinary character of the programme and therefore fits the master perfectly. Although there are some attention points, which the programme is aware of, the international classroom really stimulates all students to participate, collaborate and grow on a personal level.

The feasibility of the programme has the full attention of the management and staff as it appears that for all the specialisations, but especially for AHE, the actual study time takes much longer, mainly due to the graduation phase. The panel is positive about the support, the organisational structure and the information provided to students, for instance through the voluntarily mentor programme.

The panel appreciates the preparation process for the thesis, during which the students develop a proposal via peer feedback and under the guidance of their supervisor. However, it also made a suggestion about granting more time for actually writing the thesis. With regard to the internships of PSE and ALS, it thinks more involvement of the programme supervisor is desirable to increase the positive effects of the internship.

The panel concluded that the teaching staff is highly qualified. The students are positive about their teaching and research skills and the way research and education are integrated. They especially praised the personal involvement of the teachers and their non-hierarchical way of communication. During the site visit the high workload of the staff was discussed with the management and teaching staff. The panel thinks that the programme is handling this aspect with great care.

#### *Student assessment*

According to the panel, the assessment policy fits well with the profile of the programme and the didactic learning concept of PBL. Formative as well as summative assessment methods are being used, and the students learn to reflect continuously on their learning process. The assessment methods are in line with the ILOs and the courses' learning objectives.

The regulation procedures and working agreements related to the programme's assessment policy are well described and applied in the programme. The panel concluded based on the interviews that there is a broad culture of safeguarding the assessment system and the assessments, which is supported by the management, teaching staff and members of the Board of Examiners. It also became clear that the feedback from students on assessments is seriously discussed in regular meetings of the Educational Programme Committee. The panel confirmed that the Board of Examiners fulfils an active and important independent role securing a good quality of the programme's assessment.

The panel concluded that the validity, reliability and transparency of the assessments are positive. Several improvement points have been clearly defined and will be implemented. With regard to the internships, the panel advises using uniform grading forms containing clear criteria and a stronger advisory role for the professional supervisor in the process of determining the grade. It also recommends making the contribution of both examiners more visible on the thesis assessment form and giving feedback to students about their thesis grade and performance at an earlier stage.

### *Achieved learning outcomes*

The panel is pleased with the content of the master's theses; they are relevant to the field of Arts and Culture, represent the specialisation profiles, the academic master level and contain, wherever possible, an international approach. They make use of adequate and relevant academic and research methods and are written in adequate English or Dutch. The strengthened academic orientation is reflected in the improved methodical quality of the theses. According to the panel, in the case of internship theses the connection between the internship and the thesis can be defined more clearly. Regarding the ALS theses, the connection between their content and the ALS profile could be strengthened.

The alumni succeed sufficiently in finding jobs in the cultural field and/or at an academic level. According to the panel, graduates demonstrated that they have met the intended learning outcomes at the expected level. Alumni reported to the panel that the programme has equipped them with a variety of skills that are useful in their professional career.

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

### *Master's programme Arts and Culture*

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

The chair, prof. dr. Jan Baetens, and the secretary, Petra van den Hoorn MSc, of the panel hereby declare that all panel members have studied this report and that they agree with the judgements laid down in the report. They confirm that the assessment has been conducted in accordance with the demands relating to independence.

Date: 29 November 2019.



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

## **Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes**

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

## **Findings**

### *Profile*

The one-year master's programme Arts & Culture (MA AC) at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASoS) has a broad interdisciplinary profile. It trains students to respond to complex societal challenges facing the fields of arts, literature and politics, like mass migration, contested heritage, social inclusion, or digital culture. These challenges are related to different academic disciplines, professional contexts and country-specific backgrounds. Relevant disciplines like history, philosophy, sociology, art history, political theory, comparative literature, heritage and memory studies are covered. The programme prepares its students for a wide spectrum of professional careers in the art and cultural sectors and strives to be part of the relevant artistic and cultural field and research centres. It offers three specialisations. Arts and Heritage: Policy, Management and Education (AHE) examines how art and heritage function as expressions of modern cultures and societies. Art, Literature and Society (ALS) focusses on relevant components of the art world and literary field, e.g. current practices and debates in art and literature are explored. And Politics and Society (PSE) examines how political communities are (re)imagined, on both a conceptual and a practical political level. The last two specialisations are more closely connected. AHE aims to create 'reflective practitioners', students with a strong professional orientation, who are able to assess the accessibility, diversity, authenticity and sustainability of heritage-related objects, spaces and practices. ALS and PSE aim to create 'critical generalists'. Their students can reflect academically on the main debates in the twenty-first century culture, from both a historical perspective and an international perspective. Depending on their precise focus, they practise methods appropriate to their specific field of cultural studies and political culture.

The profile of the master's programme as a whole has changed over the past years, partly in reaction to the previous accreditation. Firstly, the methodological and academic skills have been strengthened, which is appreciated by the panel, since this contributes to the learning skills and the professional autonomy of the student. Secondly, the international orientation of the profile has improved; more than before it aims for students to enter both the Dutch and international labour markets. To this end, the programme offers all three specialisations in an English as well as a Dutch track<sup>1</sup>.

During the interview with the management and teaching staff, the generic profile was clearly explained. In line with the broad interdisciplinary profile, the programme is imbedded in a large network of (international) institutions in the professional and research field (research centres, museums) and aims to deliver graduates for a wide spectrum of professional careers in the different arts and cultural sectors (international, national and local). The panel appreciates this.

Still, a point of attention is that the international aspect of the profile is not yet effectively articulated. In the conversations with management and staff, the panel deduced that the international (that is, global) character of the profile still needs to be addressed more fully. Currently, the focus is still too

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<sup>1</sup> In Dutch the specialisations are called *Kunst, Cultuur en Erfgoed (KCE)*; *Kunst, Literatuur en Samenleving (KLS)*; *Politiek en Samenleving (PSN)*. For legibility, in this report the English abbreviations are used, but the text refers to both the English and the Dutch specialisations. Dutch abbreviations are used only where a comment specifically refers to a Dutch specialisation.

much on the Western and North American perspective instead of a broader scope concerning also the non-Western and post-colonial perspective. This is the case for the programme as a whole. In addition, the focus in the profile for the Dutch tracks is exactly the same as for the English tracks. It became clear that the advantages for the Dutch tracks lie mainly in offering Dutch students the possibility to study the track in their own language (see Standard 2). The panel advises to make the added value of the Dutch tracks more recognisable, for instance by integrating specific Dutch content related to the fields of art and culture.

For the specialisation-specific profiles, the panel is of the opinion that the profile and professional orientation of AHE is clear: students become 'reflective practitioners' in the field of art and heritage. Graduates can reflect critically on their practice as curator, museum staff member or policy maker from both an academic and a professional approach. The profiles of the other specialisations, ALS and PSE, were less clear to the panel as well as the students. Although students are familiar with the aim to become 'critical generalists' in their field, some of them did not know how to relate their profiles professionally to their field of study (e.g. what are the jobs aimed at by ALS and PSE). Additionally, in the self-evaluation report as well as during the site visit, the panel noticed that one referred to ALS in the same breath as PSE, as though it was a single specialisation. Yet at the same time, the panel was told both specialisations have a distinct focus. The panel advises the programme to rethink the current profiles of the three specialisations, focussing on how the identities of ALS and PSE should position their mutual relationship, and their relationship to AHE. The panel was pleased to notice that management and staff are already reconsidering how the specialisations and their profiles fit into the programme, and it appreciates the care and effort with which this is done. During the site visit, the panel together with the programme management explored a couple of options to make the identity of ALS and PSE clearer. For example, the option of more strictly separating the two specialisations, by redefining their aim and focus, was discussed. Another option, in the opposite direction, is to combine ALS and PSE into a single specialisation. This specialisation then requires choosing a specific study object, to be examined with an in-depth focus. The panel has no preference for either of the two options, it simply wants to encourage the programme management to think about how the profile of both specialisations could be made more clear. Reformulating the ALS and PSE specialisations will automatically improve their academic orientation and their connection to a corresponding professional field, creating a more clearly defined potential labour market for students.

#### *Intended learning outcomes*

The panel studied the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) of the programme (cf. Appendix 1) and understood that, after consultation with the External Advisory Board (consisting of alumni of the programme and representatives from the professional field), a revised set of ILOs was adopted in 2018 in order to strengthen the connection between the ILOs and the expectations of the working field. The panel highly values this. The revised ILOs became the start of a process of 'constructive alignment' to implement the renewed ILOs in the educational objectives. The process of improvement is recognisable in the education plan, and the actual status of the ILOs is mentioned.

In addition to the general ILOs at programme level, each specialisation has its own specific ILOs. The general and specific ILOs represent the increased attention of the programme paid to research and academic skills. For instance, ILOs related to formulating judgements and communication skills are both reflected in the general as well as the specific ILOs. This is also the case for the international orientation in the 'applying knowledge and understanding' and 'learning skills' ILOs.

The panel suggests differentiating between the ILOs of the Dutch and English track. Currently, in each of the three specialisations no difference has been made in the formulation of the ILOs between the Dutch and English tracks. Especially for the Dutch specialisation Kunst, Cultuur en Erfgoed (KCE), the panel suggests formulating specific ILOs so that students know they are substantially able to study Dutch heritage in Dutch. It also believes that the three specialisations have formulated too many ILOs concerning achieving and applying knowledge in many disciplines (e.g. for AHE: history, art history, memory studies, social sciences - political, economic and social - as well as organisational issues and for ALS and PSE: philosophy, arts and literature studies, history, sociology, political science, science and technology studies). The panel feels that the specific ILOs are too ambitious for



a one-year programme. Furthermore, it sees that there is little difference between the ILOs of ALS and PSE, except for one ILO concerning communication. The panel suggest fine-tuning the ILOs to connect them more to the specific profiles of each specialisation. The panel's recommendations in the section above (*Profile*) can help in this respect.

The panel appreciates the specific way in which the ILOs are formulated together with relevant stakeholders. The ILOs represent the programme's profile and its specialisations, are formulated on a master's level in line with the Dublin descriptors and include a professional, academic and international orientation. Concerning the ALS versus PSE specialisation, equivalent to their specific profiles, the panel recommends differentiating between the ILOs for these two specialisations if they remain separate specialisations in the future.

### **Considerations**

The panel appreciates the choice of the master's programme Arts & Culture for an interdisciplinary and broad profile aimed at complex societal challenges in the fields of arts, literature and politics. The generic programme is imbedded in a large network (including international) and produces graduates for a wide spectrum of professional careers in the arts and cultural sectors (international, national and local).

The panel values the changes in the generic profile as positive: the strengthened academic and international orientation of the programme and the attention for learning skills. The international aspect is not yet completely articulated. With regard to the specialisation specific profiles, the panel concluded that the profile of AHE is clearly defined professionally as well as academically. The profiles of ALS and PSE are in the opinion of the panel too broad to be combined. For both specialisations a clearly defined own professional and academic orientation is desirable. For all the specialisations the panel feels that the specific ILOs are too ambitious for a one-year programme. The panel therefore advises the programme to redefine the current profiles of the three specialisations and suggested several options.

The panel appreciates the specific way in which the ILOs are formulated together with relevant stakeholders, in particular the External Advisory Board. The ILOs represent the profile and the changes in it, are formulated on a master's level and are in line with the Dublin descriptors. They include a professional, academic and international orientation. Nevertheless, the panel suggests differentiating between the ILOs of the Dutch and the English track, and between the ALS and PSE specialisations. For all Dutch specialisations, but especially for Kunst, Cultuur en Erfgoed (KCE), the panel recommends formulating extra content-oriented ILOs related to the Dutch context, to strengthen the added value of the Dutch tracks. The panel suggests fine-tuning the ILOs to connect them more to the specific profiles of each specialisation.

### **Conclusion**

*Master's programme Arts and Culture:* the panel assesses Standard 1 as 'meets the standard'.

### **Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment**

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

### **Findings**

#### *Curriculum*

The master's programme Arts & Culture MA (60 EC) consists of three curricula: one for each specialisation. The AHE has over the past years been the largest specialisation (with 58 students enrolled in 2018) and ALS and PSE are smaller in students (ALS, with 15 students in 2018 and PSE, with 14 students in 2018). In reaction to the last accreditation the programme undertook serious efforts to strengthen the academic orientation, including new courses for writing skills, research

methods preparation courses for the internship and thesis. Recently, on the basis of advice provided by the External Advisory Board, the Educational Programme Committee and the Board of Examiners, it made some additional changes on making the three profiles more clear. The programme has also gone through a process of constructive alignment in which the revised ILOs have been aligned with the renewed course content and vice versa. The Education Plan, including specialisation-specific appendices and the Mid-term Reports for the different specialisations from January 2018, clearly describes these changes. The panel appreciates the transparent way in which changes in the programme are being implemented and also the changes themselves impress the panel.

AHE offers three core modules (25 EC), two elective modules (17 EC) and the thesis (18 EC). The core modules in periods 1 and 2 introduce students to key debates, theories and research methods within the field of arts and heritage. The core module in period 3 teaches students to develop their own research project. The elective modules I and II in periods 3 and 4 allow them to specialize in one of three areas: arts and audiences, heritage and society, or culture and economy. In period 4, instead of choosing electives, students can decide to do an internship (12 EC). In period 5 all students write their final master thesis (15,000-18,000 words), which is a research paper that presents the findings of an independent scholarly enquiry (see Appendix 2 for an overview of the AHE curriculum).

ALS and PSE contain two shared modules (18 EC), two sets of dedicated modules (18 EC) and the thesis (24 EC). The shared modules 'Make it new! Problems of cultural (re)production'<sup>2</sup> in period 1 and 'Thesis Proposal Workshop or Internship Thesis Proposal Workshop' in period 4 introduce students to key debates in 21<sup>st</sup> century culture and to proper research design. The dedicated modules for ALS in period 2 and 3 address the function of art in society and aim to elaborate further on academic skills training relevant for the field (narratological, iconographic, dramaturgical and musical analysis). The dedicated modules for PSE in periods 2 and 3 represent the humanities approach to politics and address the role of social media and technology in contemporary political culture. Just like the AHE programme, the thesis (20,000-24,000 words) has the format of a research paper that presents the findings of an independent scholarly enquiry. Students who would like to gain work experience can choose to perform an internship thesis (12,500-14,000 words), which has similar requirements but is shorter because of the higher workload coming from the assignment(s) of the internship organisation (see Appendix 2 for an overview of the PSE and ALS curricula).

The panel studied the structure and content of the three specialisations (see Appendix 4 for the relevant documents) and discussed them with the management, teaching staff, students and alumni. The panel concluded that the programme of the AHE specialisation has a clear structure and coherence with relevant core and elective modules which are in line with the profile of 'reflective practitioner' and the generic and specific ILOs. The modules pay sufficient attention to linking the theories and methods to current questions in cultural management, policy and education. The students are well-trained in academic and professional skills and in doing research (e.g. in the second module, where they conduct audience research and develop an audience marketing strategy for a cultural institution). Regarding the ALS and PSE specialisations, the panel concluded that the curricula of these specialisations also have a clear structure and coherence, with relevant shared and dedicated modules which are in line with the profile of 'critical generalists', and to a great extent in line with the generic and specific ILOs. It concluded that the students feel challenged in practising their own independent research in the field. For all the three specialisations the panel is very positive about the attention that has been paid to learning skills such as reflection by the students on their products (e.g. papers) and their (experienced) progress.

The panel gave some suggestions for further improving the specialisation programmes. The panel advises AHE to deepen the academic orientation, e.g. by incorporating theories about decolonization more strongly in the programme and paying more attention to the wide range of urgent, present-day debates that influence the arts and heritage sector. For ALS and PSE, the panel wondered if students are sufficiently able to deepen their knowledge of the underlying disciplines, because the

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<sup>2</sup> This course has been renamed to 'Topics in 21<sup>st</sup> century culture' from academic year 2019-2020.



modules show a rather broad focus. As a result, the focus of the academic orientation by the programmes of these specialisations can be strengthened. More specifically, for the ALS specialisation, the Literature aspect seems to be only slightly discussed in the dedicated modules. And in PSE, a more historical as well as discursive approach seems to be dominant, that may miss some of the opportunities to link the academic orientation of the programme with current social and political debates and problems in the field of culture and society (cf. the social and political dimension of much contemporary artistic work). The panel advises to define a more distinct labour market for ALS and PSE (see standard 1), in order to paint a clearer picture of the professional field of both specialisations. As a result, the panel believes the programme will be better able to also incorporate some of the (future) societal challenges into the relevant specialisations (e.g. migration, inequality, decolonization, participation).

Management and teaching staff have started with improvements for further streamlining the internships and theses. While all these components already meet specific academic requirements, which the panel appreciates, there are still some differences concerning the place where the thesis is situated in the curriculum and the number of EC it yields. The programme is planning to align these different types of theses and internships better across the specialisations, which the panel supports.

The panel was pleased to see that MA AC for all specialisations provides at least half of the programme for student-centred learning in the electives, the internship and the thesis. In the MA-EER 2018/19 and Rules & Regulations 2018/19, the procedures for the electives and the involvement of the Board of Examiners in these procedures are clearly described. Students have ample freedom regarding the topics of their research, and they are regularly challenged to relate their own experiences to the academic concepts.

#### *Internationalisation, name and language of the programme*

The MA AC has an international student body (30% Dutch and 70% international). In all specialisations, most students come from the EU. Only a few students are enrolled in the Dutch track. The programme will strengthen the international orientation of the programme further by paying more attention to multicultural skills (e.g. cooperation between different cultures, dealing with different values and strengthening the linguistic component more than speaking English), offering more case studies from outside the European Union and / or inviting more international specialists to provide guest lectures. The panel is pleased to see that in this way, students will be prepared for a larger, more international, labour market.

The English name represents the English curriculum that is in line with the national and international orientation of the programme. Joint English lectures and tutorials for both tracks provide an international common ground. For the core modules of KCE, the tutorials and workshops are in Dutch. Examinations are in English or in Dutch (for the Dutch specialisations). In addition, trainers in academic writing support students in both tracks with their writing skills (in Dutch and English).

Although only a small minority of students follow the Dutch track, the track still seems to be appealing for a specific, small group of Dutch students. The panel appreciates this possibility and the facilities offered, but at the same time recommends either binding the Dutch track more to Dutch culture (see Standard 1) and adding content about it or dropping the track in its current state and providing students the opportunity to learn Dutch as a foreign language, by offering the Dutch language as an optional additional skill (surplus on the English track).

#### *Professional orientation*

The professional orientation is largely present in the curriculum, in the form of external assignments, projects, practical research, sharing professional experiences between teachers and students, the skills courses and the internships. AHE has a strong connection with the professional field, which the



panel appreciates. It collaborates with events and research centres (like TEFAF and MACCH<sup>3</sup>), works with museums (like the Van Gogh Museum) and organises field trips and meetings with professionals (e.g. at the Venice Biennale and in Berlin). ALS and PSE are also building on their relationship with the field, which the panel highly supports. The panel advises the programme management to continue strengthening the structural relationship of the programme with the professional field in the direction of encouraging students to do an internship (see below), having more collaboration with the professional organisations (paying attention to 'young' organisations and new initiatives as well) and inviting guest lecturers.

The panel understood that only a minority of the students actually decides to pursue an internship, even though many students prefer to do so. Alumni and students who did do an internship mentioned its added value in preparing for the labour market. Due to a fully loaded programme or simply by not seeing (or not being guided to) the right options, students choose an alternative (either an elective or a small and extracurricular internship). This choice also prevents them from choosing the "internship thesis" option, which is offered as an alternative to the normal thesis. Concerning the importance of the professional orientation, the panel advises AHE to give more weight to the internship and the tools for reflection. First, the panel has doubts about the non-compulsory nature of the internship. An internship can substantially help students to connect the specialization's content to the labour market. It also provides the students with the opportunity to stay in touch with (future) societal challenges in the field. Second, according to the panel the internship is currently too short to allow students to fully reflect on what they have learned during their studies and how this relates to their experiences during the internship. In its opinion, the programme should consider transforming the AHE specialization into a dual programme, comprising of 90 EC. This way, the internship can be an obligatory second or third semester in which students have ample time to reflect, perform research and get acquainted with the professional field.

The panel is pleased with the activities of the External Advisory Board, which provides advice on the content of the programme (see standard 1) and it advises to continue its participation in giving advises to strengthen the professional orientation.

UM is developing an integrative approach to enhance its graduates' employability. In cooperation with UM Career Services, FASoS is offering a new lecture series on employability issues. Alumni of MA AC on the External Advisory Board made suggestions about improving the preparation of students for the labour market, and the faculty has been facilitating the organisation of the annual Career Day since 2017-2018. The panel advises the programme to communicate about this event more regularly towards the students, since this event provides students the opportunity to get in touch with alumni of their programme. The panel also advises increasing the involvement of alumni in the programme, in order to challenge the students to relate better to the professional field (by obtaining more internships, making future choices easier etc.).

#### *Didactical form of the programme*

The master's programme Arts & Culture follows the didactic learning concept of PBL, a teaching method according to which learning is approached as a constructive, collaborative, self-directed and contextual process. The approach is in line with the interdisciplinary character of the programme. It lays emphasis on dialogue and collaboration in tutorial groups of 12 to 15 students, on self-study, and is supported by tutors (facilitators of PBL sessions) and separate lectures (by teaching staff).

The panel is satisfied with the large variety of didactical work methods applied in the specific courses and contexts (e.g. working in groups or more individually, and working with presentations, seminars, assignments, real-life projects, papers, site visits to relevant professional organisations, etc.). The panel was especially enthusiastic about the peer review groups in all specialisations, where students during the thesis proposal workshops provide and give feedback on each other's thesis proposal.

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<sup>3</sup> *The European Fine Arts Fair and Maastricht Centre for Arts and Culture, Conservation and Heritage.*



Students get acquainted with the PBL concept through an introductory session at the start of the programme. During the site visit, students indicated they feel the PBL concept really fits the master's programme. However, they told the panel that sometimes more explanation about the PBL method was necessary, and it appeared that foreign students, who were not used to PBL (or similar teaching methods), needed some extra support. All students agreed though that in the international classroom, everybody is stimulated to participate actively, and ample room is created for a personal approach and for individual students 'to grow'. In addition, when some students dominate or don't expose enough 'cultural sensitivity', other students will give them feedback, or the tutor intervenes. There were some attention points that were raised in student evaluations and were discussed and dealt with by the Educational Programme Committee. The panel is confident from minutes and conversations with the teaching staff and students that these points were taken seriously and properly addressed.

#### *Feasibility and guidance*

To the panel the admission procedure is clear: the admission criteria are based on motivation, academic qualifications, writing skills and language proficiency. Students who hold an academic bachelor's degree in a field that does not grant direct admission can apply for a premaster's programme (60 EC). For each specialisation there is a premaster that offers special arts and culture content and necessary academic and language skills. Although the yearly intake of students has remained rather stable over the past years, a recruitment strategy has recently been set up, to optimize the premaster's trajectory further. The programme hopes to increase the number of students entering with a bachelor's degree, which may also increase the number of students for the Dutch track.

Despite the help of academic writing coaches who offer special workshops and individual guidance (English and Dutch), it appears that some students still experience difficulties during the programme with their level of speaking and writing in English. The admission requirement concerning English is an IELTS (International English Language Testing System) score of at least 6.5. The panel recommends raising this score to 7, because during the site visit, it concluded that entering with the minimal score is asking for a lot of effort by students to improve their English and causes extra work for teachers, writing coaches and students.

The panel is positive about the support, the organisational structure and the information provided to the students. The programme offers a voluntarily mentor programme in which each student is assigned to a staff member. Students can meet with their mentor a couple of times over the year to receive writing advice, support for their study and career planning, and ask practical questions. They told the panel that they felt supported by their mentor.

In the student chapter several attention points concerning study methods and study load were highlighted and recognised by the programme. The panel asked the teaching staff about the actual duration of the average study time. It appears that for all specialisations the actual study time is longer than nominal, in particular for AHE students, many of whom may take 18 months. Study delay seems to be mainly due to the graduation phase, where students choose to work longer on their thesis research or internship which often proves more time-consuming than initially planned (see *Professional Orientation*).

In period 5 all students of the programme work on their final thesis; ALS and PSE students can also choose an internship thesis. The preparation and writing of the proposal for the thesis or internship thesis is planned for ALS and PSE in period 4 during a workshop. In AHE a workshop in period 3 prepares the students for writing their thesis proposal. According to the panel, the workshop classes provide ample guidance for students on developing their proposal via feedback of their peers and supervisor, before starting with the thesis itself.

Students informed the panel that they were very satisfied with the way supervision is offered during the thesis-writing process. They felt supported and guided by their professors in the process of making choices (e.g. determining a research theme, interpreting the results). A point of concern is the perceived short time designated for actually writing the thesis. The panel ascertained that the deadline of handing in the final thesis (in June, with a possible resit during the summer) exerts a lot of pressure on some students. Therefore, the panel suggests that the programme management give the students more flexibility and time (e.g. during the resit period) to enable them to give their thesis a last boost for an improved grade.

The thesis supervisor provides supervision during the internship or internship theses. There is a signed agreement between the internship organisation, the faculty internship coordinator and the student prior to the start of the internship. While in AHE the programme supervisors pay regular visits to the internship organisations, in ALS and PSE there is little contact: the programme supervisor visits the organisation at the beginning and at the end of the internship. Sometimes this is merely done in writing. The panel thinks more involvement of the programme supervisor in ALS and PSE is desirable to increase the positive effects of the internship for the student and enhance the relationship with the professional field.

#### *Teaching staff*

The teaching staff is highly qualified: educationally, as well as possessing relevant expertise in their field of study. The international and interdisciplinary experience of the staff provides the students with an international outlook. The panel studied the roles of the (core) staff and concluded that a large majority either possesses a University Teaching Qualification (UTQ) or is in the process of obtaining one. It also studied the research topics and found that full professors and associate professors are well represented on the teaching staff and in the research programmes of FASoS (management and most supervisors have a PhD). While most staff members are actively engaged in relevant academic research topics, other teachers typically have expertise in the professional arts and heritage sector, which they apply by conducting research and consulting in the field (of policy, management, marketing, and education). Courses are designed to systematically use the lecturer's research expertise, and lectures are taught by experts in the field (especially in the AHE specialisation). New staff members receive a mandatory PBL tutoring course and coaching by an experienced staff member. Attention is also paid to regular staff professionalisation (like workshops about didactic and assessment qualities and intercultural skills).

The students appeared to be very positive about the teaching and research skills of their teaching staff and the way research and education are integrated throughout the programme. In addition, they highly value the supervision and the feedback provided by their teachers. In the conversation with the panel, students especially praised the teachers' personal involvement and stimulation, and they appreciated the 'horizontal communication lines' which are typical for this programme.

To the panel it became clear that the experienced workload among staff members is very high. The panel understood from the management and teaching staff that this point is still on the agenda. All sorts of measures have been taken to make things more bearable, like reducing the number of exams, creating synergies through sharing electives, more time for research (and less publication pressure), more steady contracts, tenure tracks, sabbatical possibilities, etc. During the site visit, the faculty has indicated that after a long period in which major changes have been implemented, it wants to allow its staff to catch a breath and give them time to reflect on the effects of those changes. This is highly appreciated by the panel.

#### **Considerations**

The panel concluded that the master's programme Arts & Culture has a clear structure, content and coherence for the three specialisations AHE, ALS and PSE, with relevant core and elective modules that are in line with the generic and specific ILOs. While the modules for AHE mainly represent the profile of 'reflective practitioner', those for ALS and PSE mainly represent becoming 'critical



generalists'. The specialisations are relevant to the academic fields; the students are well-trained in academic, professional and learning skills and in practising their own independent research.

Since the last accreditation, the programme has undertaken serious efforts to strengthen the academic orientation, and over the past years more relevant improvements have been implemented (advised by The External Advisory Board, The Educational Programme Committee and the Board of Examiners). For all specialisations, the panel supports the programme's plans to strengthen the international orientation further and to improve the general alignment of the different types of theses and internships between the specialisations.

Specifically, for AHE the panel appreciated the strong connection to the professional field and at the same time advises giving more weight to the professional orientation and deepening the academic orientation. This also would support, together with the large number of specific ILOs (see Standard 1), the possible transformation to a dual programme. Specifically, for ALS and PSE the panel advises focussing more on the academic orientation and strengthening the structural relationship with the professional field (e.g. by promoting internships). To increase the professional orientation even more, the panel advises improving the involvement of alumni in the programme.

The panel concluded that the increasing international orientation, together with an increasing international population of students and teachers, justifies the chosen English name and English programme. The Dutch track still attracts Dutch students, which is worthwhile for the programme. Nevertheless, in line with better positioning of the programme, the panel recommends either binding the Dutch track more to Dutch culture and adding content for it or using the Dutch track more as a purely additional skill (as a surplus on the English track).

The panel appreciates the didactic learning concept of PBL and supports the students' view that this approach is in line with the interdisciplinary character of the programme and therefore fits the master perfectly. Although there are some attention points, which the programme is aware of, the international classroom really stimulates all students to participate, collaborate and grow on a personal level.

The feasibility of the programme has the full attention of the management and staff as it appears that for all the specialisations, but especially for AHE, the actual study time takes much longer, mainly due to the graduation phase. The panel is positive about the support, the organisational structure and the information provided to students, for instance through the voluntarily mentor programme.

The panel appreciates the preparation process for the thesis, during which the students develop a proposal via peer feedback and under the guidance of their supervisor. However, it also made a suggestion about granting more time for actually writing the thesis. With regard to the internships of PSE and ALS, it thinks more involvement of the programme supervisor is desirable to increase the positive effects of the internship.

The panel concluded that the teaching staff is highly qualified. The students are positive about their teaching and research skills and the way research and education are integrated. They especially praised the personal involvement of the teachers and their non-hierarchical way of communication. During the site visit the high workload of the staff was discussed with the management and teaching staff. The panel thinks that the programme is handling this aspect with great care.

## **Conclusion**

*Master's programme Arts and Culture:* the panel assesses Standard 2 as 'Meets the standard'.

**Standard 3: Student assessment**

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

**Findings***Quality of the assessment system and assessments*

The programme sees assessment as a part of the learning environment. In 2017-2018, the constructive alignment process encompassed not only the adjustment of assessment methods, the assessment policy has also been redefined. According to the faculty-wide assessment policy, attention is paid to summative as well as formative assessment. The panel has seen the Education Plan which provides an overview of assessment methods per course; each course consists of intended learning outcomes that are aligned to the corresponding assessments; the identity-proof exam reports specify the weighting and the grade calculation per course (this format has been used for AHE and will also be used for ALS and PSE). The panel ascertained that most of the course manuals contain grading forms. The Education Plan relates the courses to the ILOs in matrices. The panel finds that the assessment policy and design of the assessment system tie in with the profile and the ILOs. The attention for assessment as learning, where students monitor their own performance and progress as part of their learning strategy fits in the learning concept PBL.

The course coordinator (who is also the responsible examiner) ensures that the assessment method is in line with the course objectives. If a course examination is composed of multiple assessment methods (e.g. a paper and a presentation), the course coordinator decides on the appropriate weight for all partial assessments, in line with the learning goals of the course. At the programme level the management and teaching staff (examiners) ensure the overall quality of the assessment. The programme director monitors an effective implementation of the assessment programme, the Educational Programme Committee evaluates the quality of the courses based on the results of course evaluation questionnaires, and the Board of Examiners checks the assessment performance. The management and teaching staff are guided by the assessment policy, guidelines from the Board of Examiners, and procedures described in the Rules and Regulations. In addition, they are supported by an Educationalist and an Assessment Committee. The programme uses clear procedures to communicate exam results to the students.

A range of assessment methods is used: written exams, take-home exams, papers, (group) presentations, debates, literature reviews, portfolios, etc. Particular attention is paid to testing via exam formats that are relevant for and/or practised in the professional field (e.g. pitching an idea, presenting research, etc.). With the didactic approach of PBL, students receive formative feedback during each tutorial from the tutor and their peers, which helps them in achieving the ILOs. The responsible examiner determines the result of the final examination. The panel values the programme's effort in improving the assessment procedures. In response to the concerns expressed by the students that the teachers might use different grading criteria, the programme has plans to use assessment formats for all relevant courses and develop improved rubrics for the grading of these courses. Also, there are plans to work with external benchmarks for grading theses in the near future. The panel supports those plans.

The panel concluded that the validity, reliability, transparency and procedural quality of the assessments are positive. Students told the panel that they are satisfied: the programme has an adequate system of assessment, and the methods and criteria are in line with the contents of the courses. The panel looked at the assessment procedures of the internship and established that there are considerable differences between the specialisations (forms are used inconsistently or not at all). It advises using uniform grading forms containing clear criteria. For instance, the thesis assessment form (see below) sets a good example. In addition, the professional supervisor could play a stronger advisory role in the process of determining the grade, especially in the ALS and PSE specialisations where this is currently not the case.



Concerning the thesis assessment, the programme fully complies with the faculty-wide Regulation for assessment of final work. Two examiners provide a joint assessment, looking only at the merits of the final work. No other circumstances concerning the process of writing (progress, personal circumstances) are taken into account. The programme director oversees the process of matching the student's interest with a first reader (the supervisor) and then finding a right match with a second reader (the responsible examiner). A designated assessment form which, according to the panel, explicitly specifies the grading criteria is used and filled in by both examiners under the responsibility of the responsible examiner. When the examiners cannot come to an agreement, a third examiner is added. The panel greatly appreciates the design of the assessment form and the transparency of the procedure; the programme has really invested in the formalisation and embedding of the procedure within the faculty. The forms of the master's theses the panel studied were filled out in sufficient detail, which is positive. Still, the panel made two suggestions to further improve the quality of assessment, which the programme could consider: 1) the contribution of both examiners is not made explicit, which can be important (for the student and in terms of transparency), especially when specific criteria are assessed differently by the examiners; 2) give students feedback about their thesis grade and performance at an earlier stage.

#### *Board of Examiners*

The main tasks of the Board of Examiners are, among others, to provide advice to the management concerning the assessment policy and regulations, and to safeguard the assessment quality by 1) appointing the responsible examiners, 2) screening and evaluating the distribution of grades of all courses, 3) screening assessment forms for the grading of the final work, 4) participating in thesis grading calibration workshops and 5) organising annual internal audit checks on the assessment of theses. The panel confirmed that the Board fulfils an active and important independent role in defining, advising and monitoring the quality of the assessments and the assessment system and was pleased to see that the Board is aware of current issues.

#### **Considerations**

According to the panel, the assessment policy fits well with the profile of the programme and the didactic learning concept of PBL. Formative as well as summative assessment methods are being used, and the students learn to reflect continuously on their learning process. The assessment methods are in line with the ILOs and the courses' learning objectives.

The regulation procedures and working agreements related to the programme's assessment policy are well described and applied in the programme. The panel concluded based on the interviews that there is a broad culture of safeguarding the assessment system and the assessments, which is supported by the management, teaching staff and members of the Board of Examiners. It also became clear that the feedback from students on assessments is seriously discussed in regular meetings of the Educational Programme Committee. The panel confirmed that the Board of Examiners fulfils an active and important independent role securing a good quality of the programme's assessment.

The panel concluded that the validity, reliability and transparency of the assessments are positive. Several improvement points have been clearly defined and will be implemented. With regard to the internships, the panel advises using uniform grading forms containing clear criteria and a stronger advisory role for the professional supervisor in the process of determining the grade. It also recommends making the contribution of both examiners more visible on the thesis assessment form and giving feedback to students about their thesis grade and performance at an earlier stage.

#### **Conclusion**

*Master's programme Arts and Culture:* the panel assesses Standard 3 as 'Meets the standard'.

**Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes**

The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

**Findings***Thesis quality*

The panel read 17 master's theses of the programme, proportionally divided over the three specialisations; 12 theses were in English and five were in Dutch. Five of them were internship theses. The panel found that the studied thesis themes were relevant to the field of art and culture, represent the specialisation profiles, and were often related to an international approach. The theses represented the academic master's level, used adequate and relevant academic and research methods, and were written in adequate English or Dutch. According to the panel, the critical points made by the previous panel during the last site visit concerning the inadequate academic level have been resolved. The programme has put a lot of effort into training academic skills and strengthening the guidance of the thesis, which was clearly evidenced by the improved methodological underpinning of the theses. Also, the internship theses met the academic standards. Still the panel had a few remarks. In the case of internship theses the connection between the internship and the thesis can be defined more clearly (to which extent should they overlap or differ). As for the ALS theses, the panel could not easily see the connection between the content of the theses and the ALS profile. The panel thinks this may be inherent in the broadness of the ALS profile (see Standard 1).

*Alumni success*

According to the panel, graduates demonstrated that they have met the intended learning outcomes at the expected level. Alumni of the programme can be found in jobs in the art and cultural sectors at the international, national and local levels (e.g. institution managers, marketing and communication officers, educators, cultural entrepreneurs, independent writers, and journalists). They are employed in education, research and cultural institutions, in the Netherlands as well as in Western Europe (e.g. UNESCO World Heritage in Paris, the Kulturprojekte Berlin and Save the children UK). Graduates appraise the applicability of theoretical concepts and are well versed in multidisciplinary and intercultural teamwork, and academic skills. Alumni reported to the panel that the programme has equipped them with a variety of skills that are useful in the workplace, including writing, communication, time management and project management skills.

**Considerations**

The panel is pleased with the content of the master's theses; they are relevant to the field of Arts and Culture, represent the specialisation profiles, the academic master level and contain, wherever possible, an international approach. They make use of adequate and relevant academic and research methods and are written in adequate English or Dutch. The strengthened academic orientation is reflected in the improved methodical quality of the theses. According to the panel, in the case of internship theses the connection between the internship and the thesis can be defined more clearly. Regarding the ALS theses, the connection between their content and the ALS profile could be strengthened.

The alumni succeed sufficiently in finding jobs in the cultural field and/or at an academic level. According to the panel, graduates demonstrated that they have met the intended learning outcomes at the expected level. Alumni reported to the panel that the programme has equipped them with a variety of skills that are useful in their professional career.

**Conclusion**

*Master's programme Arts and Culture:* the panel assesses Standard 4 as 'Meets the standard'.



## GENERAL CONCLUSION

The panel assessed standards 1, 2 3, and 4 of the master's programme Arts and Culture as 'meets the standard'. Based on the NVAO decision rules regarding limited programme assessments, the panel therefore assesses the programme as 'positive'.

### **Conclusion**

The panel assesses the *master's programme Arts and Culture* as 'Positive'.



# APPENDICES



# APPENDIX 1: INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

## Final qualifications Master Arts & Culture (General)

### *Dublin descriptor A: Knowledge and understanding*

1. Graduates are able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the interdisciplinary field with a focus on arts, culture or politics.
2. Graduates are able to develop final works relevant to society and the academic field.

### *Dublin descriptor B: Application of knowledge and understanding*

1. Graduates are able to apply a well-defined cultural framework to the analysis of current national and international societal issues (related to the field of arts, culture or politics, and the interaction between these domains)
2. Graduates are able to apply their knowledge and understanding of the field offered in the specialisation in both academic and professional contexts
3. Graduates are able to link theory to practice by placing present-day societal issues related to the field of arts, culture or politics in their specific theoretical contexts
4. Graduates are able to develop knowledge into conceptual frameworks to provide insight into complex issues related to the arts, culture or politics
5. Graduates are able to handle the complexities and problems in issues that are related to the arts, culture or politics that have resulted from differences in academic discipline, professional context and country-specific background.

### *Dublin descriptor C: Formulate judgements*

1. Graduates are able to formulate critical judgements while taking their societal and academic responsibilities into account
2. Graduates are able to successfully design a relevant research question and conduct research, both independently and in a team
3. Graduates are able to identify, understand and assess implicit assumptions on topics related to their specialisation.

### *Dublin descriptor D: Communication*

1. Graduates are able to unambiguously communicate their conclusions, insights, motives and considerations orally and in writing to specialist and non-specialist audiences
2. Graduates are able to create and use the appropriate communication tools, such as visual resources used to support oral presentations.

### *Dublin descriptor E: Learning skills*

1. Graduates are able to reflect on their own learning process and continue developing themselves individually and together with others.
2. Graduates are able to provide informed feedback and respond to received feedback in a meaningful and responsible way.
3. Graduates are able to actively and constructively work in (international or multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary) teams.



## **Specialisations:**

### **D1 Final Qualifications Master Arts & Culture, specialisation 'Art, Literature and Society' and D2 Master Arts & Culture, specialisation 'Politics and Society'**

Upon completion of the specialisation 'Art, Literature and Society' (ALS) or 'Politics and Society' (PSE) of the Master Arts & Culture graduates are able to:

#### *A. Knowledge and insight (Dublin Descriptor I)*

- A1. identify and describe topical developments in contemporary society with a focus on politics, culture, and the arts.
- A2. situate these developments within their relevant intellectual and historical contexts and interpret them as forms of cultural (re)production.
- A3. demonstrate knowledge about the theoretical frameworks from relevant disciplines (e.g. philosophy, arts and literature studies, history, sociology, political science, and science and technology studies) that explain the topical developments in society.
- A4. demonstrate insight into the interdisciplinary study of topical developments that take place in the fields of politics, culture, and the arts.

#### *B. Applying knowledge and insight (Dublin Descriptor II)*

- B1. contribute (via e.g. presentation, paper) to interdisciplinary research on topical developments in contemporary society with a focus on politics, culture, and the arts.
- B2. critically reflect on, position themselves in, and participate in current academic and societal debates in politics, culture, and the arts.
- B3. link acquired academic knowledge (specified under Dublin descriptor 1) to non-academic professional contexts (e.g. policy making, education, media, journalism, creative industries).

#### *C. Formation of a judgement (Dublin descriptor III)*

- C1. identify, understand and assess implicit and/or explicit assumptions in topical political, cultural and artistic debates.
- C2. integrate and qualify acquired knowledge in an evaluative analysis of a topical case in the fields of politics, culture, and the arts.
- C3. critically assess their evaluative analyses while taking into account their academic and societal relevance.

#### *D. Communication (Dublin Descriptor IV)*

- D1. communicate their and/or others' findings, positions, motives, and conclusions to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- D2. select and make use of appropriate means for communicating with diverse audiences in different environments (e.g. academic publications, reports, social media, oral presentations, newspapers, radio)

#### *E. Learning skills (Dublin Descriptor V)*

- E1. detect and analyse research problems and formulate research questions, individually and in groups.
- E2. critically and effectively reflect on their own work and on that of others in academic and professional contexts and effectively process criticism and feedback that they receive from others about their work.
- E3. develop the responsible and professional attitude needed for independent learning.

### **D3 Master Arts & Culture, specialisation 'Arts and Heritage'**

The Degree of Master of Arts (MA) of Arts & Culture, specialisation 'Arts and Heritage: Policy, Management and Education', is awarded to students who are able to:

#### *A. Knowledge and insight (Dublin Descriptor I)*

- A1. possess and demonstrate advanced knowledge of and insight into important issues and practices in the fields of arts, culture and heritage (including history, art history, memory studies, social sciences - political, economic and social - as well as organisational issues).
- A2. distinguish different definitions, meanings and functions of arts, culture and heritage, and understand how these are contingent on time, place and social groups.
- A3. differentiate between the relevant actors and factors in different arts, cultural and heritage practices.
- A4. possess advanced knowledge about key theories, approaches, concepts and methodologies to research the field of Arts and Heritage both academically and professionally.

#### *B. Applying knowledge and insight (Dublin Descriptor II)*

- B1. apply the knowledge and understanding related to the aforementioned topics under 1 in a meaningful way to contextualise, analyse, compare and criticise traditional and new professional and academic practices.
- B2. find, select and use relevant traditional and digital information sources and distinguish between different types of sources.
- B3. can link theory to practice and select a suitable research method in the application of their knowledge and insight.
- B4. analyse an academic or non-academic text or position paper, build an argument in a logical and convincing manner and illustrate it with case studies or examples from the cultural field.
- B5. gain professional skills and competences related to Arts and Heritage management, Arts marketing and Cultural policy analysis.
- B6. depending on their choice of elective after period 2, graduates can apply their specific knowledge and skill in a meaningful way to a specific cultural practice:
  - Arts and Audiences: education/mediation, curation & visitor's research
  - Cultural economics: entrepreneurship, art market, creative cities
  - Heritage and Society: Heritage, conservation, politics of memory

#### *C. Formation of a judgement (Dublin descriptor III)*

- C1. produce and justify an independent critical judgement in academic and societal debates on the issues and perspectives mentioned under 1.
- C2. consider their ethical position and social and academic responsibilities in various professional cultural fields.
- C3. identify, analyse, compare and evaluate implicit and explicit value judgements on art, culture and heritage.

#### *D. Communication (Dublin Descriptor IV)*

- D1. communicate their conclusions, insights, motives and considerations orally and in writing to specialist and non-specialist audiences in the domain of arts and Heritage.
- D2. express themselves orally and in writing at an advanced academic level.
- D3. give an appealing, well-informed and substantiated oral presentation supported by strong visuals.

#### *E. Learning skills (Dublin Descriptor V)*

- E1. possess the attitude, critical mind, self-reflection and skills needed to continue learning.
- E2. reflect on their own learning process and are able to continue developing themselves individually and together with others.
- E3. practice a profession at an academic master level in national, international and interdisciplinary teams within the broad cultural sector.



## APPENDIX 2: OVERVIEW OF THE CURRICULUM

### Arts and Heritage

<b>Period 1</b>			
Module 1 (core): <i>Studying Arts and Heritage – Entering the Field</i> <b>12 ECTS</b>			
Introduction to key theories and debates for the study of arts and heritage Professional workshops on cultural policy analysis and evaluation Workshop on academic writing Study trip to Berlin			
<b>Period 2</b>			
Module 2 (core): <i>Researching Art and Culture</i> <b>12 ECTS</b>			
Introduction to key research methods and frameworks for the study of art and culture Professional workshops on audience/marketing research and campaign development Study trip to Amsterdam			
<b>Period 3</b>			
Module 3 (core): <i>Research and Writing Skills</i> <b>1 ECTS</b>		Module 4: <i>Elective I (choice)</i> <b>5 ECTS</b>	
Lectures and workshops on designing a research project and writing a thesis proposal	Arts and Audiences I	Heritage and Society I	Culture and Economy I
<b>Period 4</b>			
Module 5 (choice)			
<i>Elective II (choice) or Internship</i> <b>12 ECTS</b>			
Internship: Students conduct their internship	Arts and Audiences II	Heritage and Society II	Culture and Economy II
<b>Period 5</b>			
Module 6 (core): <i>Thesis</i> <b>18 ECTS</b>			
Writing of the final thesis			

*Art, Literature and Society, and Politics and Society*

ALS	PSE
<b>Period 1</b>	
Module 1 (core):	
<i>Make it new! Problems of cultural (re)production</i> <b>12 ECTS</b>	
<b>Period 2</b>	
Module 2A	Module 2B
<i>Art Worlds: Exploring current practices and debates in art and literature</i> <b>12 ECTS</b>	<i>The Politics of National Identity: Past and Present</i> <b>12 ECTS</b>
<b>Period 3</b>	
Module 3A	Module 3B
<i>Theories and methods: Images, Affect, Practices</i> <b>6 ECTS</b>	<i>Politics &amp; Technology: Capitalism, democracy and disruptive technology</i> <b>6 ECTS</b>
<b>Period 4 &amp; 5</b>	
Module 4	
<i>Thesis Proposal Workshop</i> or <i>Internship Thesis Proposal workshop</i> <b>6 ECTS</b>	
Module 5	
<i>Thesis</i> <b>24 ECTS</b> or <i>Internship + Internship Thesis + Internship Report</i> = <b>24 ECTS</b>	



## APPENDIX 3: PROGRAMME OF THE SITE VISIT

### **Programme site visit Maastricht University, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences BA and MA Arts & Culture 13 and 14 June 2019**

#### DAY 1 Thursday 13 June 2019

*9:45 10:00 Arrival of the panel*

Dean

Associate Dean of Education

*10:00 12:15 Internal panel discussion*

*12:15 12:45 Lunch*

*12:45 13:00 Presentation by the management*

Dean

Associate Dean of Education

Programme director BA AC

Assistant programme director BA AC

Programme director MA AC, specialisation AHE/KCE

Programme director MA AC, specialisations PSE/PSN, ALS/KLS

*13:00 14:00 Interview management*

Programme director BA AC

Assistant programme director BA AC

Programme director MA AC, specialisation AHE/KCE

Programme director MA AC, specialisations PSE/PSN, ALS/KLS

*14:00 14:30 Break / internal panel discussion*

*14:30 15:15 Interview BA students and alumni*

Student 1st year

Student 2nd year (3)

Student 3rd year (2)

Alumni (2)

*15:15 16:00 Interview BA staff, incl. Chair Educational Programme Committee*

Academic writing advisor

Coordinator mentor programme; course coordinator; specialisation coordinator

Former programme director (until 1 January 2019)

Chair educational programme committee BA AC

Member educational programme committee BA AC; course coordinator

Course coordinators (2)

*16:00 16:30 Break / internal panel discussion*

*16:30 17:15 Interview MA students and alumni*

ALS student

ALS alumna

PSE student

PSN alumna

AHE students (3)

AHE alumna



*17:15 18:00 Interview MA staff, incl. Chair Educational Programme Committee*  
Course coordinators AHE/KCE (3)  
Final work coordinator AHE/KCE  
Former director specialisations PSEE/PSN and ALS/KLS  
Chair educational programme committee MA AC  
Course coordinator ALS/KLS

DAY 2 Friday 14 June 2019

*9:00 10:30 Arrival of the panel, internal panel discussion, consultation of the material on the reading table, open consultation hour (10:00-10:30)*

*10:30 11:15 Interview Board of Examiners and student adviser [Dutch-speaking group]*  
BoE Chair  
BoE Vice-Chair  
BoE member  
BoE external member  
BoE secretary  
Student adviser

*11:15 11:45 Break / internal panel discussion*

*11:45 12:45 Final conversation with the management*  
Dean  
Associate Dean of Education  
Programme director BA AC  
Assistant programme director BA AC  
Programme director MA AC, specialisation AHE/KCE  
Programme director MA AC, specialisations PSE/PSN, ALS/KLS

*12:45 13:15 Lunch*

*13:15 15:30 Panel prepares preliminary findings and oral report*

*15:30 16:00 Oral report of the preliminary judgment (public session)*

*16:00 16:30 Break*

*16:30 17:30 Development dialogue*



## APPENDIX 4: THESES AND DOCUMENTS STUDIED BY THE PANEL

Prior to the site visit, the panel studied 17 theses of the master's programme Arts and Culture. Information on the selected theses is available from QANU upon request.

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

- Education plan, including specialisation-specific appendices
- Course descriptions 2018-2019
- Staff overview 2018-2019
- Overview of recommendations previous panel and (re)actions of the programme
- MA AC sample of professional occupations of alumni
- The Education Plan cycle
- Assessment policy FASoS
- Brochure FASoS MA programmes
- Annual report FASoS Board of Examinations 2016-2017 and 2017-2018
- EER 2018-2019
- Rules and Regulations
- Procedure for the grading and archiving of final works
- Annual reports Educational Programme Committee MA AC 2016-2017 and 2017-2018
- Mid-term MA AC – AHE
- Mid-term MA AC – ALS / PSE
- Minutes Educational Programme Committee MA AC 2018-2019
- Coursebooks 2018-2019 and lecture slides
- For the following courses, the course and examination material were present in hardcopy during the site visit:
  - o Seminar Researching Arts & Culture – specialisation AHE
  - o Theories and Methods: Images, Affect, Practices – specialisation ALS
  - o The Politics of National Identity: Past and Present – specialisation PSE