

MASTER POLITICAL SCIENCE

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES,

VU UNIVERSITY AMSTERDAM

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This report was finalised on 15 June 2017.



REPORT ON THE MASTER'S PROGRAMME POLITICAL SCIENCE OF VU UNIVERSITY AMSTERDAM

This report takes the NVAO's Assessment Framework for Limited Programme Assessments as a starting point (19 December 2014).

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE PROGRAMME

Master's programme Political Science

Name of the programme:	Political Science
CROHO number:	60203
Level of the programme:	Master
Orientation of the programme:	academic (WO)
Number of credits:	60 EC
Specialisations or tracks:	Comparative European Politics; International Relations and Transnational Governance; Global Environmental Governance; Policy and Politics.
Location(s):	Amsterdam
Mode(s) of study:	full time
Language of instruction:	English
Expiration of accreditation:	3 July 2018

The visit of the assessment panel Political Science to the Faculty of Social Sciences of VU Amsterdam took place on 20-21 April 2017.

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE INSTITUTION

Name of the institution:	VU University Amsterdam
Status of the institution:	Funded
Result institutional quality assurance assessment:	Positive

COMPOSITION OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

The NVAO has approved the composition of the panel on Political Science. The panel that assessed the master's programme Political Science consisted of:

- Prof. dr. Marijke Breuning, Professor of Political Sciences, Department of Political Science, University of North Texas in Denton, Texas, USA [chair];
- Dr. Renske Doorenspleet, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science and International Studies, University of Warwick, UK;
- Dr. Christien Van den Anker, Associate Professor of Politics and International Relations, Faculty of Health & Applied Sciences, University of the West of England in Bristol, UK;
- Prof. dr. Ferdi De Ville, co-director of the Centre for EU Studies, Ghent University, Belgium;
- Prof. dr. Peter Vermeersch, Professor of Political Sciences, Faculty of Social Sciences, KU Leuven, Belgium;
- Prof. dr. Dirk De Bièvre, Professor of International Politics, Department Political Sciences, Antwerp University, Belgium;
- Kaisa de Bel, third-year bachelor student Political sciences and second-year bachelor student Law, Leiden University, the Netherlands [student-member].



The panel was supported by dr Marianne van der Weiden, who acted as secretary.

Appendix 1 contains the curricula vitae of the panel members.

WORKING METHOD OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

Preparation

QANU received the critical reflection of the master's programme Political Science on 8 March 2017 and forwarded copies by mail and e-mail to the panel members. They read the report and prepared questions, comments and remarks prior to the site visit. The secretary collected these questions and arranged them according to subject matter.

In addition, all panel members read recent theses from the master's programme. In consultation with the chair of the panel, fifteen theses were selected, covering the full range of marks given: five with grades in the range 6.0-6.9, five with an intermediate grade (7.0-8.4) and five with a high mark (8.5-9.9). Theses were selected from all specialisations and from the academic years 2014-2015 and 2015-2016. The panel members also received the grades and the assessment forms filled out by the examiners and supervisors. An overview of all documents and theses reviewed by the panel is included in Appendix 6.

The secretary drafted a programme for the site visit. This was discussed with the chair of the panel and the coordinator of the programme. As requested by QANU, the coordinator of the programme carefully selected discussion partners. The panel agreed with the selection. A schedule of the programme with all partners is included in Appendix 5.

Site visit

The site visit took place on 20 and 21 April 2017 at VU Amsterdam. In a preparatory meeting on 17 April 2017 the panel members discussed their findings based on the critical reflection. Furthermore, the panel discussed its findings with regard to the theses and the questions and issues to be raised in the interviews with representatives of the programme and other stakeholders.

During the site visit, the panel studied documents provided by the coordinator of the site visit. They included minutes of the Programme Committee and the Examination Board, course descriptions, course materials, written exams, assignments and other assessments.

Furthermore, the panel interviewed the programme management, students, alumni, staff members, members of the Programme Committee and members of the Examination Board. Prior to the site visit, both staff members and students were informed about the opportunity to speak to the panel confidentially during the 'consultation hour'. No requests were received for the consultation hour.

After the concluding meeting with the management, the panel members extensively discussed their assessment of the programme and prepared a preliminary presentation of the findings. The site visit was concluded with a presentation of the preliminary findings by the chair.

Report

After the visit, the secretary produced a draft version of the report. She submitted the report to the panel members for comments. The secretary processed corrections, remarks and suggestions for improvement provided by the panel members to produce the revised draft report. This was then sent to VU Amsterdam to check for factual errors. The comments and suggestions provided by the university were discussed with the chair of the assessment panel and, where necessary, with the other panel members. Based on the panel's decisions to incorporate or ignore comments and suggestions, the secretary compiled the final version of the programme report.



Decision rules

In accordance with the NVAO's Assessment framework for limited programme assessments, the panel 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 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 standard.

Excellent

The programme systematically well surpasses the current generic quality standard and is regarded as an international example.

SUMMARY JUDGEMENT

Standard 1. Intended learning outcomes

The one-year master's programme in Political Science aims to educate students to critically examine political issues at a high level of conceptual abstraction and to carry out in-depth academic theoretical and empirical research on a political topic in a globalising context. The intended learning outcomes have been described in terms of a set of exit qualifications, which are in line with the domain-specific frame of reference and the Dublin descriptors at master's level. The panel agrees that they properly reflect the intended learning outcomes of an academic master's programme in political science. The panel recommends to link the VU core values (open, personally engaged and responsible) explicitly to the exit qualifications, to clarify not only the knowledge and skills, but also the attitude aimed for in the programme. Based on the students' feedback during the site visit, the panel concludes that the programme is able to position itself adequately. It offers a distinctive profile based on the international and selective character, the integration of comparative politics and international relations, the comprehensive approach of politics, polity and policy, and the strong academic orientation of the programme. The panel assesses Standard 1 as 'satisfactory'.

Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment

The programme consists of four specialisation tracks: 'Comparative European politics', 'International relations and transnational governance', 'Global environmental governance' and 'Policy and politics'. The track 'Policy and politics' will be discontinued per September 2017, because it does not attract a sufficient number of students.

The panel recognises the cumulative structure of the programme, guiding students to an advanced level of knowledge and research skills in a logical sequence of courses. The dual role of the foundational courses in the first period may have to be reconsidered, since the role of a refresher course interferes with the nature of a strong theoretical course at master's level. Alternative methods to harmonise the diverse academic backgrounds of incoming students should be looked into. Halfway through the programme, in January, students work on the formulation of their research topic. The procedure to link students with suitable supervisors is through speed dates at a 'thesis market'. Most topics can be accommodated this way. The panel appreciates that the programme wishes to cater to all students' interests, but on the basis of the theses (see Standard 4) the panel is not entirely convinced that all supervisors can be aware of the most recent literature in a topic that is far removed from their own area of expertise. It might be better to limit the scope of possible thesis topics for students, to guarantee a better match with the staff's expertise. The many written assignments and the extensive feedback provided by lecturers prepare students for their thesis writing.

Admission to the master's programme is selective, based on disciplinary and methodological background and strong English proficiency. Currently, the number of international students is more than fifty per cent, leading to a natural diversity in the classroom. Most students (sixty per cent) are able to complete the programme within one year, although quite a few of these do not submit their master's thesis in June, but use the summer months and turn in their thesis for the re-sit in August. The students describe the workload, level of the programme and most of the courses (for the foundation courses, see above) as intensive and demanding. There are no major impediments to study progress.

The available staff is well-qualified substantively, didactically and in research. Staff members are very committed to help students along by providing feedback, even to the extent that the expectation levels may be raised too high. Naturally, eagerness to support students is to be applauded, but the panel advises discussing this question in a staff meeting, aiming for a fair balance between teaching and other staff obligations.

The panel concludes that the curriculum and staff constitute a coherent teaching-learning environment for the students and enable them to achieve the intended learning outcomes. The panel assesses Standard 2 as 'satisfactory'.



Standard 3. Assessment

The panel observes that over the past few years serious steps have been undertaken to guarantee the assessment quality, as illustrated by the introduction of an assessment plan and peer review. The assessment methods are in line with the learning objectives and the assignments are of an appropriate level. Students are provided with timely and detailed feedback. The examination committee checks the implementation of the mechanisms to ensure validity and reliability, by an annual survey of course files and the evaluation of a random sample of courses and theses. The survey outcomes indicate that the implementation of the assessment quality mechanisms is not yet complete and that there are inconsistencies in the thesis assessment procedure. In theory, this is a solid quality system. Initially, it was, however, unclear to the panel whether the examination committee can sufficiently monitor if such critical points are addressed. The composition of the examination committee - at Faculty level rather than at programme level - could lead to a procedural and formal approach. The panel wondered if the examination committee is sufficiently able to check the implementation of improvement measures. After the site visit, the panel received additional information, which shows that the programme staff indeed discusses the examination committee's advice in regular staff meetings and implements the recommendations. The panel is reassured that the examinations committee actively monitors the assessment quality and that the programme staff acts upon the committee's criticism. The panel advises the programme director to formally report on these improvement activities to the examination committee. This will ensure that the examination committee is fully informed and consequently more 'in control' of the assessment quality. The panel assesses Standard 3 as 'satisfactory'.

Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes

The panel read a sample of fifteen theses and their assessment forms and had an interview with a number of alumni during the site visit, to determine if the intended learning outcomes are achieved. The learning outcomes of the master thesis reflect all the exit qualifications of the programme. In general, the theses were of the appropriate master level. In two cases, the panel found the level a marginal pass at most. The panel's doubts were clearly shared by the two examiners who had written thorough comments on the various criteria. In contrast with these two marginal cases, the quality of some other theses was outstanding. The grades are generally in line with the panel's judgements. In a few cases the panel would have given a lower grade, but in other cases the panel's grade would have been higher.

The literature reviews in a few theses are not complete and do not reflect the most recent academic discussions. The panel wonders if this is caused by the very high degree of freedom for students to select their research topic and the fact that supervisors cannot be expected to be experts in every field. The panel advises reconsidering the matching procedure of student, topic and supervisor. In most cases the feedback was detailed and based on the assessment criteria. The assessment forms for the master theses are clear, but the intersubjectivity could be further improved by adding a weighting for the various criteria and by specifying minimum criteria for the different ranges of grades (pass/fail, 6-7, 7-8 et cetera). A discussion between the thesis examiners about their proposed grades, instead of an automatic calculation of the average of their proposed grades, would also be useful. The alumni are satisfied with the programme as a preparation for their further career. The panel assesses Standard 4 as 'satisfactory'.

Based on its international experience (Belgium, USA, UK), the panel notes with appreciation that the programmes in Political Science in the Netherlands are comparatively better structured and well-considered than elsewhere. For further improvement of the programme, the panel recommends to link the VU core values (open, personally engaged and responsible) explicitly to the exit qualifications, to clarify not only the knowledge and skills, but also the attitude aimed for in the programme. The dual role of the foundational courses in period 1 should be reconsidered, since the role of a refresher course interferes with the nature of a strong theoretical course at master's level. Alternative methods to harmonise the diverse academic backgrounds of incoming students should be looked into. The panel advises investigating how a more balanced intake across tracks can be

achieved. In order to guarantee a better match with the staff's expertise the panel thinks it may be better to limit the scope of possible thesis topics for students. A stronger connection to real life and work could be achieved by taking advantage of the vicinity of relevant political organisations and organising field trips or excursions to Brussels and The Hague. The panel advises discussing in a staff meeting what students can reasonably expect from staff members in terms of (speed of) feedback, aiming for a fair balance between teaching and other staff obligations. The panel advises the programme director to formally report on the activities to improve the assessment quality to the examination committee. The assessment forms for the master theses are clear, but the intersubjectivity could be further improved by adding a weighting for the various criteria, by specifying minimum criteria for the different ranges of grades, and by including a discussion between the two thesis examiners about their proposed grades.

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

Master's programme Political Science

Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes	satisfactory
Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment	satisfactory
Standard 3: Assessment	satisfactory
Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes	satisfactory
General conclusion	satisfactory

The chair and the secretary 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: 15 June 2017



Prof. dr. Marijke Breuning



Dr Marianne van der Weiden



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

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. Insofar as is applicable, the intended learning outcomes are in accordance with relevant legislation and regulations.

Findings

The master's programme Political Science of VU Amsterdam (VU) aims to educate students to critically examine political issues at a high level of conceptual abstraction and to carry out in-depth academic theoretical and empirical research on a political topic in a globalising context. Upon graduation, they will be prepared for an academic career or for a professional position in government, public policy, profit and non-profit private organisations where they will be able to address complex political questions. The students will develop and increase their knowledge of the history and foundations of the philosophy of social sciences, epistemological issues, political science theories and approaches, and their ability to critically assess political science literature. They will also learn to design research projects with the appropriate methods and techniques and to report the outcomes in academic writing, while identifying and critically reflecting on the political and policy relevance of the results. These intended learning outcomes have been described in terms of a set of exit qualifications (see Appendix 3). The exit qualifications are in line with the domain-specific frame of reference (see Appendix 2) and the Dublin descriptors at master's level. The panel agrees that they properly reflect the intended learning outcomes of an academic master's programme in political science.

The programme's educational vision is based on the university's core values 'open', 'personally engaged' and 'responsible' and is put into practice in three overarching themes: academic citizenship, academic community and social relevance. The panel recognises the core values in the programme, its seminar-type of teaching and in the close interaction between staff and students (see also Standard 2). The panel advises a stronger connection between the core values and the exit qualifications, to make these values more explicit for students and graduates.

Distinctive features of the programme are its international and selective character, the integration of comparative politics and international relations, the comprehensive approach of politics, polity and policy, and the strong academic orientation of the programme. The track in Global Environmental Governance is unique. For one of the students whom the panel met during the site visit, this was indeed the reason to opt for the VU. Another student came specifically for the track 'Comparative European politics', but most were interested in the track 'International relations and transnational governance'. The high academic ranking of the VU programme and its location in Amsterdam were mentioned as well, especially by students from abroad. The panel concludes that the programme is able to position itself adequately and offers a distinctive profile for prospective students.

In order to strengthen the links with the labour market, an advisory board has been set up. This board consists of people working in the academic world, government and public policy, NGOs and the private sector. More than half of its members are graduates of the master's or the bachelor's programme in political science.



The board will meet for the first time in the fall of 2017, and will then discuss the outcomes of the re-accreditation assessment. The panel believes that this advisory board will provide a useful connection with the professional field.

Considerations

The panel concludes that the intended learning outcomes are appropriate for an academic master's programme Political Science. They properly reflect the requirements of the domain-specific reference framework and the Dublin descriptors at master's level. The exit qualifications clarify what is expected from the programme's graduates in terms of knowledge and skills. The panel advises including the core values in the intended learning outcomes. This would make more explicit the open, engaged and responsible attitude that is also expected from the graduates.

Conclusion

The panel 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.

Findings

Programme: content and design

The one-year programme consists of four specialisation tracks: 'Comparative European Politics', 'International Relations and Transnational Governance', 'Global Environmental Governance' and 'Policy and Politics'. The track 'Policy and Politics' will be discontinued per September 2017, because it does not attract a sufficient number of students. The panel report will, therefore, focus on the other three tracks. All tracks share a common core and follow the same logic and structure (for a schematic overview see Appendix 4).

The programme is organised in six periods. In period 1, students attend two foundational courses: 'Theories and Approaches in International Relations' and 'Theories and Approaches in Comparative European Politics', followed, in period 2, by two more advanced courses on selected issues. One of these advanced courses is specific for a track and obligatory for that track's students, the second course is an elective. In period 3, the core module 'Political and Policy Research: Philosophy and Design' focuses on epistemology, methodology and research techniques. Students can use this course to define the research design of their master's thesis. In period 4, students follow the 'Workshop' in their own track, training their critical, research, academic writing and reflective skills. They design and carry out a small research project, writing both an individual paper and a group paper with approximately three fellow-students. This workshop is not focused on the students' own research topic, but the individual paper can be used as a preparation for the master's thesis. Finally, in periods 5 and 6, students independently design and carry out a research project and write their thesis.

The panel recognises the cumulative structure of the programme, guiding students to an advanced level of knowledge and research skills. The aim of the two foundational courses is to get all incoming students, with their very diverse academic backgrounds, to the same level playing field. It appears that this 'refresher' character interferes with the academic level.

Some students appreciate them as a theoretical and methodological introduction, but for others, especially those who graduated from the VU bachelor's programme in political science, the first period is not sufficiently challenging. The panel studied the syllabi of the two foundational courses and recognises the students' feedback. The course in international relations does not require students to engage with original texts and debates, which would be appropriate at master's level. The panel suggests moving part of the 'Workshop' to period 1, in order to train students from the very beginning of the foundational courses in critically engaging with academic literature and grasping the underlying paradigmatic debates. The 'Workshop' could then perhaps be linked more directly to the preparation of the master's thesis, although the panel is aware that self-plagiarism is a risk to be avoided.

From the beginning of period 4, in January, students work on the formulation of their research topic and make a list of three potential supervisors. The thesis coordinator organises a 'thesis market', where students can meet with individual staff members in speed dates and discuss if their expertise and interest match with the student's topic. Most subjects can be accommodated this way. In some cases, the student is advised to adapt the topic or approach, for a better match with the supervisor's expertise. All students and alumni, whom the panel met during the site visit, were positive about this procedure and satisfied with their supervisor. The panel appreciates that the programme wishes to cater to all students' interests, but on the basis of the theses (see Standard 4) the panel is not entirely convinced that all supervisors can be aware of the most recent literature in a topic that is far removed from their own area of expertise. It might be better to limit the scope of possible thesis topics for students, to guarantee a better match with the staff's expertise.

Didactical approach

With an annual intake of around forty students, the teaching methods can be intensive and build on a strong interaction between staff and students and among students. In line with the programme's core values, students are stimulated to broaden their horizon and to reflect on the social issues related to the tracks: globalisation, inequality and climate change. During each course, students train their academic writing skills and have to turn in written assignments. Most of these are individual papers. In the 'Workshop', students write a group paper as well, and in the interview with the panel they expressed their appreciation for this type of group work. The focus is mainly on writing skills, while in some courses, such as the 'Workshop', oral and presentation skills are trained as well.

The (international) students would welcome a stronger connection to real life and work. They recognise the academic orientation of the programme and would not wish it to be different, but think that the vicinity of relevant political organisations could be taken advantage of, for example by organising field trips or excursions to Brussels and The Hague.

Admission and study progress

Admission to the master's programme is selective. Students must hold a bachelor's degree in political science, international relations or a closely related discipline from a research university, be familiar with basic qualitative and quantitative social science research methodology and have a strong English proficiency. The admissions committee is formally part of the examination committee.

Approximately thirty per cent of the intake consists of graduates of the VU bachelor's programme in political science. They go through the same selection procedure as other candidates. This is in line with the department's policy that, upon graduation from the bachelor programme, students should take stock, look around and take a conscious decision about their future steps, instead of automatically continuing in the same vein. The students recognise and support this policy, and so does the panel.

Currently, the number of international students is more than fifty per cent, leading to a natural diversity in the classroom. As mentioned above (Standard 1), the programme's academic ranking is a strong argument for students to apply at the VU. The distribution among the tracks is uneven: more than half of the students select the track in 'International relations and transnational governance', while 'Global environmental governance' is selected by twenty to thirty per cent, and



'Comparative European politics' by ten to twenty per cent. Students may change their track after the foundational courses in period 1, but it appears that most have made their choice before the start of the programme. The panel advises investigating how a more balanced intake across tracks can be achieved. This might also help in achieving a better match between students' thesis topics and available supervisors.

The intake from a wide variety of (inter)national bachelor's programmes implies that not all students are on the same level playing field at the start of their studies. As mentioned above, the two foundational courses are partly meant to address this issue, but as a consequence, this has a negative effect on their academic level. The panel advises a renewed discussion among staff about the best way to bring all admitted students to the same point. A few possibilities to be considered are stricter admission requirements, providing a list of compulsory reading (to be assessed before the start of the programme) or referring prospective students to the pre-master programme. The pre-master is a 30 EC programme for students from universities of applied sciences or from other disciplines, and is a solid preparation for the master's programme, as was confirmed by the students during the site visit. The pre-master used to be an English-taught programme, but is currently taught in Dutch. The panel was informed that it may again switch to English, which would make it accessible to international students, although the financial costs will probably remain too high a hurdle.

Most students (sixty per cent) are able to complete the programme within one year, although quite a few of these do not submit their master's thesis in June, but use the summer months and turn their thesis in for the re-sit in August. The students describe the workload and level of the programme and most of the courses (for the foundation courses, see above) as intensive and demanding. Many students combine their studies with other activities, such as voluntary or paid work. The information in the critical reflection shows that more than eighty per cent graduates within two years. The panel agrees that there are no major impediments to study progress.

Staff

The information provided shows that the available staff is well-qualified for teaching the master's programme. Almost all of them have a PhD (91 per cent) and a didactical qualification (82 per cent). All involved staff members are active, often internationally renowned, researchers. The research in political science was rated 4.5 out of 5 in the most recent research assessment (2014). The students are very positive about their teachers, their accessibility and willingness to provide detailed and timely feedback. The response to students' questions and input by some teachers is even so extensive and fast, beyond what is formally required, that the panel wonders if such enthusiastic staff members do not raise the students' expectation level too high. Naturally, eagerness to help students is to be applauded, but the panel advises discussing this question in a staff meeting, aiming for a fair balance between teaching and other staff obligations.

Considerations

The curriculum is well-structured, guiding students to an advanced level of knowledge and research skills in a logical sequence of courses. The dual role of the foundational courses in period 1 may have to be reconsidered, since the role of a refresher course interferes with the nature of a strong theoretical course at master's level. Alternative methods to harmonise the diverse academic backgrounds of incoming students should be looked into. The process to define a research topic and find a supervisor starts timely and is well-organised. The design course and 'Workshop' prepare the students for their own research project and most students are able to write their thesis within the designated time frame or a little longer. The many written assignments and the extensive feedback provided by lecturers prepare students for their thesis writing.

The international composition of the student body is to be considered a positive feature, provided better ways can be found to organise a level playing field from the beginning of the programme. The staff is well-qualified substantively, didactically and in research. Staff members are very committed to help students along by providing feedback, even to the extent that the expectation levels may be raised too high. Taken together, the panel finds the positive features to certainly outweigh the slightly

critical comments. The panel concludes, therefore, that the curriculum and staff constitute a coherent teaching-learning environment for the students and enable them to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Conclusion

The panel assesses Standard 2 as 'satisfactory'.

Standard 3: Assessment

The programme has an adequate assessment system in place.

Explanation:

The tests and assessments are valid, reliable and transparent to the students. The programme's examining board safeguards the quality of the interim and final tests administered.

Findings

The programme's assessment policy is based on the assessment policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences. In consultation with the teaching staff, the programme director has drawn up an assessment framework for 2016-2017. Based on feedback from the examination committee, this framework will be adapted for the new academic year. As described above, most master courses are assessed on the basis of a written assignment. The panel agrees this is an appropriate assessment method for an academic master's programme.

Procedures are in place to guarantee the validity and reliability of assessment. Examiners are encouraged to submit the draft version of their exam to at least one colleague for comments (peer review), which is a good step. A survey of the course files 2015-2016, executed by the examination committee, shows, however, that more work is to be done. Learning objectives, a description of the assignment, the exam results and a short reflection on the outcomes were included in almost every course file. Information on the items to be covered and to what level ('toetsmatrijs'), in order to increase validity, and assessment forms or model answers to increase reliability, were missing or incomplete in most files. Peer review was mentioned in almost half of the course files. The panel concludes that criteria for assessment quality have been formulated well enough, but that they are not yet sufficiently internalised and implemented by all staff members.

The assessment method and any weighting of several key components are described in the course catalogue and in more detail in the study guide. The students told the panel that they are provided with extensive feedback and that results are always handed out within the correction period of ten working days. The panel concludes that the transparency of assessment is good.

The examination committee also checked the use of assessment forms for the master's thesis. The theses are assessed on a number of criteria: clarity and relevance of the research problem and research question; clarity of the structure of the thesis; quality of the theoretical framework and research design; quality of the argument and analysis; creativity and originality; plus more formal criteria such as the bibliography, format and correct use of English. There are no formal guidelines on the relative weight of these criteria. The overall grade is motivated in a separate paragraph. Every thesis is assessed by the supervisor and an independent second reader. If these examiners differ two points or more, or if one of them proposes a 'fail', the examination committee appoints a third examiner, whose assessment is binding.

Generally, the assessments forms are complete and provide sufficient feedback to underpin the final grade, but the examination committee's survey shows that the two examiners sometimes differ in their use of assessment scores (a grade on a ten-point scale or words as 'sufficient', 'good' etc.). On the basis of the survey outcomes, the examination committee suggests that it would be more transparent to explain the weight of each criterion.



Having read a sample of theses and assessment forms (see Standard 4), the panel agrees that the assessment criteria themselves are clear and that the overall argumentation for the final grade is generally clear and convincing. Nevertheless, the inconsistencies in the assessment procedure are undesirable. Also, when it is unclear why a grade on a (sub-)criterion is awarded, students do not know how they would have been able to improve to get a higher grade. It is, therefore, necessary to formulate more explicit guidelines on the relative weight of the criteria and to specify what the minimum criteria are, not only for a pass, but also for a grade in the higher ranges (6-7, 7-8 et cetera). The panel is surprised to note that the final grade is the average of the grades of the two examiners, without any dialogue or discussion between the two. The panel believes that such dialogue would contribute to more standardisation and calibration of the assessment criteria, and thus to higher intersubjectivity. This also applies when a third examiner is involved.

The examination committee is responsible for the quality of assessments and exams and, therefore, for the quality of the degree awarded upon graduation. The examination committee is organised at the level of the Faculty. During the site visit, the panel was informed that the examination committee comprises a number of sections. In the central committee all bachelor and master programmes are represented per discipline. This central committee discusses and establishes the general assessment policy. The core committee consists of three members (including the chair), acts as the executive board, handles practical issues, such as fraud, and prepares the decisions of the central committee. The examinations committee is supported by a professional secretariat. Finally, a number of subcommittees is concerned with issues at programme level that do not involve the formulation of (new) policy and require substantive knowledge of the programme and discipline concerned, such as advice on exemption requests.

Most of the work of the examination committee is done at the level of the central committee. A subcommittee consists of two members, one of whom represents the discipline in the central committee. The survey on course files and assessment forms mentioned above was done by the central committee. In addition, each year the subcommittee checks a random sample of a course and a number of master thesis assessments. The outcomes are presented to the central committee. The examination committee forwards the survey outcomes and its conclusions to the programme director, requesting him to take appropriate improvement measures, where necessary. The panel concludes that the infrastructure to guarantee the assessment quality is available, but it was uncertain, at first, whether its effects in practice can be verified sufficiently, because the examination committee's substantive involvement is very limited. The programme management told the panel that each year five or six staff meetings are organised to discuss teaching and assessment, including the standardisation of assessment and the exchange of best practices. After the site visit, the panel received further documentation to illustrate this. The panel advises the programme director to formally report on these improvement activities to the examination committee. This will ensure that the examination committee is fully informed and consequently more 'in control' of the assessment quality.

Considerations

The panel observes that over the past few years serious steps have been undertaken to guarantee the assessment quality, as illustrated by the introduction of an assessment plan and peer review. The assessment methods are in line with the learning objectives and the assignments are of an appropriate level. Students are provided with timely and detailed feedback. The examination committee checks the implementation of the mechanisms to ensure validity and reliability, by an annual survey of course files and the evaluation of a random sample of courses and theses. The survey outcomes indicate that the implementation of the assessment quality mechanisms is not yet complete and that there are inconsistencies in the thesis assessment procedure.

In theory, this is a solid quality system. Initially, it was, however, unclear to the panel whether the examination committee can sufficiently monitor if such critical points are addressed. The composition of the examination committee - at Faculty level rather than at programme level - could lead to a procedural and formal approach. The panel wondered if the examination committee is sufficiently

able to check the implementation of improvement measures. After the site visit, the panel received additional information, which shows that the programme staff indeed discusses the examination committee's advice in regular staff meetings and implements the recommendations. The panel is reassured that the examinations committee actively monitors the assessment quality and that the programme staff acts upon the committee's criticism. The panel advises the programme director to formally report on these improvement activities to the examination committee. This will ensure that the examination committee is fully informed and consequently more 'in control' of the assessment quality. The panel advises adding an external member to the examination committee.

The assessment forms for the master theses are clear, but the intersubjectivity could be further improved by adding a weighting for the various criteria, by specifying minimum criteria for the different ranges of grades, and by including a discussion between the two, or sometimes three, thesis examiners about their proposed grades.

Conclusion

The panel assesses Standard 3 as 'satisfactory'.

Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes

The programme 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.

Findings

The panel read a sample of fifteen theses and their assessment forms and had an interview with a number of alumni during the site visit, to determine if the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

In the master thesis (18 EC, around 15,000 words) the student can demonstrate his/her ability to undertake independent academic research. The learning outcomes of the master thesis reflect all the exit qualifications of the programme. In general, the theses were of the appropriate master level. In two cases, the panel found the level a marginal pass at most. The panel's doubts were clearly shared by the two examiners who had written thorough comments on the various criteria. The panel agrees with the examiners that one of the theses concerns an interesting and relevant topic and contains a more than adequate literature survey, but that the methodology and analysis are too limited. The second thesis concerns a re-sit. The examiners point out, correctly, the weaknesses of the thesis and the underlying research, but apparently the student had made enough progress compared to the original thesis that the examiners felt justified to award a 'pass' grade. The panel only read the second version of the thesis and cannot determine if the progress was indeed substantial enough.

In contrast with these two marginal cases, the panel wishes to emphasise that the quality of some other theses was outstanding. The grades are generally in line with the panel's judgements. In a few cases, the panel would have given a lower grade, but in other cases the panel's grade would have been higher. The literature reviews in a few theses are not complete and do not reflect the most recent academic discussions.

The panel wonders if this is caused by the very high degree of freedom for students to select their research topic and the fact that supervisors cannot be expected to be experts in every field. The panel advises reconsidering the matching procedure of student, topic and supervisor. In most cases the feedback was detailed and based on the assessment criteria. As mentioned above (see on Standard 3) a weighting of the criteria and a specification of the minimum criteria for the different ranges of grades are recommended.

From the interview with two alumni the panel concludes that they look back on the programme with appreciation. They feel well prepared for their future career, either as a PhD candidate or in another



position. The student counsellor, alumni events and individual staff members are all helpful sources of information in career guidance.

Alumni are approached to evaluate the programme in both a national and a VU-specific survey. They are invited to provide information to bachelor and master students at so-called career events or as guest lecturers. In the advisory board, already mentioned in Standard 1, alumni are strongly represented. The panel concludes that the programme values the input and feedback of alumni and uses it in a suitable manner.

Considerations

Based on the sample of theses and the interview with alumni, the panel concludes that graduates achieve the intended learning outcomes. The theses show that students are able to conduct an independent research project with the appropriate methodology. The grading is fair and based on detailed argumentation. The alumni are satisfied with the programme as a preparation for their further career. The panel, therefore, assesses this standard as 'satisfactory'.

Conclusion

The panel assesses Standard 4 as 'satisfactory'.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The intended learning outcomes express clearly what is expected from graduates of the master's programme Political Science. The exit qualifications are in line with the domain-specific framework and the Dublin descriptors at master's level. The core values of the VU could be linked explicitly to the intended learning outcomes. The one-year programme is well structured and guides students to the required advanced knowledge level and research skills. Admission to the programme is selective. More than half of the student body is international. The first two courses are used to bring this diversity of students to the same level of knowledge and skills, but the effect is that the course in International relations is not challenging enough for students with a strong background in this field. The panel suggests looking for other ways to achieve a level playing field and upgrading the foundational course. The staff is well-qualified in research and for teaching. They are easily accessible for students and always willing to answer questions and provide feedback. The curriculum and staff provide a coherent teaching-learning environment. An assessment policy has been developed to guarantee the validity, reliability and transparency of assessments, but has not yet been fully implemented. The examination committee is ultimately responsible for the quality of assessment. The programme staff undertakes sufficient follow up actions on the examination committee's criticisms. The master theses and the alumni feedback prove that graduates achieve the intended learning outcomes. Summing up, the panel assesses all Standards as 'satisfactory'. The final assessment is 'satisfactory'.

Conclusion

The panel assesses the *master's programme Political Science* as 'satisfactory'.

MEASURES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Based on its international experience (Belgium, USA, UK), the panel notes with appreciation that the programmes in Political Science in the Netherlands are comparatively better structured and well-considered than elsewhere. For further improvement of the programme, the panel recommends to link the VU core values (open, personally engaged and responsible) explicitly to the exit qualifications, to clarify not only the knowledge and skills, but also the attitude aimed for in the programme. The dual role of the foundational courses in period 1 should be reconsidered, since the role of a refresher course interferes with the nature of a strong theoretical course at master's level. Alternative methods to harmonise the diverse academic backgrounds of incoming students should be looked into. The panel advises investigating how a more balanced intake across tracks can be achieved. In order to guarantee a better match with the staff's expertise the panel thinks it may be better to limit the scope of possible thesis topics for students. A stronger connection to real life and work could be achieved by taking advantage of the vicinity of relevant political organisations and organising field trips or excursions to Brussels and The Hague. The panel advises discussing in a staff meeting what students can reasonably expect from staff members in terms of (speed of) feedback, aiming for a fair balance between teaching and other staff obligations. The panel advises the programme director to formally report on the activities to improve the assessment quality to the examination committee. The assessment forms for the master theses are clear, but the intersubjectivity could be further improved by adding a weighting for the various criteria, by specifying minimum criteria for the different ranges of grades, and by including a discussion between the two thesis examiners about their proposed grades.



APPENDICES



APPENDIX 1: CURRICULA VITAE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

Dr. C. (Christien) van den Anker is Associate Professor of Politics and International Relations at the Faculty of Health & Applied Sciences at the University of the West of England in Bristol (UK) since 2006. Between 2001-20016, she worked as a Lecturer in Global Ethics and as Deputy Director at the Centre for Global Ethics at the University of Birmingham, UK. Christien is an internationally established specialist in human rights and contemporary slavery. In her work, she refocused the narrow human trafficking debate to encompass all forms of slavery, clarified the migration-slavery nexus, and pioneered partnerships working for research-based advocacy.

Prof. dr. M. (Marijke) Breuning [chair] is Professor of Political Science at the University of North Texas, USA. She specialises in foreign policy decision making, with a specific interest in development cooperation and small states, as well as the politics of international children's rights (and especially intercountry adoption), women/gender and politics, and the sociology of the profession. Marijke has published numerous refereed journal articles and book chapters, as well as three books. She has served as an editor of the *American Political Science Review* (2012-2016), and previously served as a member of the inaugural editorial team of *Foreign Policy Analysis*, a journal of the *International Studies Association*, an editor of the *Journal of Political Science Education*, and book review editor of *International Politics*. She serves – or has served – on several editorial boards and in various leadership positions in the International Studies Association and American Political Science Association.

K.J.M. (Kaisa) de Bel started her studies in Political Science in 2013 at Leiden University, specialising in International Relations. In 2015, she decided to read Law next to her Political Science studies at the same university. Kaisa is an active member of various committees of study association SPIL, and was in 2014-2015 a member of the board. Currently, she is a member of the advisory board of SPIL. Between 2014-2016, she offered secondary school pupils advice on studying Political Science.

Prof. dr. D. (Dirk) De Bièvre is Associate Professor of International Politics and International Political Economy at the University of Antwerp, Belgium. He studied in Leuven (Belgium), Louvain-la-Neuve (Belgium), Konstanz (Germany), and Firenze (Italy), where he obtained his PhD at the European University Institute (EUI) in 2002. He specialises in European trade policy, the World Trade Organisation, and interest group mobilisation. Before joining the Antwerp Faculty in 2006, Dirk was a post-doctoral researcher at the Max Planck Institute for Research on Collective Goods in Bonn (Germany), and an EU and Volkswagen Foundation research fellow at the Mannheim Centre for European Social Research (MZES). He has taught at the universities of Brussels, Mannheim, Dresden, Leuven, and was a visiting fellow at the Department of Government of the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) during the academic year 2014-15.

Prof. dr. F. (Ferdinand) De Ville is Associate Professor at the Centre for EU Studies at Ghent University, Belgium. He received a master degree (2007) and a PhD (2011) in Political Science at Ghent University. In his dissertation he analysed the relationship between the international trade regime and European social, environmental and consumer protection. Ferdi has also done policy advisory research on European trade policy for the Flemish government.

Dr. R. (Renske) Doorenspleet is Associate Professor at the University of Warwick, UK. She is a graduate of the University of Leiden; after a postdoctoral fellowship at Harvard University (USA) in 2002/2003, she started a research project on democracy in divided countries, funded by NWO. She has taught courses on comparative politics, democratisation and development, statistics and research methods. During the academic year 2011-2012, she got an academic fellowship and grant of the Institute for Advanced Teaching and Learning, in order to innovate teaching in politics, combining film and theatre projects with academic research and teaching around the theme of



democracy. During 2012-2014, Renske was the political science coordinator of Warwick's interdisciplinary Q-step Centre, and developed new politics degrees offering quantitative social science training. Her research focuses on democratic transitions and consolidation in comparative perspective. Her articles have been published in academic journals such as *World Politics*, *Democratization*, *Acta Politica*, *the International Political Science Review*, *Ethnopolitics*, *Government and Opposition* and *the European Journal of Political Research*. She is also the author of *Democratic Transitions* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2005), co-editor of *One-Party Dominance in African Democracies* (Lynne Rienner, 2013) and of *Political Parties, Party Systems and Democracy in Africa* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014). At the moment, she is working on a new book, which will explore the value of democracy in comparative perspective (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

Prof. dr. P. (Peter) Vermeersch is Professor of Politics at the KU Leuven, Belgium. He is currently director of the LINES Institute (Leuven International and European Studies) and affiliated as senior researcher with the Centre for Research on Peace and Development – both at KU Leuven. In 2007 and 2008, he was a visiting scholar at the Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies, Harvard University. Peter is a graduate of the University of Leuven, but he also studied, lived and conducted research in Central Europe and the Balkans. His research focuses on minorities and migration, democratisation, reconciliation and nationalism. His articles have appeared in academic journals such as *The European Journal of Sociology*, *Europe-Asia Studies*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, *The Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, and *East European Politics and Societies*. Peter is also the author and editor of several academic books. In addition, he is an associate editor of *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Ethnicity and Nationalism* and a board member of PEN Flanders, and he serves on the editorial board of *Karakter*, a Dutch-language journal that publishes essays about all aspects of science. In 2011 and 2012 Peter Vermeersch was part of the organising team of the G1000, a largescale deliberative citizens' initiative held in Belgium.

APPENDIX 2: DOMAIN-SPECIFIC FRAMEWORK OF REFERENCE

Note: As formulated on 22-01-2016 by LOOP (Landelijk Overleg Opleidingen Politicologie) the political science cluster in the framework of re-accreditation of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, University of Amsterdam, Radboud University Nijmegen and Leiden University. This text is a translation.

The Political Science degree programme provides training in the independent practise of political science and the professional application of the scientific knowledge and skills acquired in the programme. The political scientist is specialised in identifying and analysing conflicts between and collective decision-making processes by groups and organisations, tangible and intangible interests, institutions and processes of power that influence these conflicts and decision-making, and the resulting societal effects. The political scientist is able, by virtue of their specialisation, to analyse the occurrence, causes and effects of contemporary societal trends such as globalisation and regionalisation, technological developments such as the ICT revolution and knowledge society, and the functions of diversity.

In line with agreements made at the European level with regard to political science (European Conference of National Political Science Associations, 1 September 2003) and with descriptions of the field of study worldwide, the following components of Political Science are regarded as fundamental to an effectual practise of the profession and should in any case be included in the course of study: political theory/history of political ideas/political philosophy, research methods (qualitative and quantitative), the national and EU political system, comparative political science, and international relations. These European agreements pertain to Bachelor's programmes. The emphasis placed on other components, as follows, may vary between institutions: management science and policy analysis, conflict studies, political decision-making, political economics, political conduct, political history, political sociology, and political psychology. Most Master's programmes do not cover the entire spectrum of political science, and instead focus on specific facets.

The Bachelor's programme trains students to practise a wide range of professions in the policy environment as well as to pursue advanced study that requires greater autonomy; the Master's in Political Science refines and deepens knowledge and skills, including research skills, in the field of political science and provides training for the independent practise of professions at the academic level. The programmes do not aim to train for any single specific professional profile apart from that of scientific researcher. Rather, the needs of the modern knowledge society call for broad professional expertise with sufficient mobility and flexibility to work in public, non-profit and hybrid organisations and the private sector alike. The current requirements on a sound academic degree programme that trains for work in the knowledge society furthermore entails that a Political Science programme educates students to be open to and possess an understanding of other disciplines, to be capable of communicating specialist political scientific knowledge to non-specialist audiences in a coherent manner, to be able to integrate a mass of information in a targeted and effective manner, to apply their knowledge to formulate decisions (also in collective contexts), to be active and critical participants in public debates on political scientific problems, and to keep up with the latest knowledge independently.

On the basis of the above description and the Dublin descriptors, the following distinctions can be made between the competences demonstrated by Bachelor's graduates of Political Science and Master's graduates of Political Science:

Dublin Descriptors	Bachelor's	Master's
Knowledge and understanding in the field of study	Sufficient knowledge of recent developments in the field of study to formulate scientifically founded judgements.	Capacity to integrate knowledge and handle complex subject matter.
		Insight into the specific position that political science occupies relative to other fields of scientific study.
Applying knowledge and understanding	Ability to incorporate knowledge and to apply knowledge to phenomena addressed during the Bachelor's study	Ability to incorporate knowledge from disciplines relevant to political science and apply it to the analysis of political scientific problems, as well as to apply knowledge to phenomena that were not explicitly addressed during the course of study.
	Ability to recognise and analyse societal problems based on an understanding of political science	Ability to recognise and analyse complex societal problems and to evaluate solutions based on an understanding of political science.
	Competences to devise and sustain arguments in general and solve problems within the field of study.	Ability to contribute original ideas to solve societal problems.
Research skills	Knowledge of the empirical cycle of research through supervised participation in all phases of scientific research.	Ability to independently formulate, carry out and report on scientific research.
Formulating judgements and reflecting on the field of study and societal phenomena	Ability to evaluate the structure and outcomes of empirical scientific research.	Ability to evaluate the structure and outcomes of empirical scientific research, including its methodological and methodical-technical aspects.
	Sufficient knowledge of normative theories to recognise the value loading of both scientific theories and policy intentions	In-depth knowledge of normative theories in order to take a substantiated position in debates on the value loading of both scientific theories and policy intentions.
Communication skills	Ability to communicate information, ideas and solutions.	Ability to communicate scientific knowledge, including the structure of research and the rationale and considerations underpinning it clearly and unambiguously. Participation in the scientific and public debate.

APPENDIX 3: INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Master's programme Political Science

After completing the Master's programme in Political Science, students will be able to:

1. Critically examine political issues at a high level of conceptual abstraction as well as translate them into terms understandable by a wider public;
2. Summarise, evaluate, and synthesise research results from political science and related fields and assess the policy relevance of these results;
3. Carry out in-depth academic theoretical and empirical research on a topic within the areas of political systems, public policies or international relations.

In addition, with regard to the field that is covered by their respective specialisation track (International Relations & Transnational Governance; Comparative European Politics; Global Environmental Governance, or Policy & Politics), students will:

4. Have a thorough knowledge of the key issues and main theories;
5. Have an advanced understanding of a number of selected topics;
6. Have a thorough understanding of how the field is affected by the process of transnationalisation;
7. Produce a research-based thesis that shows intellectual rigour and proficiency in the field.



APPENDIX 4: OVERVIEW OF THE CURRICULUM

Master's Programme in Political Science 2016-2017

Track Comparative European Politics						
	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6
Cohort 2016	Theories and Approaches in International Relations (S_TAIR)	Selected Issues: European Politics and Policymaking (S_SIEPP)	Political and Policy Research: Philosophy and Design (S_PPRPD)	Work shop in Comparative Policy and Politics (S_WCPP) 12 EC	Master's Thesis in Political Science (S_MTPs)	18 EC
	Theories and Approaches in Comparative European Politics (S_TACEP)	Selected Issues: Transnational Political Economy (S_SITPE) <i>or</i> Selected Issues: Global Environmental Governance (S_SIGEG) <i>or</i> Selected Issues: International Security (S_SIIS)				

All courses are 6 EC, unless the schedule above states otherwise.

Period 1 5-9-2016 until 28-10-2016

Period 2 31-10-2016 until 23-12-2016

Period 3 9-1-2017 until 3-2-2017

Period 4 6-2-2017 until 31-3-2017

Period 5 3-4-2017 until 2-6-2017

Period 6 6-6-2017 until 30-6-2017

Level 400

Level 500

Level 600



Track International Relations and Transnational Governance

	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6
Cohort 2016	Theories and Approaches in International Relations (<i>S_TAIR</i>)	Selected Issues: Transnational Political Economy (<i>S_SITPE</i>)	Political and Policy Research: Philosophy and Design (<i>S_PPRPD</i>)	Workshop in International Relations (<i>S_WIR</i>)	Master's Thesis in Political Science (<i>S_MTps</i>)	18 EC
	Theories and Approaches in Comparative European Politics (<i>S_TACEP</i>)	Selected Issues: European Politics and Policymaking (<i>S_SIEPP</i>) <i>or</i> Selected Issues: Global Environmental Governance (<i>S_SIGEG</i>) <i>or</i> Selected Issues: International Security (<i>S_SIIS</i>)		12 EC		

All courses are 6 EC, unless the schedule above states otherwise.

Period 1 5-9-2016 until 28-10-2016

Period 2 31-10-2016 until 23-12-2016

Period 3 9-1-2017 until 3-2-2017

Period 4 6-2-2017 until 31-3-2017

Period 5 3-4-2017 until 2-6-2017

Period 6 6-6-2017 until 30-6-2017

Level 400

Level 500

Level 600



Track Global Environmental Governance

	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6
Cohort 2016	Theories and Approaches in International Relations (<i>S_TAIR</i>)	Selected Issues: Global Environmental Governance (<i>S_SIGEG</i>)	Political and Policy Research: Philosophy and Design (<i>S_PPRPD</i>)	Workshop in Global Environmental Governance (<i>S_WGEG</i>)	Master's Thesis in Political Science (<i>S_MTps</i>)	18 EC
	Theories and Approaches in Comparative European Politics (<i>S_TACEP</i>)	Selected Issues: Transnational Political Economy (<i>S_SITPE</i>) Or Selected Issues: European Politics and Policymaking (<i>S_SIEPP</i>) or Selected Issues: International Security (<i>S_SIIS</i>)				

All courses are 6 EC, unless the schedule above states otherwise.

Period 1 5-9-2016 until 28-10-2016

Period 2 31-10-2016 until 23-12-2016

Period 3 9-1-2017 until 3-2-2017

Period 4 6-2-2017 until 31-3-2017

Period 5 3-4-2017 until 2-6-2017

Period 6 6-6-2017 until 30-6-2017

Level 400

Level 500

Level 600



Track Policy and Politics

	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6
Cohort 2016	Theories of Governance (<i>S_TG</i>)	Selected Issues: European Politics and Policymaking (<i>S_SIEPP</i>)	Political and Policy Research: Philosophy and Design (<i>S_PPRPD</i>)	Workshop in Comparative Policy and Politics (<i>S_WCPP</i>)	Master's Thesis in Political Science (<i>S_MTPs</i>)	18 EC
	Theories and Approaches in Comparative European Politics (<i>S_TACEP</i>)	International Governance (<i>S_IG</i>) <i>or</i> Governance of Security and Policing (<i>S_GSP</i>)				

All courses are 6 EC, unless the schedule above states otherwise.

Period 1 5-9-2016 until 28-10-2016

Period 2 31-10-2016 until 23-12-2016

Period 3 9-1-2017 until 3-2-2017

Period 4 6-2-2017 until 31-3-2017

Period 5 3-4-2017 until 2-6-2017

Period 6 6-6-2017 until 30-6-2017

Level 400

Level 500

Level 600

APPENDIX 5: PROGRAMME OF THE SITE VISIT

20 april		
De Boelelaan 1105, ruimte 1A-58		
8.30	8.45	Aankomst panel
8.45	9.15	Vorbereidend overleg en inzien documenten
9.15	10.15	Gesprek met management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - dr. E.B. (Bastiaan) van Apeldoorn, Opleidingsdirecteur Politicologie en Political Science - B. (Biejan) Poor Toulabi, LLM, Opleidingscoördinator Politicologie en Political Science - prof. dr. J. (Jacqueline) van Stekelenburg, Portefeuillehouder Onderwijs Faculteit der Sociale Wetenschappen
10.15	10.30	Overleg panel
10.30	10.45	Pauze
10.45	11.30	Gesprek met studenten BSc <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lianne Gijben, 1ste jaars - Suzan Balak, 1ste jaars - Sam Muller, 2e jaars - Carlo de Coq, 3e jaars - Charlotte Kruidenberg, 3e jaars - Boudewijn Bisschop, 3e jaars
11.30	11.45	Overleg panel
11.45	12.30	Gesprek met docenten BSc <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - T.J. (Thijs) Bogers, MA, Docent - dr. N. (Naná) de Graaff, Universitair docent - dr. J.J. (Jaap) Woldendorp, Universitair docent - dr. D.B.D. (Duco) Bannink, Universitair hoofddocent - dr. J.C. (Jasper) Muis, Universitair docent - drs. B. (Boris) Slijper, Docent
12.30	13.15	Lunch (=pauze)
13.15	14.00	Overleg panel
14.00	14.45	Gesprek met studenten MSc <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ani Antonjan - Max Boiten - Victoria Crocker - Rick van Lindenberg - Jesper Normann - Simone Tijn A Soe - Mark Zonnenberg
14.45	15.00	Overleg panel
15.00	15.15	Pauze
15.15	16.00	Gesprek met docenten MSc <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - dr. N. (Naná) de Graaff, Universitair docent - prof. dr. P. (Philipp) Pattberg, Hoogleraar - dr. M. (Marijn) Hoijsink, Universitair docent - dr. P. (Patrick) Overeem, Universitair docent - prof. dr. B.J.J. (Ben) Crum, Hoogleraar - dr. P. (Paul) Pennings, Universitair hoofddocent
16.00	16.15	Overleg panel
16.15	16.45	Gesprek met Opleidingscommissies (OLC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - dr. N. (Naná) de Graaff, Voorzitter en docentlid opleidingscommissies Politicologie en Political Science

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demi Leakat, Studentlid opleidingscommissie Politicologie - 2e jaars - Koen van Dijk, Studentlid opleidingscommissie Politicologie - 2e jaars - Ibtissam Benmoussa, Studentlid opleidingscommissie Politicologie - 3e jaars - Koen Voors, Studentlid opleidingscommissie Political Science
16.45	17.00	Pauze
17.00	17.45	Alumni <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mark Zonnenberg, Bachelor - Joep Moolhuizen, Bachelor - Anneroos Hardeveld, Master - Emilie Verbunt, Master
17.45	18.15	Korte nabespreking dag 1/benoemen aandachtspunten dag 2
19.15	21.30	Diner panel

21 april

De Boelelaan 1105, ruimte Forumzaal 3

8.30	8.45	Aankomst panel
8.45	9.30	Inzien documenten, voorbereiding gesprekken, inloopsprekkuur
9.30	10.15	Gesprek met Examencommissies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mr. dr. A.J.G.M. (André) van Montfort, Voorzitter examencommissie - dr. P. (Paul) Pennings, Lid decentrale subcommissie - drs. J.N. (Jeannette) Wouters, Ambtelijk secretaris examencommissie
10.15	10.30	Overleg panel
10.30	11.15	Gesprek met dr. E.B. (Bastiaan) van Apeldoorn, Opleidingsdirecteur Politicologie en Political Science
11.15	11.30	Overleg panel
11.30	12.30	Eindgesprek management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - dr. E.B. (Bastiaan) van Apeldoorn, Opleidingsdirecteur Politicologie en Political Science - B. (Biejan) Poor Toulabi, LLM, Opleidingscoördinator Politicologie en Political Science - prof. dr. K.I. (Karin) van Oudenhoven - van der Zee, Decaan Faculteit der Sociale Wetenschappen - dr. G.G. (Gerhard) van de Bunt, Onderwijsdirecteur Faculteit der Sociale Wetenschappen - prof. dr. W. (Wolfgang) Wagner, hoofd afdeling Bestuurswetenschap en Politicologie
12.30	13.00	Lunch (=pauze)
13.00	15.30	Opstellen voorlopige bevindingen
15.30	15.45	Mondelinge rapportage voorlopige bevindingen

APPENDIX 6: THESES AND DOCUMENTS STUDIED BY THE PANEL

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

1672541	1815741	1943316
2122472	2506774	2534332
2536603	2540335	2541735
2561249	2583092	2581244
2573378	2563412	2524017

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):

- Course materials of the following courses:
 - o Theories and Approaches in International Relations
 - o Theories and Approaches in Comparative European Politics
 - o Theories of Governance
 - o Political and Policy Research: Philosophy and Design
- Writing Guide Political Science
- Jaarverslag Examencommissie 2015-2016
- Verslag subcommissie Politicologie van de examencommissie betreffende steekproefsgewijze check op theses en toetsen
- Verslag check cursusedossiers en beoordelingsformulieren BSc Politicologie en MSc Political Science 2015-2016
- Jaarverslag Opleidingscommissie Politicologie 2015-2016
- Verslag commissie Diversiteit
- Uitnodiging en programma training gespreksvaardigheden/diversiteitssensitiviteit voor tutoeren

After the site visit, the panel received additional information:

- Brief faculteitsbestuur en opleidingscoördinator d.d. 16 mei 2017 met bijlagen
 - o Bijlage 1: Notulen Onderwijsstafvergadering Politicologie – Political Science, d.d. 09 maart 2016
 - o Bijlage 2: Notulen Onderwijsstafvergadering Politicologie – Political Science, d.d. 24 oktober 2016
 - o Bijlage 3: Vergelijking beoordeling cursusedossiers examencommissie P1-3 2015-2016 en 2016-2017

