

Organisation Studies

**Culture, Organisation
and Management
VU University Amsterdam**

Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities (QANU)
Catharijnesingel 56
PO Box 8035
3503 RA Utrecht
The Netherlands

Phone: +31 (0) 30 230 3100
Telefax: +31 (0) 30 230 3129
E-mail: info@qanu.nl
Internet: www.qanu.nl

Project number: Q312

© 2012 QANU

Text and numerical material from this publication may be reproduced in print, by photocopying or by any other means with the permission of QANU if the source is mentioned.

CONTENTS

Report on the master's programme Culture, Organisation and Management of VU University Amsterdam.....	5
Administrative data regarding the programme	5
Administrative data regarding the institution.....	5
Quantitative data regarding the programme	5
Composition of the assessment committee	5
Working method of the assessment committee	6
Summary judgement.....	8
Description of the standards from the Assessment framework for limited programme assessments	11
Appendices	27
Appendix 1: Curricula vitae of the members of the assessment committee	29
Appendix 2: Programme of the site visit	31
Appendix 3: Domain-specific framework of reference.....	33
Appendix 4: Intended learning outcomes	35
Appendix 5: Overview of the curriculum.....	37
Appendix 6: Quantitative data regarding the programmes.....	39
Appendix 7: Theses and documents studied by the committee.....	41
Appendix 8: Declarations of independence	43

This report was finalized on 4 December 2012.

Report on the master's programme Culture, Organisation and Management of VU University Amsterdam

This report takes the NVAO's Assessment framework for limited programme assessments as a starting point.

Administrative data regarding the programme

Master's programme Culture, Organisation and Management

Name of the programme:	Culture, Organisation and Management
CROHO number:	60050
Level of the programme:	master's
Orientation of the programme:	academic
Number of credits:	60 EC
Specialisations or tracks:	-
Location(s):	Amsterdam
Mode(s) of study:	full time
Expiration of accreditation:	31-12-2013

The visit of the assessment committee Organisation Studies to the Faculty of Social Sciences of VU University Amsterdam took place on 7 September 2012.

Administrative data regarding the institution

Name of the institution:	VU University Amsterdam
Status of the institution:	publicly funded institution
Result institutional quality assurance assessment:	applied (pending)

Quantitative data regarding the programme

The required quantitative data regarding the programmes are included in Appendix 5.

Composition of the assessment committee

The committee that assessed the master's programme Culture, Organisation and Management consisted of:

- Prof. Arndt Sorge, Honorary Professor, Faculty of Economics and Social Science, University of Potsdam, Germany (chair);
- Prof. Nelson Phillips, Professor of Strategy and Organisational Behaviour, Imperial College Business School, London, UK;
- Prof. Ray Reagans, Associate Professor, Sloan School of Management, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA, USA;

- Prof. Hans Doorewaard, Professor of Organisational Development, Nijmegen School of Management, Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands;
- Sanne Keurentjes, BSc, master student of Organisation Studies, University of Tilburg, the Netherlands.

The committee was supported by Dr. Marianne van der Weiden, who acted as secretary.

Appendix 1 contains the Curricula Vitae of the members of the committee.

Working method of the assessment committee

Preparation

The assessment of the master's programme in Culture, Organisation and Management of the VU University Amsterdam is part of a cluster assessment. In the context of this cluster assessment, the committee also evaluated the master's programme Policy, Communication and Organisation of the VU University Amsterdam, the bachelor's programme Organisatiewetenschappen and the master's programme Organisation Studies of Tilburg University, the bachelor's programme Personeelwetenschappen and the master's programme Human Resource Studies of Tilburg University. Because of the small scale of the cluster assessment, it was possible to have the programmes of both participating universities assessed by an almost identical committee.

On behalf of QANU, Dr. Floor Meijer acted as cluster coordinator and secretary for the site visit at Tilburg University. During the site visit at the VU University Amsterdam, the committee was supported by Dr. Marianne van der Weiden.

In advance of the assessment of the programmes, the programme management prepared a self-evaluation report. After a check by the committee's secretary to ensure that the information provided was complete, the self-evaluation report was forwarded to the committee members. In addition, each committee member received 15 recent theses produced by students of the programmes. The coordinator of the committee randomly selected 15 theses per programme from a list of all graduates of the last two years. This pre-selection was then divided over the committee members by the chairman, Prof. Arndt Sorge. The theses studied by the committee covered the full range of marks: every committee member received at least one thesis with a low mark (6-6.5), one with an intermediate mark (7-8) and one with a high mark (8.5+). The committee members used QANU's checklist for the assessment of theses to ensure that their assessments were comparable and covered the relevant aspects.

The site visit

The site visit took place on 7 September 2012 and was preceded by a kick-off meeting on 4 September 2012 and a preparatory meeting on 6 September 2012. Prof. Reagans was not able to be present at the site visit due to problems with his traveling schedule.

During the general kick-off meeting, the committee members received an introduction to the assessment framework and evaluation procedures and agreed upon the committee's general working method. In the preparatory meeting, the committee discussed their findings on the self-evaluation report and theses of the VU University Amsterdam programmes and decided which issues to raise in their meetings with the programme representatives.

The programme for the site visit, which is included in Appendix 2, was drawn up by the coordinator in consultation with the programme management and the chair of the committee. During the site visit the committee conducted interviews with the programme management, students, lecturers, graduates, members of the Educational Committee and the Board of Examiners. In addition, the committee studied the documentation that was made available by the programme, including learning materials, written exams, assignments and other assessments. It also explored the Blackboard environment of the programme. An open office hour was scheduled and announced, but no one made use of it.

After the concluding interview with the management, the committee held an internal meeting in which it discussed its findings, phrased its conclusions and gave its assessment of the themes and standards making up the assessment framework. Finally, the chairman presented the committee's preliminary findings to staff and students of the programmes.

Report

Following the site visit, the secretary of the committee produced a draft report of the committee's findings. This draft report was amended and corrected by the committee members. After the committee had approved the draft report, it was sent to the Department to be checked for factual errors, inaccuracies and inconsistencies. The secretary forwarded the comments and suggestions provided by the Board and Institute to the chairman of the committee and, where necessary, to the other committee members. The committee decided whether the comments and suggestions were to be incorporated in the report or ignored. On the basis of the committee's decisions, the secretary compiled the final version of the report.

Decision rules

In accordance with the NVAO's Assessment framework for limited programme assessments (as of 22 November 2011), the committee used the following definitions for the assessment of both the standards and the programme as a whole.

Generic quality

The quality that can reasonably be expected in an international perspective from a higher education bachelor's or master's programme.

Unsatisfactory

The programme does not meet the current generic quality standards and shows serious shortcomings in several areas.

Satisfactory

The programme meets the current generic quality standards and shows an acceptable level across its entire spectrum.

Good

The programme systematically surpasses the current generic quality standards across its entire spectrum.

Excellent

The programme systematically well surpasses the current generic quality standards across its entire spectrum and is regarded as an (inter)national example.

Summary judgement

This report presents the findings and considerations of the Organisation Studies committee on the master's programme Culture, Organisation and Management (COM) at VU University Amsterdam. The committee bases its assessment on information from the self-evaluation report, additional information obtained from the discussions during the visit, the selected theses, and the documentation that was available for inspection during the site visit. For this programme, the committee has identified positive aspects as well as ones that could be improved. After considering them, the committee reached the conclusion that the course meets the requirements for basic quality that form the condition for re-accreditation.

Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes

The COM master's programme targets students from the Netherlands and abroad who are interested in the interactions of groups of people within organisations and how meaning-making plays a role in these processes. This ethnographic approach is characteristic of the COM programme.

The programme teaches students to look beyond the immediate facts and go behind the scenes to understand the complexities in organisational life. Appropriate fieldwork methods include (participant) observation, field conversations, interviews and document analysis.

During the one-year programme, students develop an academic, critical and investigative, research-focused work attitude. They gain knowledge and insights about the cultural aspects of organisation science, learn how to study these processes and to translate their findings into a report for scientific and non-scientific audiences. Graduates can apply their knowledge and skills in a broad range of organisations.

The committee concludes that the COM programme is clearly designed as an academic master's programme. It has a strong focus on research and on developing a scientific and critical attitude. The committee advises the relevant departments at VU University and Tilburg University to draw up a more elaborate domain-specific framework to guide the further development of the COM programme in the wider context of Organisation Studies.

Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment

The first half of the COM programme teaches students the theoretical and methodological basis. Four courses lay the foundation in organisation theory, the effects of globalisation and the ethnographic approach. For one of the courses, students can choose between an interventionist or an analytical and descriptive approach.

During this period, early November, students select a topic for their master's research project and then write a research proposal in January. After receiving approval of this proposal, they conduct an independent piece of social-scientific, ethnographic research about and in an organisation. The results of their research are presented in a master's thesis. A Research Lab at the beginning of the period of fieldwork teaches students the necessary methodological skills. The focus is on qualitative research methods.

Lecturers use a variety of teaching methods: sometimes traditional lectures, but more often interactive working groups, small group assignments and methodological workshops. Guest lecturers are invited regularly. In addition, students are expected to devote time to self-study.

The COM programme has a stable influx of 15-20 international students each year, and a similar number of students choose to do their fieldwork abroad. The committee appreciates the international orientation of the programme which fits the focus of its content on culture and diversity.

A large part of the intake comes from students with a degree in higher vocational education. To be admitted to the programme, they must first successfully complete the premaster's programme. For financial reasons the premaster's programme will be shortened to 30 EC. At the same time the entrance requirements have been tightened so that the quality of the incoming students is expected to remain at the same level. Staff expects a smaller intake from this group of students and expects this will be compensated by a larger group of international students. In the future, instead of the new premaster's programme, a bridging programme may be offered to international students in the form of a summer course.

The committee finds the feasibility of the programme to be realistic. The structure of the programme allows students who want to obtain their degree within one year to do so. Generally speaking, an ethnographic research project tends to take more time.

The teaching staff of the COM programme is well qualified and covers the broad range of experience, theoretical background and methodological preferences that are needed for this multidisciplinary programme. The teaching load is high, especially because of the large number of master's theses to be supervised. Contacts between lecturers and students are frequent and informal. Students express their appreciation of this.

Standard 3: Assessment and achieved learning outcomes

Courses are assessed by a variety of tests and assignments. The research proposal and the master's thesis are evaluated by two assessors. The quality of the assessments is monitored by the Board of Examiners which has issued a number of useful guidelines. The next step is to check on their implementation.

The committee examined a representative sample of theses and generally found the marking to be fair and consistent. In some cases the presentation of the literature and the data were quite good, but the discussion section failed to link them properly. The committee recommends that the assessment criteria for the various methodological approaches be worked out in greater detail to provide more guidance.

On the basis of the theses, the committee concludes that graduates achieve an academic master's level. This conclusion is confirmed by the experiences recounted by the alumni. COM graduates find relevant jobs at an appropriate level within a fairly short time, and they are satisfied with the knowledge, skills and attitude they learned in the programme.

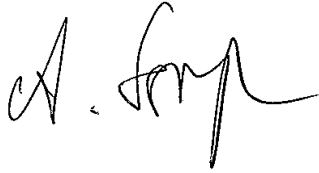
The committee assesses the standards from the Assessment framework for limited programme assessments in the following way:

Master's programme Culture, Organisation and Management:

Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes	satisfactory
Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment	satisfactory
Standard 3: Assessment and achieved learning outcomes	satisfactory
General conclusion	satisfactory

The chair and the secretary of the committee hereby declare that all members of the committee have studied this report and that they agree with the judgements laid down in it. They confirm that the assessment has been conducted in accordance with the demands relating to independence.

Date: 4 December 2012



Prof. Arndt Sorge



Dr. Marianne van der Weiden

Description of the standards from the Assessment framework for limited programme assessments

The master's programme Culture, Organisation and Management (COM) is offered by the Department of Organisation Sciences, which also hosts the master's programme Policy, Communication and Organisation (BCO), a premaster's programme in Organisation Sciences, and the bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organisation (in collaboration with the Department of Governance Studies). Organisation Sciences is one of the seven scientific departments of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

COM started as a '*doctoraal*' programme in 1990 and has been a master's programme since 2004. In 2007 the programme was restructured as an international course, taught in English. In 2010 the Faculty restructured its educational programmes again, linking the two master's programmes of the department more closely. Both now share one central fundamental course (Organisation Sciences) and provide a similar route towards the master's thesis (courses for Research Proposal, Research Lab and a 24 EC master's thesis). A joint one-year premaster's programme in Organisation Sciences was created to accommodate students lacking the qualifications for direct access to the master's programme.

The assessment committee describes and evaluates the COM and the BCO programme in two separate reports.

Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes

The intended learning outcomes of the programme have been concretised with regard to content, level and orientation; they meet international requirements.

Explanation:

As for level and orientation (bachelor's or master's; professional or academic), the intended learning outcomes fit into the Dutch qualifications framework. In addition, they tie in with the international perspective of the requirements currently set by the professional field and the discipline with regard to the contents of the programme.

1.1. Findings

This section contains the committee's assessment on the profile and orientation of the programme (1.1.1), the domain-specific framework of reference (1.1.2), the intended learning outcomes (1.1.3) and the relationship between learning outcomes and professional practice (1.1.4).

1.1.1. Profile and orientation

The self-evaluation report describes the COM master's programme as follows. It offers a comprehensive education in the field of organisation sciences and provides insight into the global context in which organisations work. Organisations are understood as cultural entities in which people struggle over meaning and identity in processes that are often subject to deliberate change efforts. The description of these meaning-making processes and the evaluation of the corresponding cultural change projects give the programme its focus and shape its methodological orientation.

The programme rests on three conceptual pillars:

1. COM students learn to approach organisations first as processes of organising, i.e. the way groups of people interact in specific organisational settings.

2. Organising is further seen as a meaning-making process that takes place within and between organisations, their members, in national as well as transnational, or global contexts. Given this focus on meaning-making, culture is considered one of the principal dimensions of any organisation, as represented through material symbols, rituals, narratives, etc.
3. The feasibility of the management of meaning-making in organisational processes constitutes the third conceptual pillar of the programme.

The self-evaluation report mentions that, academically, the programme rests upon a long-standing ethnographic tradition, offering a specific niche in organisational research and enabling students to critically study organisational processes that often do not live up to what mainstream theories in organisation theory and behaviour preach. The programme is built around the department's research programme, the central themes of which are transnational entrepreneurship, identity and diversity, and culture change and intervention.

COM is a multidisciplinary programme, combining organisational sociology, organisational psychology and public administration with the ethnographic methods of anthropology.

In practical terms, COM builds upon a mixture of various fieldwork methods for generating and analysing data, such as (participant) observation, field conversations, formal interviews and document analysis, tailored to the specific theme or subject under study. The ethnographic approach allows students to develop a grounded, in-depth understanding of the ways in which members of organisations cope with the problems and contradictions that emerge in their daily routines.

The COM programme demands that students develop an academic, critical and investigative, research-focused work attitude. The academic orientation of the programme is reflected in the emphasis that is placed upon the positioning of the domain vis-à-vis related domains (such as Business Administration), the development of the field of organisation sciences over time (historical approach), and a critical reflection on the differences and similarities of the various theoretical perspectives that are utilized within the domain (choice for an interpretive perspective).

The committee did not find a national or international benchmark in the self-evaluation report. Even though the COM programme appears to fill a specific niche in the multidisciplinary field of organisation studies, the committee would have preferred to see more explicit awareness of the differences and similarities with other programmes. Nevertheless, it is clear that since the start of the programme, COM has built its own ethnographic tradition and has formulated sensible and clear programme goals on that basis. The COM profile fits well within the focus on applied social sciences and on social embeddedness that VU University wants to develop further.

1.1.2. Domain-specific framework of reference

In preparation for the cluster assessment the VU University Amsterdam and University of Tilburg drew up a domain-specific framework for Organisation Studies. In this framework the multidisciplinary approach is emphasized. The programmes to be assessed use a variety of disciplinary lenses but share insights from organisational sociology and organisational psychology. A common aspect in all programmes is that these insights are applied to improve understanding of organisations and organising at and across a variety of levels. The Organisation Studies domain is further characterized by multiple methodological approaches, predominantly taken from the social sciences. For a full description, see Appendix 3.

The domain-specific framework is very limited in its scope. The committee would have preferred to see a more intelligent formulation of what is common to the programmes in Organisational Studies at the VU University Amsterdam and Tilburg University. The table provided seems to point out the differences between the programmes rather than their common ground and fails to provide coherence, detail and explanation. A national and international benchmarking of the programme is not presented either.

1.1.3. Intended learning outcomes

After completing the programme, students have developed theoretical insights about the functioning of organisations in their social environment, the ways organisational members and groups strategize, network, make sense, and exercise power in daily organisational life. They also know how to study these processes, report on them, and convey their message to scientific as well as layperson audiences. They can apply these insights to relevant issues from the daily practice of various types of organisations such as businesses, (semi-)government, and non-governmental organisations and social movements.

The self-evaluation report illustrates the academic orientation and the master level of the programme by describing the learning objectives. For an overview of the knowledge goals, skill goals and judgement goals, and how these learning objectives are distributed over the individual courses, see Appendix 4.

The committee compared the learning objectives with the Dublin descriptors and concludes that they reflect the required level of knowledge and understanding beyond the bachelor's level. Graduates must show originality and the ability to solve problems in new, unfamiliar and multidisciplinary environments. There is an appropriate focus on the integration of knowledge, complexity, communicative skills, reflectivity and integrity.

The coursework stimulates students to develop a scientific and critical attitude. More than half of the COM programme is devoted to the research project, its preparation and the writing of the thesis.

The committee therefore concludes that the final qualifications and intended learning outcomes are at the required level of the Dublin descriptors for master's programmes and that COM is clearly designed as an academic master's programme.

1.1.4. Relationship between learning outcomes and professional practice

According to the self-evaluation report, the learning objectives and final qualifications produce alumni who are well equipped to act as professionals in a wide variety of organisational settings and contexts. They are prepared to work as generalists with a sharp eye for issues of conflicting interests and meaning-making.

Despite the research focus of the master's programme the majority of COM alumni will not become researchers. Yet, their acquired research skills and critical academic way of thinking allow them to work in settings where complex organisational issues and dilemmas demand original solutions. They are employed as trainees, advisors, and professionals in a large number of sectors including consultancy, professional services, business and (semi-)government.

The committee did not find indications of strong links with the professional field, but the outcomes of the alumni surveys and the meeting with a number of alumni during the site visit made it clear that COM graduates find their way onto the labour market easily. Looking back,

the alumni think that students should be made more aware at an earlier stage of how important a thesis subject can be as a springboard to a job.

1.2. Considerations

The committee has considered the aim and the profile of the COM master's programme as described in the self-evaluation report and expressed in the panel discussions with staff and students during the site visit.

The committee recognizes that the programme aims to deliver graduates who are knowledgeable in the specific area of culture, organisation and management and who can apply this knowledge in a critical and reflective way in different sorts of organisations. The committee finds that the intended learning outcomes as described in terms of knowledge goals, skills goals and judgement goals and compared with the Dublin descriptors are consistent with the level of an academic master's programme. The full range of intended learning outcomes is addressed in the courses and the master's research project. The strong research focus of the programme is clearly recognisable and supports the academic profile.

The direct links with the professional field are limited. Nevertheless, the alumni have no difficulties in launching their careers based on the COM programme, and there is no shortage of places for students to do their fieldwork. The committee therefore draws the conclusion that the programme is able to fulfil the needs of future employers.

The committee acknowledges that the COM programme has built its own unique niche over the years. However, since it is part of the wider area of Organisation Studies and part of a larger Department of Organisation Sciences within the university, the committee advises developing a domain-specific framework more seriously, as a background to future developments of the programme's contents. In addition, a regular benchmarking exercise with national and international programmes in the same area is recommended.

1.3. Conclusion

Master's programme Culture, Organisation and Management: the committee assesses Standard 1 as **satisfactory**.

Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment

The curriculum, staff and programme-specific services and facilities enable the incoming students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Explanation:

The contents and structure of the curriculum enable the students admitted to achieve the intended learning outcomes. The quality of the staff and of the programme-specific services and facilities is essential to that end. Curriculum, staff, services and facilities constitute a coherent teaching-learning environment for the students.

2.1. Findings

This section on the teaching-learning environment examines whether the curriculum, staff and facilities enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes. Aspects that will successively be discussed are: the structure and coherence of the curriculum (2.1.1), didactic principles (2.1.2), internationalisation (2.1.3), feasibility (2.1.4), intake and outflow of students (2.1.5), staff (2.1.6), programme-specific quality assurance (2.1.7). Finally, attention is paid to the improvement measures that have been made in response to the previous evaluation (2.1.8).

2.1.1. Structure and coherence of the curriculum

A schematic overview of the curriculum can be found in Appendix 5. The committee has focused on the new programme, in effect since 2011.

The COM programme is designed with the intention to deliver students who can produce a thorough piece of social-scientific research on the basis of independently conducted fieldwork. The first half of the one-year curriculum teaches the students the theoretical, contextual and methodological basis, and the second half is devoted to research and the master's thesis.

In period 1 (September-October) the students follow the Organisation Sciences course, together with the BCO master students. It addresses the core theoretical perspectives, focusing in particular on the different research areas and approaches. Students are stimulated to develop a critical attitude towards the literature and dominant perspectives in this field. This course is meant to establish a common frame of reference, which is especially necessary because of the broad variety in the disciplinary background of the bachelor students enrolling in the programme (from university and higher vocational institutes). The second course in period 1 is a thematic course on Transnational Organisations in a Global World.

Because culture, the core theme of the programme, can be approached from an interventionist (change) perspective or more analytically, students are offered a choice between Changing Organisational Culture or Culture and Diversity in Organisations in period 2 (November-December). Parallel to the presentation of the cultural theme, a methodological course on Organisational Ethnography is taught in this period. Organisational Ethnography is an emerging approach that builds upon the research tradition of cultural anthropologists and is increasingly used among organisational scholars.

These four courses lay the foundation for the rest of the curriculum in which students are guided and supervised while designing and conducting an independent piece of social-scientific, ethnographic research about and in organisations (periods 3-6).

At the end of the Organisational Ethnography course students will start to write their Research Proposal (period 3, January). This must be theoretically informed, socially relevant, methodologically sound, and clearly structured.

The entire second semester (February-June) is dedicated to the fieldwork, the analysis of empirical data and the subsequent writing of an original academic report. The topics of the thesis generally build on the issues addressed during the thematic courses of periods 1 and 2, and are often closely related to the supervisor's research expertise. The methodological preparation given in the Organisational Ethnography and Research Proposal courses enables students to develop the research design that guides the fieldwork and writing phases. A specific Research Lab course provides students with the necessary underpinning of the empirical phase of data collection and data analysis. Interpretive research techniques characteristic of the ethnographic approach (observation, interviewing) are taught and trained. A special Lab Group is reserved for students who plan to do fieldwork outside of the Netherlands, preparing them to do research in a different cultural environment.

Although the ethnographic tradition is part of the programme's profile, some students and some thesis projects demand a different methodology. Staff indicated that they are specialized in different methodologies such as narrative analysis and participant observation. The ethnographic approach is not obligatory, as the thesis question determines which methodology is fitting. This may not be sufficiently clear to the students as they suggested in their meeting with the committee that the emphasis on the ethnographical approach is too dominant and that the methodology courses should address a wider range of methods.

Generally speaking, the students seem to be satisfied with the structure of the programme. They describe the first course, Organisation Science, as an eye-opener. The selection of the thesis topic, appropriate research method and supervisor early in the programme is appreciated. Some students would prefer classes to be linked more closely to the lecturer's research interests. This would provide a better preparation for the thesis work since thesis topics are based on the staff's research.

In summary, the committee finds that the COM programme has achieved a good balance between providing insight into the common aspects of organisation science as seen from a specific cultural viewpoint and the personal interests of students as expressed in their choice of master thesis projects.

2.1.2. Didactic principles

The COM programme uses a variety of teaching methods and approaches. Traditional lectures are part of most of the thematic courses. Guest lectures by (scientific) experts and professionals from the field as well as the use of film and documentaries stimulate students to consider how theoretical knowledge and insights can be applied, and to reflect on possible consequences for practice.

All courses except for the opening course on Organisation Sciences involve interactive workgroups in which students and lecturers work towards the development of new insights, on the basis of the reading materials or of the assignments students are working on. In some courses, particularly Organisational Ethnography and the Research Lab, methodological workshops form an important component of the teaching methods.

Some students expressed the view that the first course on Organisation Sciences is too large in terms of student numbers. Because it is a common course for COM and BCO, it has over 200 students, large lectures and a multiple choice exam. Students applauded the personalized approach in all the other courses. The many written assignments were described as ‘a struggle’ but useful to attain a better understanding and to relate to the literature.

During the site visit the students mentioned as a strong point of the programme its focus on open-mindedness, teaching them that there are no fixed solutions.

During the visit the committee recognized the personalized attention paid by staff to the students. The course on Organisation Sciences has a different design which may be less attractive to the students, but the committee supports the intention to establish a common framework for both COM and BCO students with their heterogeneous disciplinary backgrounds.

2.1.3. Internationalisation

Since 2007, the COM programme has been offered as an international course, taught in English. Reasons for this change were the programme’s strong international focus on globalisation, transnational processes of organising and intercultural communication, the fact that most of the teaching staff was active in international joint research projects with international partners, and the expectation that the COM programme would attract sufficient numbers of international students, given its unique, ethnographically inspired position in the domain of Organisation Sciences.

The programme shows a fairly consistent intake of 15-20 international students each year. The management explains the attractiveness of the programme by the specific content but also by the popularity of Amsterdam.

In 2011-2012 twenty students of the COM programme went abroad for their master’s research project. The committee appreciates the fact that the programme not only attracts students from abroad, it also stimulates Dutch students to broaden their horizon by doing a research project in another country. The international projects and contacts of COM staff members are often the basis for these students’ projects.

The attention paid to international aspects in the programme and its apparent attractiveness to foreign students as reflected in the intake numbers are a good foundation to expand the international orientation even more in the future, in line with the ambitions of the VU at the university level.

2.1.4. Feasibility

The restructuring of the programme in 2011 was intended to increase the number of graduates finishing in time, and to achieve a concomitant quality improvement. Students are guided early in the programme (October-November) to select a topic for their master’s research project, to elaborate this into a research proposal (January) and to prepare for their research methodology in the Research Lab course (February-March). Students are supervised both individually and in thesis circles.

On average, students have between 10 and 12 contact hours a week in periods 1, 2 and 3. Self-study of the scientific literature (recent scientific publications in international peer-reviewed journals and books) forms an important part of the curriculum. Contact hours and self-study add up to a full-time programme.

Students indicated during the site visit that it is possible to finish the programme in one year if they put their mind to it. Therefore COM is feasible as a one-year programme. The fact remains, however, that half of the students do not finish on time. The main reasons given by staff are that students have many competing activities such as jobs. Sometimes these are part-time jobs to earn money but students who have enrolled in the COM programme after having completed a bachelor's degree in higher vocational education often have already found a job in that field and want to combine the programme with their work. In addition, there is little outside pressure to finish in one year. Finally, there is the fact that the ethnographic tradition often leads to more lengthy projects than an average master's project in social sciences.

The Board of Examiners informed staff and students last year (2011-2012) that the June deadline for submitting the thesis would be strictly enforced. This had a positive effect on timely submissions, although some staff members adhere to the idea that 'a thesis is finished when it is finished', a process which in their view cannot be shortened at will.

The committee recognizes the dilemma. A one-year programme is not much time to attain the intended learning outcomes especially when (international) fieldwork is involved and students are encouraged to look beyond the simple solutions. Under the circumstances, the department has been able to develop a programme that can be done in one year and has done well in establishing a structure that guides students along their study paths.

2.1.5. Intake and outflow of students

For a quantitative overview of intake, throughflow and output figures, see Appendix 6.

The COM programme receives a mix of national and international students from various disciplinary backgrounds. The programme is fairly attractive to students from a broad range of institutions of higher vocational training (hbo). Of a total of approximately 90-100 students each year, 15-20 come from foreign institutes and 20-30 from higher vocational education, and the intake from other Dutch universities is almost twice as large as from the VU itself.

During the site visit the committee learned that the department cherishes the heterogeneity in its students' backgrounds and consciously aims at a large variety of intake: 50% from higher vocational institutes, 20% from its 'own' bachelor's degrees. The fact that the international intake in 2012 has increased to 25% is welcomed.

Should student numbers continue to rise, the department fears that the quality standards will drop, especially in the supervision of master thesis projects. In that case they would like to investigate the possibilities of a fixed quota of 75-100 students. In the short term current political uncertainty ('langstudeerdersboete') seems to be leading to a lower intake of bachelor students from higher vocational education, first into the premaster's programme and then the following year into the master's programme. The department expects that this decrease will be countered by an increase in international students.

All admissions are handled by the Examination Board. Students with a bachelor's degree in one of the disciplines offered at the Faculty of Social Sciences are admitted directly. Conditional admission is possible on the basis of a bachelor's degree from another university in the Netherlands or abroad. If the programmes are sufficiently equivalent, admission is granted directly. In other cases additional entry requirements may be formulated, up to a maximum of the 60 EC premaster's programme. Admission is also possible on the basis of a

bachelor's degree from an institute of higher vocational education on the condition that the candidate obtains satisfactory marks on completion of the premaster's programme.

The premaster's programme (60 EC) is a mix of methodological and substantial courses, concluded by a thesis. It adapts students to the new institutional environment in terms of academic orientation (theory and research focus, reflectivity) which clearly differs from the more practical orientation of their original bachelor's programmes.

Both staff and students praise the effect of the premaster's programme. The department has decided to shorten it to 30 EC as of 2012-2013. This is being done to decrease the costs for students because the premaster's programme is not funded by the government nor is it part of the internal allocation of means within VU University Amsterdam. Staff members mentioned to the committee that they are aware that this will put more pressure on the first semester programme next year to get all students to a common level. They describe it as a balancing act since the heterogeneity and variety of students are considered an asset. They are not too apprehensive about the effects on students' success since the admission criteria for the premaster's programme have been tightened. Also, they find that students with a weaker background are usually aware that they will have to work harder, which, combined with a strong motivation, generally leads to good results.

Of the 2011-2012 cohort, over 50% of the students were able to finish their studies within the same academic year. This is a considerable rise compared to the results of the previous cohort. Some 25% of the students are expected to finish their studies in the period September-December, and the final 25% will take longer.

2.1.6. Staff

Practically all of the 60 EC of the COM programme are taught by members of the Department of Organisation Science. The student-staff ratio is 1:24.

The core courses are taught by a total of thirteen members of the department, all of them holding PhDs. The lecturers who are responsible for the thematic courses are all involved in scientific research in the domain of their particular course. Frequently, PhD students who are embedded in the department's research programme are involved in the courses as guest lecturers on their topic of research. The diversity of the scientific and teaching staff is large in terms of experience, theoretical background, and methodological preferences.

All lecturers either have extensive teaching experience and/or have obtained the basic academic teaching qualification as required by the VU University or an equivalent.

The increase in the number of students means the required number of staff for supervision of the master thesis projects exceeds the capacity of the teaching staff of the courses. To deal with this, each of the scientific and teaching staff members of the department supervises at least one, but typically more, master thesis projects. This includes PhD students and lecturers from the bachelor's and premaster's programmes. The use of experienced teachers as co-supervisors guarantees that the required quality is maintained. Increasingly, staff members from the parallel BCO programme are asked to supervise master thesis projects in COM, and vice versa. This practice mixes perspectives and broadens research horizons, both among the students and the supervising staff.

The distribution of staff time between education and research is set at 70-30%. Staff members address the high teaching load by merging research and teaching, both by teaching about their own research and by using the input of students in their research projects.

2.1.7. Programme-specific quality assurance

All courses are critically evaluated by student questionnaires. The educational committee described the 2011-2012 academic year, the first year after the restructuring of the programme, as rather chaotic and indicated that some changes had to be improvised during the year. Not all information was properly provided to students at the start, but this was addressed quickly. Students expressed their appreciation that staffs are always willing to listen to complaints and suggestions and that this leads to improvements in the programme. Links between staff and students are informal and short.

The educational committee has drawn up an agenda for the 2012-2013 academic year, including the translation of faculty measures such as the required increase in contact hours. It intends to follow up on comments from last year. The educational committee is aware that the quality control of the programme is a crucial issue. The early detection of poor students before they start their thesis work is also an issue to be addressed. In the COM programme the role of the study advisor is limited because of the strong personal relations between staff and students in coursework and in the thesis research projects.

The appreciation of the COM programme as expressed in course evaluations by the students is much more positive than the outcomes of the NSE national student survey. Staff members ascribe the relatively low scores to quite serious IT problems at the time of the survey which caused irritation among students: due to problems with the implementation of a new IT system, grades could not be reported on time, and registration for exams within the deadline set in the Rules and Regulations (Onderwijs- en Examenreglement) was not possible either.

2.1.8. Improvements after the last evaluation

The previous assessment of the COM programme took place in 2006. The assessment committee found the quality satisfactory on all points. At that time, the master's programme had only been in place since 2004, which made it difficult for the committee to draw strong conclusions on some issues such as the feasibility of the programme in one year.

Since the previous assessment, the programme has been restructured twice, in 2007 and in 2011. The current assessment committee expects that especially the clear division between course work in the first two periods and the conduct of the thesis research project in the second part of the programme will help the students to focus and to finish on time.

The 2006 committee remarked critically on the fact that the COM programme could not provide a national or international benchmark because of its supposedly unique character. In reaction to the lack of a strong domain-specific framework, the current committee has similar reservations, although it admits that over the years the COM programme has established quite a strong position for itself.

2.2. Considerations

The curriculum of the COM programme provides a set of courses on fundamental content and methodology, followed by a substantial master thesis research project. The committee considers the coursework a good foundation for the subsequent research project.

The COM staff puts much effort into stimulating and guiding the students to select a thesis topic, to elaborate it in a solid research proposal and to start doing their own empirical (ethnographic) research. In the first year of this new curriculum (2011-2012), not everything has worked out as envisaged. Both staff and students indicated that lecturers are open to criticism and suggestions for improvement. The committee therefore expects that most of the teething problems will be eliminated this year.

The personalized approach is a strong asset of the COM programme. Although the heterogeneity of the students' background is large, the programme succeeds in creating a community during the year of study. At the end, the differences in background are no longer visible. All students are challenged to discuss the literature critically and not accept facts or theories at face value.

The COM programme is a truly international programme and attracts a consistent intake of foreign students. Because the intake of students with a bachelor's degree from a higher vocational education institute may decrease in the near future as an effect of national policy changes, the staff should try to attract even more international students in compensation. This move should preferably be aligned with the internationalisation agenda at the university level.

The committee considers the programme to be feasible even though many students do not complete their thesis within one year. Students often make other choices, which cannot always be influenced by the programme's staff.

There has been a constantly large intake of students over the past few years. The committee noted that students from different social sciences bachelor's programmes make an informed choice for this specific master's programme.

Bachelor graduates from higher vocational education first have to pass a one-year premaster's programme. The committee finds this a good preparation for the COM programme. In the new academic year (2012-2013), the premaster's programme will be shortened to 30 EC for financial reasons. The staff expects that the qualitative results will be more or less comparable because the entry requirements have been tightened.

The staff is well qualified to teach the programme. The teaching load is high, especially because of the large number of students to be supervised during their research projects. The committee can therefore understand that the COM staff would not be too unhappy with a lower intake of students over the next few years. This would enable them to address some quality issues for which they have not had sufficient time.

The educational committee has taken a proactive approach and has, in close consultation with students and staff members, tried to remedy last year's problems in the new programme structure.

Looking back on the 2006 assessment report, the committee notes that two issues have remained a constant challenge: the limited possibilities of a programme to push students through within one year, and the question of whether the COM programme is so specific that it is not possible to formulate a strong common framework with other programmes in Organisation Studies.

In summary, the committee is convinced that the teaching-learning environment has been designed and is executed in such a way that students are generally able to achieve the intended learning outcomes within the one-year period of the programme.

2.3. Conclusion

Master's programme Culture, Organisation and Management: the committee assesses Standard 2 as **satisfactory**.

Standard 3: Assessment and achieved learning outcomes

The programme has an adequate assessment system in place and demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Explanation:

The level achieved is demonstrated by interim and final tests, final projects and the performance of graduates in actual practice or in post-graduate programmes. The tests and assessments are valid, reliable and transparent to the students.

3.1. Findings

This section consists of two parts. First, it deals with the committee's findings with regard to the system of assessment (3.1.1). Secondly, it answers the question of whether students achieve the intended learning outcomes (3.1.2).

3.1.1. Assessment system

In the COM programme a variety of assessment methods is used, depending on the learning objectives to be achieved. The focus is on written assignments, to stimulate students to gain a thorough understanding of the literature instead of just memorising it. Resits are available for each course and typically take place about eight weeks after the original exam.

The Organisation Sciences introductory course is examined by an individual test which is largely based on multiple choice questions in combination with two open questions. The other thematic courses are evaluated on the basis of a combination of several group and individual assignments and tests which include both written assignments and some exams. Individual assignments and tests make up at least half of the final grade of a course to limit the effects of potential 'free rider behaviour' in group assignments.

In the week prior to the final assignment or test, lecturers either prepare a response lecture or are available for feedback and questions. Students receive sample questions via Blackboard to prepare for their tests or a list of the evaluation criteria of the assignments. After the grading of assignments and tests, students have the opportunity to review their results in a session organized by the course's lecturers.

To enhance the quality of the multiple choice exams, lecturers can refer to the handbook and checklist when constructing questions. Multiple choice exams are processed by the Education Centre, which also analyzes the reliability of the exam. Lecturers are expected to cross-check their open-ended questions and assignments with fellow teachers or a colleague who is an expert in the field in order to ensure their clarity, consistency and quality. It is not clear if this really happens, and the committee advises the Board of Examiners to put this issue on the agenda. Course evaluation forms by the students provide feedback on the clarity of the assignments.

In order to guarantee the quality of the achieved learning outcomes, two lecturers are always involved in evaluating the Research Proposal and the master thesis. The evaluation of the Research Proposal is done via mutual consultation. The master thesis is assessed independently. While the supervisor takes into account the process that leads to the final product in his or her evaluation (e.g. level of independence, integration of feedback), the second assessor focuses solely on the quality of the final product, thereby ensuring a minimal quality level is maintained at all times. The evaluation of the master thesis is based on the overall quality of the written product but even more so on the quality of the theoretical

arguments, the consistency and application of the method chosen, the quality of the data collection and analysis, the level of insight, and the reflective quality shown in the discussion section. The assessment aspects are part of the course description in the Study Guide. The students are made aware of the evaluation criteria for each aspect by the inclusion of the evaluation form in an information booklet used during the yearly thesis market, as well as on the Blackboard page for the master thesis.

The Board of Examiners is responsible for the standards of the programme. To ensure the quality of the exams and assessments, it has issued a number of guidelines for staff: on the need to have exam questions and assignments checked by a knowledgeable colleague (four-eyes principle), on how to formulate clear questions (multiple choice and open questions), and on the importance of a test matrix per course to cover all learning objectives.

The department has reviewed the results of the COM and BCO master theses over the 2004-2010 period. This review showed that some lecturers systematically mark scores that are below or above the standard deviation, that first supervisors generally mark higher than the second assessor, that there is a substantial number of stable couples of first and second assessors and that some of these 'couples' systematically give lower or higher marks. Finally, huge differences were found in the number of students supervised by one and the same lecturer, and the number of 'cum laude' students is below the Faculty's average. This review has produced a number of recommendations which should lead to a more even distribution of thesis students among staff and more awareness of the grading process.

The Board of Examiners has provided a good basis by formulating clear guidelines, e.g. by using the outcomes of the survey on thesis marking, but this should be followed in the near future by a check on adherence by staff. The proactive role of the Board of Examiners has become a legal requirement but is not yet fully implemented in this Faculty.

The committee examined a number of assignments that were provided as part of the documentation during the site visit and found them to be of sufficient quality. The students expressed their satisfaction with the assessment system because of its focus on assignments that challenge the students to relate to the literature and the theoretical framework. There are no immediate concerns about the quality of the assessment system, but nevertheless the committee feels it is vulnerable because the Board of Examiners has not yet checked if staff members have implemented these assessment guidelines.

As regards the thesis evaluations, the committee strongly encourages a greater dialogue among staff about marking procedures across different methodological approaches in order to produce formalized standards on the weight of various factors for each methodology. This exercise should be monitored by the Board of Examiners, and the outcomes should be announced to the students.

3.1.2. Achievement of intended learning outcomes

To assess whether students achieve the intended learning outcomes, the committee studied a representative sample of theses. Generally speaking, the assessments by members of the committee were well in line with the grades given by staff, although the wide range of methodologies used often made it difficult to compare grades across the programme.

While some theses were very strong in presenting their findings in a well-written narrative, the committee would have expected these findings to be linked back to the literature and theoretical framework. A rich description in itself seems to lead to a good mark. The

committee acknowledges that this is related to the ethnographic tradition but expects more theorisation and reflection in a social sciences master thesis. It considers it important that supervisors and the Board of Examiners discuss their grading standards more fully. Staff members admitted that students have more difficulties with theory and discussion than with the methodological part of the thesis. The importance of the discussion part of the thesis was therefore emphasized quite strongly in the 2011-2012 cohort, and supervisors find that this has led to an improvement of that aspect.

Supervisors sometimes think that particular students have the potential to develop the thesis further, but the time constraints keep them from doing so. A thorough analysis often takes more time than provided in the programme structure. The committee concludes that students and staff are therefore confronted with the choice either to reduce their expectations or to extend the length of the study period.

Staff members often keep in touch with the students they supervised during the master thesis project. The information these alumni provide shows that COM students are able to obtain relevant and highly valued jobs. The acquired skills enable them not only to start but also to advance in their career. This informally obtained information is validated by the outcomes of a recent survey amongst a sample of 37 alumni who graduated since 2008. Almost 90% of COM graduates have jobs that strongly build on the programme, and three-quarters of them obtained this job within three months of graduation.

The meeting of the committee with a number of COM and BCO alumni confirms these positive outcomes. They had found jobs as a consultant, PhD student, policy advisor or had opted for a traineeship. Most of them mention that it has been especially useful that the programme taught them to analyse an organisation, its policy and its change issues on different levels, looking beyond the immediate facts. They are convinced that this is a specific characteristic of the COM programme, and the programme is not interchangeable with any other master's programme.

3.2. Considerations

The committee examined the assessment system and found it to be transparent, valid and consistent. The theses are supervised and evaluated fairly. The committee recommends that the observations on grading bias, as noted in a recent survey, be taken seriously. The exchange of second assessors between the COM and BCO programmes is a good way to broaden horizons.

The Board of Examiners has taken the initiative to issue some good guidelines to lecturers on issues related to assessment, but the committee is disappointed to note that they have not checked up on the implementation of these guidelines. The Board of Examiners should take a more proactive role in this respect.

The committee evaluated a representative sample of theses. Generally speaking, the committee's marks were in line with the original grades. In some cases the committee would have liked to see a stronger discussion section, linking the data back to the theoretical framework and the scientific literature. The committee recommends developing specific and clear criteria to evaluate the different methodologies used in the theses.

The theses clearly show that the level of the graduates is at the required master's level. This is confirmed by the experiences of the alumni on the labour market.

3.3. Conclusion

Master's programme Culture, Organisation and Management: the committee assesses Standard 3 as **satisfactory**.

General conclusion

The committee judges the COM programme to be a stimulating academic master's programme. The design of the programme structure, the way it is taught by qualified and committed staff members, and the conditions created for quality control all contribute to a fitting teaching-learning environment. The assessment of the learning outcomes in tests, assignments and, above all, the master thesis meets the required quality standards. Both the quality of the theses and the experiences of the alumni show that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

The committee assesses the *master's programme Culture, Organisation and Management* as **satisfactory**.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Curricula vitae of the members of the assessment committee

Prof. Arndt Sorge (chair) was appointed Honorary Professor at the Faculty of Economics and Social Science, University of Potsdam, Germany in 2009. He has been the Director of the Research Unit Internationalisation and Organisation, Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (2006-2011), held the François Sellier chair as Professor of International Business and Management, Faculty of Management and Organisation, University of Groningen (2005-2010), where he also was Full Professor of Management, esp. Organisation Structuring (1999-2010). From 1997-1999 he was a Full Professor of Work and Organisation Sciences and the Scientific Director of the Work and Organisation Research Centre WORC at Tilburg University. From 1992 until 2007 Arndt Sorge was Full Professor of Industrial and Organisational Sociology at Humboldt University Berlin and at the same time part-time Professor in International Personnel Management and Industrial Relations at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Maastricht University (1991-1997). Arndt Sorge obtained his Doctorate (Dr. sc. pol.) magna cum laude at the University of Münster in 1975 and his Habilitation in sociology at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University Frankfurt/Main in 1985.

Prof. Nelson Phillips has been a Professor of Strategy and Organisational Behaviour and Head of the Organisation and Management Group at Imperial College Business School, London, UK since 2005. From 2002 until 2005 he held the Beckwith Chair in Management Studies at the Judge School of Business, University of Cambridge, UK, where he also was the MBA Director from 2002 until 2003. Nelson Phillips obtained his PhD from the University of Alberta, Canada in 1995. He has been a visiting professor at the Bocconi University, Milan, Italy and an Edward Clarence Dyason Universitas 21 Fellow at the Faculty of Economics and Commerce of Melbourne University, Australia. His research interests and contributions focus on Institutional Theory; Entrepreneurship, Family Business and Social Entrepreneurship; Technology Strategy and Innovation; and Qualitative Methods.

Prof. Ray Reagans has been an Associate Professor at Sloan School of Management, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge MA, USA since 2009. Previous appointments were at Carnegie Mellon University (Associate Professor, 2005-2009) and at Columbia University (Associate Professor, 2001-2005). He obtained his PhD in Sociology from the University of Chicago in 1998. His research interests focus on networks and their role in organisations. His articles on these issues have been published in books and in refereed journals such as *Organisation Science*, *Journal of Mathematical Sociology*, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *Management Science*.

Prof. Hans Doorewaard has been a Professor of Organisation Development at the Nijmegen School of Management (NSM), Radboud University Nijmegen since 1999. He obtained his PhD in Policy Sciences from the Radboud University Nijmegen in 1989, which was based on a study of hegemonic power processes in organisations. His educational and research interests include human resource management, power in organisations, gender in organisations, organisational change, team-based work, research methodology, and emotions in organisations. As a lecturer, Hans Doorewaard is involved in both the Nijmegen School of Management at the Radboud University Nijmegen and the Executive Degree Program in Business Administration (ABK) of the Radboud University Nijmegen. From 1999 to 2008, he was the educational director of the specialisation in 'Business Administration' of the Executive Degree Program in Business Administration of the Radboud University Nijmegen. From 2003 to 2008, Hans Doorewaard was the Associate Dean of Education at the Nijmegen

School of Management. Hans Doorewaard is a Research Fellow at the Institute of Management Research of the Nijmegen School of Management.

Sanne Keurentjes BSc is a master student of Organisation Studies at the Tilburg University where she also works as a student assistant. She obtained her bachelor degree in Organisation Studies from Tilburg University in 2012. Previously she studied at Fontys Sport Academy, Tilburg (2005-2009) and earned her degree as a teacher physical education.

Appendix 2: Programme of the site visit

Friday 7 September 2012	
8.30-9.30	Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Dr. Anton Hemerijck, Dean FSW • Prof. dr. Marcel Veenswijk, Head of Department Organisation Sciences • Dr. Frank de Bakker, Faculty Board, education • Dr. Frans Kamsteeg, Teaching Manager Department Organisation Sciences • Dr. Ingrid Wakkee, Coordinator Master's BCO and COM
9.30-10.30	Students M COM +M BCO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merel Keiser (BCO) • Sjoerd Geraerts (BCO) • Deborah Duttonhofer (COM) • Thijs Willems (COM) • Marjolein Krol (COM)
10.30-10.45	Break
10.45-11.45	Lecturers M COM + M BCO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Sierk Ybema (BCO, COM, Organisation Sciences) • Prof. Heidi Dahles (COM, Transnational Organisations in a Global World) • Dr. Dick de Gilder (BCO, Communicatie en Identiteit) • Prof. Alfons van Marrewijk (BCO, COM, Changing Organisational Culture) • Dr. Dirk Deichmann (BCO, Onderzoeks Lab, Strategisch Organiseren) • Dr. Cathy van Dyck (BCO, Zorgprocessen, Research Proposal)
11.45-12.30	Educational Committees COM and BCO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Ida Sabelis (staff member) • Dr. Maria Dijkstra (staff member) • Prof. Alfons van Marrewijk (staff member) • Maartje Verspoor (student)
12.30-13.15	Lunch
13.15-14.00	Board of Examiners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Geert de Vries • Dr. Peter v.d. Sijde • Dr. Sytze Kingma • Dr. Sonja Utz
14.00-14.30	Alumni <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandra van Ooijen (BCO)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jurre Ongerling (BCO) • Nassira Hassani (BCO) • Suzan de Wit (BCO) • Roline Prummel (COM) • Machteld de Jong (COM) • Saar Scholten (COM)
14.30-15.00	Preparation final meeting with management
15.00-16.00	Final meeting with management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. dr. Anton Hemerijck, Dean FSW • Prof. dr. Marcel Veenswijk, Head of Department Organisation Sciences • Dr. Frank de Bakker, Faculty Board, education • Dr. Frans Kamsteeg, Teaching Manager Department Organisation Sciences • Dr. Ingrid Wakkee, Coordinator Master's BCO and COM
16.00-18.00	Formulating conclusions and open office hour
18.00-18.30	Presentation preliminary findings + drinks

Appendix 3: Domain-specific framework of reference

The domain-specific framework of reference is shared between VU and University of Tilburg.

The *multidisciplinary* educational programs in OS examine and critically apply knowledge about organizational processes and the structure, culture and adaptive dynamics of organizations. All programs use a variety of disciplinary lenses (see matrix), but share insights from organizational sociology and organizational psychology. These insights are applied to seek understanding of organizations and organizing on and across a *variety of levels* (individual, team or group, organization, networks of organizations, sector/field, society).

Empirical observation, conceptual development and theorizing are seen as equally important and mutually reinforcing. Given the broad range of organization-related questions addressed, the OS domain is characterized by *multiple methodological approaches*, mostly taken from the social sciences, and manifesting themselves in the utilization of a variety of both qualitative and quantitative methods, or combinations of the two.

Programs and disciplines	Organizational sociology	Organizational psychology	Anthropology	Economics	Communication science	Public administration	Other
Organisation Studies	x	x		x			
Human Resource Studies	x	x (and work psychology)		x			labor law educational sciences
Culture, Organization and Management	x	x	x (ethnography)			x	
Beleid, Communicatie en Organisatie	x	x			x (organizational communication)	x	

Appendix 4: Intended learning outcomes

Students who complete the COM Master's have acquired knowledge of and are capable of applying this knowledge to different organisational problems and settings:

(Knowledge Goals, KG 1-4):

1. The different streams and approaches in the broad field of organisational studies;
2. In particular organisational research from a cultural perspective;
3. The use of ethnographic methods in the field of organisational study;
4. The philosophical underpinnings of a cultural approach within organisation sciences.

Students who complete the COM Master's are prepared for and able to:

(Skill Goals, SG 1-3):

5. Give a critical oral and written account of the different theoretical approaches in the field of culture, organisation and management;
6. Map the cultural and political processes in and around organisations and networks, and formulate a series of alternative solutions for organisation and/or cooperation problems.
7. Conduct an ethnographic study in a given field of organisational studies.

Students who complete the COM Master's have developed:

(Judgement Goals, JG 1-3)

8. An interest in complex cultural processes in the context of organisations;
9. A critical attitude towards the organisation science literature, theoretical perspectives, and practitioners' analyses;
10. Intellectual integrity, self-reflexivity, and the sensibility to meaning-making at micro, meso, and macro levels of organising.

Distribution of learning objectives over the individual courses (knowledge goals-KG, skills goals-SG, judgement goals-JG)

Period	Course	KG1	KG2	KG3	KG4	SK 1	SK 2	SK 3	JG1	JG2	JG3
1a	Organisation Sciences	x	x		x				x	x	
1b	Transnational Organisations in a Global World	x	x			x			x	x	
2a	Culture and Identity in Organisations	x	x		x	x			x	x	x
	Changing Organisational Culture	x	x		x	x			x		
2b	Organisational Ethnography	x	x	x		x		x	x	x	X
3	Research proposal	x	x	x		x	x		x	x	
4	Research Lab	x		x		x					X
4-6	Master's Thesis	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	X

Appendix 5: Overview of the curriculum

Master's in COM Cohorts 2007-2010

Semester 1 (September-January)		Semester 2 (February-June)
<i>Part I (7 weeks)</i> COM Research Domains 7,5 EC	<i>Part II (7 weeks)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variant Transnational Entrepreneurship (7,5 EC) Variant Identity and Diversity in Organisations (7,5 EC) Variant Culture Change & Intervention (7,5 EC) 	Master's Thesis in Culture, Organisation and Management 30 EC
Fieldwork Preparation (15 EC), consisting of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Methods and Meaning (5 EC) Thematic Reading (individual assignment, assessed by thesis supervisor) Research proposal (assessed by thesis supervisor) 		

Master's in COM, cohort 2011 and further

Period 1 September October	Period 2 November December	Period 3 January	Period 4 February March	Period 5 April May	Period 6 June
Organisation Science	<i>Electives: Changing Organisational Culture OR Culture and Identity in Organisations</i>	Research Proposal	Master's Thesis		
Transnational Organisations in a Global World	Organisational Ethnography		Research Lab		
Scientific foundation	Methodological Course	Research Proposal	Methodological Underpinning	Empirical Research	Research Report/Thesis

Appendix 6: Quantitative data regarding the programme

Data on intake, transfers and graduates

1. Student intake by previous education (VU, other NL-university, professional education, other) and by gender (male, female)

Cohortjaar	Cohokode	Cohortomvang - onderwijsherkomst				Cohortomvang - geslacht		
		Eigen Universiteit	Andere NI Universiteiten	HBO	Buiten HO	Man	Vrouw	Totaal
2003	60050	9	12	66	1	23	65	88
2004	60050	4	11	48		9	54	63
2005	60050	12	16	49		13	64	77
2006	60050	12	26	51	1	22	68	90
2007	60050	27	35	31	8	19	82	101
2008	60050	17	41	21	16	16	79	95
2009	60050	15	21	32	19	16	71	87
2010	60050	21	38	12	19	19	71	90
2011	60050	16	10	1	10	9	28	37

2. Completion rates (absolute numbers) and enrolment In COM (average number of months) by previous education (VU, other NL-university, professional education, other)

Examenjaar	Eigen Universiteit		Andere NI Universiteiten		HBO		Buiten HO		Totaal	
	Aantal geslaagden (absoluut)	Studieduur (gem. aantal mnd.)	Aantal geslaagden (absoluut)	Studieduur (gem. aantal mnd.)	Aantal geslaagden (absoluut)	Studieduur (gem. aantal mnd.)	Aantal geslaagden (absoluut)	Studieduur (gem. aantal mnd.)	Aantal geslaagden (absoluut)	Studieduur (gem. aantal mnd.)
2004					3	24			3	24
2005	3	26	11	23	31	30			45	28
2006	8	18	14	25	30	33			52	29
2007	20	15	25	20	37	34	6	14	88	25
2008	11	17	24	21	36	32	4	16	75	25
2009	16	21	39	21	23	32	12	17	90	23
2010	15	20	26	21	29	34	14	19	84	25

3. Completion rates (absolute numbers) and enrolment In VU (average number of months) by previous education (VU, other NL-university, professional education, other)

Examenjaar	Eigen Universiteit		Andere NI Universiteiten		HBO		Buiten HO		Totaal	
	Aantal geslaagden (absoluut)	Verblijfsduur instelling (gem. aantal mnd.)	Aantal geslaagden (absoluut)	Verblijfsduur instelling (gem. aantal mnd.)	Aantal geslaagden (absoluut)	Verblijfsduur instelling (gem. aantal mnd.)	Aantal geslaagden (absoluut)	Verblijfsduur instelling (gem. aantal mnd.)	Aantal geslaagden (absoluut)	Verblijfsduur instelling (gem. aantal mnd.)
2004					3	24			3	24
2005	3	47	11	23	31	30			45	29
2006	8	59	14	25	30	33			52	35
2007	20	64	25	20	37	34	6	14	88	36
2008	11	58	24	21	36	32	4	16	75	32
2009	16	64	39	21	23	32	12	17	90	31
2010	15	71	26	21	29	34	14	19	84	34

Teacher-student ratio achieved

Course	Programme	Available hours	Students
Organisation Sciences	COM/ BCO	$(42+120)/2+2*69=219$	207 (69 COM)
Organisational Ethnography	COM	$42+120+2*69=300$	69
Transnational Organisations in a Global World	COM	$42+120+2*69=300$	69
Culture and Identity in Organisations (elective COM)	COM	$42+120+2*44=250$	44
Changing Organisational Culture (elective COM, BCO)	COM/BCO	$(42+120)/2+2*46=173$	138 (46 COM)
Research Proposal	COM	$42+60+60+2*69=300$	69
Research Lab	COM (two tracks)	$(42+60+60)*2 +2*69=462$	69
Master's Thesis		$36*69=2484$	69
Total		4488 hours = 2,7 fte 65 hours per student Student-staff ratio is 1:24	69

Average amount of face-to-face instruction per stage of the study programme

Number of contact hours: 12 per week (first semester), 2 hours per week (second semester)

Appendix 7: Theses and documents studied by the committee

Prior to the site visit, the committee studied the theses of the students with the following student numbers:

1804103	2114119	2091429
1900668	1804499	2060884
1998692	1796666	2204908
2086344	1924001	2070855
1803107	1698974	1771930

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

Course materials for all courses:

- Course outlines
- Handbooks
- Readers and articles
- Assignments
- Answers and assignment papers by students
- Evaluation forms

Information on master's thesis projects:

- Rules and regulations
- Style guide
- Recently completed theses

Educational committee:

- Minutes of recent meetings
- Annual educational reports
- Curriculum evaluations

Board of examiners:

- Minutes of recent meetings
- Letters and communications to staff
- Handbook on educational quality, chapter on testing and assessments
- Transitional rules

Alumni surveys

PR material

Monitor results on personnel satisfaction

Appendix 8: Declarations of independence



DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENTIALITY TO BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

THE UNDERSIGNED

NAME:

Andt Gorge

HOME ADDRESS:

*Lehrstr. 32, 15788 Zenthen
Germany*

HAS BEEN ASKED TO ASSESS THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMME AS AN EXPERT /
SECRETARY:

SEE ANNEX

APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTION:

SEE ANNEX

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT MAINTAINING ANY (FAMILY) CONNECTIONS OR TIES
OF A PERSONAL NATURE OR AS A RESEARCHER / TEACHER, PROFESSIONAL OR
CONSULTANT WITH THE ABOVE INSTITUTION, WHICH COULD AFFECT A FULLY
INDEPENDENT JUDGEMENT REGARDING THE QUALITY OF THE PROGRAMME IN
EITHER A POSITIVE OR A NEGATIVE SENSE;



HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT HAVING MAINTAINED SUCH CONNECTIONS OR TIES WITH THE INSTITUTION DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS;

CERTIFIES TO OBSERVING STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY WITH REGARD TO ALL THAT HAS COME AND WILL COME TO HIS/HER NOTICE IN CONNECTION WITH THE ASSESSMENT, INsofar AS SUCH CONFIDENTIALITY CAN REASONABLY BE CLAIMED BY THE PROGRAMME, THE INSTITUTION OR NVAO;

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO BEING ACQUAINTED WITH THE NVAO CODE OF CONDUCT.

PLACE:

Tilburg

DATE:

4 September 2012

SIGNATURE:

A. J. J. J.



DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENTIALITY

TO BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

THE UNDERSIGNED

NAME:

Hans Doorewaard

HOME ADDRESS:

Klepperman Orca 5
0585 BB Mook

HAS BEEN ASKED TO ASSESS THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMME AS AN EXPERT / SECRETARY:

ORG STUDIES

Vilbusg

VU Amsterdam

APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTION:

Vilbusg University

VU Amsterdam

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT MAINTAINING ANY (FAMILY) CONNECTIONS OR TIES OF A PERSONAL NATURE OR AS A RESEARCHER / TEACHER, PROFESSIONAL OR CONSULTANT WITH THE ABOVE INSTITUTION, WHICH COULD AFFECT A FULLY INDEPENDENT JUDGEMENT REGARDING THE QUALITY OF THE PROGRAMME IN EITHER A POSITIVE OR A NEGATIVE SENSE;



HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT HAVING MAINTAINED SUCH CONNECTIONS OR TIES WITH THE INSTITUTION DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS;

CERTIFIES TO OBSERVING STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY WITH REGARD TO ALL THAT HAS COME AND WILL COME TO HIS/HER NOTICE IN CONNECTION WITH THE ASSESSMENT, INsofar AS SUCH CONFIDENTIALITY CAN REASONABLY BE CLAIMED BY THE PROGRAMME, THE INSTITUTION OR NVAO;

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO BEING ACQUAINTED WITH THE NVAO CODE OF CONDUCT.

PLACE:

Stilburg

DATE:

6 Sep 2012

SIGNATURE:



DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENTIALITY

TO BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

THE UNDERSIGNED

NAME: Nelson Phillips

HOME ADDRESS: 39A Chesbow Road
London UK W2 5BP

HAS BEEN ASKED TO ASSESS THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMME AS AN EXPERT / SECRETARY:

Org Studies - Tilburg
- VU Amsterdam

APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTION:

Tilburg University
VU Amsterdam

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT MAINTAINING ANY (FAMILY) CONNECTIONS OR TIES OF A PERSONAL NATURE OR AS A RESEARCHER / TEACHER, PROFESSIONAL OR CONSULTANT WITH THE ABOVE INSTITUTION, WHICH COULD AFFECT A FULLY INDEPENDENT JUDGEMENT REGARDING THE QUALITY OF THE PROGRAMME IN EITHER A POSITIVE OR A NEGATIVE SENSE;



HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT HAVING MAINTAINED SUCH CONNECTIONS OR TIES WITH THE INSTITUTION DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS;

CERTIFIES TO OBSERVING STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY WITH REGARD TO ALL THAT HAS COME AND WILL COME TO HIS/HER NOTICE IN CONNECTION WITH THE ASSESSMENT, INsofar AS SUCH CONFIDENTIALITY CAN REASONABLY BE CLAIMED BY THE PROGRAMME, THE INSTITUTION OR NVAO;

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO BEING ACQUAINTED WITH THE NVAO CODE OF CONDUCT.

PLACE: *Tilburg*

DATE: *Sept 7, 2012*

SIGNATURE:



DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENTIALITY

TO BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

THE UNDERSIGNED

NAME: Ray Reagan

HOME ADDRESS: 204 Hastings
Pittsburgh, Pa 15206

HAS BEEN ASKED TO ASSESS THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMME AS AN EXPERT / SECRETARY:

OW/OS/PEW/HR at Tilburg University
Com/Bio VU University Amsterdam

APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTION:

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT MAINTAINING ANY (FAMILY) CONNECTIONS OR TIES OF A PERSONAL NATURE OR AS A RESEARCHER / TEACHER, PROFESSIONAL OR CONSULTANT WITH THE ABOVE INSTITUTION, WHICH COULD AFFECT A FULLY INDEPENDENT JUDGEMENT REGARDING THE QUALITY OF THE PROGRAMME IN EITHER A POSITIVE OR A NEGATIVE SENSE;



HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT HAVING MAINTAINED SUCH CONNECTIONS OR TIES WITH THE INSTITUTION DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS;

CERTIFIES TO OBSERVING STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY WITH REGARD TO ALL THAT HAS COME AND WILL COME TO HIS/HER NOTICE IN CONNECTION WITH THE ASSESSMENT, INSOFAR AS SUCH CONFIDENTIALITY CAN REASONABLY BE CLAIMED BY THE PROGRAMME, THE INSTITUTION OR NVAO;

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO BEING ACQUAINTED WITH THE NVAO CODE OF CONDUCT.

PLACE:

DATE:

9/30/12

SIGNATURE:

Ray Keegan



DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENTIALITY
TO BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

THE UNDERSIGNED

NAME: *SANNE KEURENTJES*

HOME ADDRESS: *VOGELSCHOOT 73*
4813 NH BREDA

HAS BEEN ASKED TO ASSESS THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMME AS AN EXPERT /
SECRETARY:

SEE ANNEX

APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTION:

SEE ANNEX

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT MAINTAINING ANY (FAMILY) CONNECTIONS OR TIES
OF A PERSONAL NATURE OR AS A RESEARCHER / TEACHER, PROFESSIONAL OR
CONSULTANT WITH THE ABOVE INSTITUTION, WHICH COULD AFFECT A FULLY
INDEPENDENT JUDGEMENT REGARDING THE QUALITY OF THE PROGRAMME IN
EITHER A POSITIVE OR A NEGATIVE SENSE;



HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT HAVING MAINTAINED SUCH CONNECTIONS OR TIES WITH THE INSTITUTION DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS;

CERTIFIES TO OBSERVING STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY WITH REGARD TO ALL THAT HAS COME AND WILL COME TO HIS/HER NOTICE IN CONNECTION WITH THE ASSESSMENT, INSOFAR AS SUCH CONFIDENTIALITY CAN REASONABLY BE CLAIMED BY THE PROGRAMME, THE INSTITUTION OR NVAO;

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO BEING ACQUAINTED WITH THE NVAO CODE OF CONDUCT.

PLACE: *BAEDA*

DATE: *7/09/2012*

SIGNATURE:



DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENTIALITY

TO BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

THE UNDERSIGNED

NAME: Marianne van der Weiden

HOME ADDRESS: Homeruslaan 62
3581 HJ Utrecht

HAS BEEN ASKED TO ASSESS THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMME AS AN ~~EXPERT~~ / SECRETARY:

Organization Studies

APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTION:

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam / QANU

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT MAINTAINING ANY (FAMILY) CONNECTIONS OR TIES OF A PERSONAL NATURE OR AS A RESEARCHER / TEACHER, PROFESSIONAL OR CONSULTANT WITH THE ABOVE INSTITUTION, WHICH COULD AFFECT A FULLY INDEPENDENT JUDGEMENT REGARDING THE QUALITY OF THE PROGRAMME IN EITHER A POSITIVE OR A NEGATIVE SENSE;



HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT HAVING MAINTAINED SUCH CONNECTIONS OR TIES WITH THE INSTITUTION DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS;

CERTIFIES TO OBSERVING STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY WITH REGARD TO ALL THAT HAS COME AND WILL COME TO HIS/HER NOTICE IN CONNECTION WITH THE ASSESSMENT, INSOFAR AS SUCH CONFIDENTIALITY CAN REASONABLY BE CLAIMED BY THE PROGRAMME, THE INSTITUTION OR NVAO;

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO BEING ACQUAINTED WITH THE NVAO CODE OF CONDUCT.

PLACE: *Utrecht*

DATE: *21 Sept. 2012*

SIGNATURE:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke, positioned to the right of the 'SIGNATURE:' label.