

## Besluit **Besluit strekkende tot het verlenen van accreditatie aan de opleiding wo-master Ecology van de Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam**

### Gegevens

<b>datum</b>	Naam instelling	:	Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
29 juli 2016	Naam opleiding	:	wo-master Ecology (120 EC)
<b>Onderwerp</b>	Datum aanvraag	:	23 maart 2016
Besluit accreditatie	Graad opleiding	:	Master of Science
wo-master	Variant opleiding	:	voltijd
Ecology van de	Afstudeerrichtingen:	:	Ecology and Evolution, Environmental Chemistry and Toxicology
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam	Locatie opleiding	:	Amsterdam
(004597)	Datum goedkeuren	:	
<b>uw kenmerk</b>	panel	:	21 september 2015
CvB/JWB/2016/222	Datum locatiebezoeken	:	17 en 18 december 2015
<b>ons kenmerk</b>	Datum visitatierapport	:	2 maart 2016
NVAO/20161740/LF	Instellingstoets kwaliteitszorg:	:	positief besluit van 14 juni 2016
<b>bijlagen</b>			
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### Beoordelingskader

Beoordelingskader voor de beperkte opleidingsbeoordeling van de NVAO (Stcrt. 2014, nr 36791).

### Bevindingen

De NVAO stelt vast dat in het visitatierapport deugdelijk en kenbaar is gemotiveerd op welke gronden het panel de kwaliteit van de opleiding goed heeft bevonden.

### Advies van het visitatiepanel

Samenvatting bevindingen en overwegingen van het panel.

The master's programme Ecology aims at providing students with the knowledge, skills and insights required to operate as an independent professional in the field of Ecology. Students become qualified for a PhD position or another research-related function in a fundamental or applied ecological field. Students should develop a critical and ingrained scientific attitude and an awareness of the ethical and societal aspects of ecology and environmental biology.

The programme offers an Ecology & Evolution (E&E) track and an Environmental Chemistry and Toxicology (ECT) track. Due to lack of students choosing this second specialization, this latter track will be terminated after graduation of the 2015-2016 cohort. According to the

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The master's programme in Ecology is a two-year-programme that consists of 120 EC. Students compose their individual study path. Each track consists of obligatory courses, elective courses, two research projects and a literature thesis. Both tracks share two core courses: Scientific writing in English and Experimental design and Analysis (addressing advanced statistics).

The panel has established that the curricula of the two research tracks offer students adequate opportunities for academic specialisation. Courses provide students with state-of-the-art knowledge and research skills in the field of ecology. Students also develop their academic skills in scientific writing and advanced statistics, which prepares them well for their research projects. The panel is convinced that students could benefit from a course where advanced research topics in the broader field of biology are addressed. Acting as temporary members of the research group, students are well guided while developing themselves as independent researcher. The courses and research projects take place in very good research environments. The panel concludes that the programme does not offer *clearly defined opportunities to students for orientation on applied sciences and ecology-related careers outside academia*, and urges the programme to develop a solid vision in this matter, in concert with the colleagues of the UvA.

The programme uses a variety of teaching methods: lectures, symposia, field work, group assignments and individual research projects. According to the panel, these are adequate didactic practices for a master's programme in ecology. The panel considers the *symposium-simulation in the course 'Ecotoxicology and Water' of the ECT-track a best practice of academic skills training*.

The panel established that the programme is feasible but demands good planning skills from students. They are well-supported in this by the programme coordinator, but until now this has not resulted in favourable success rates. The programme is delivered by qualified and highly motivated staff members. According to the panel the student-staff ratio is good. Students have access to adequate study and research facilities.

The panel concludes that the master's programme has an adequate assessment system in place. It considers that the programme uses various types of assessments that match the respective learning objectives of the different programme components.

The panel concludes that the Examination Board has established adequate procedures that safeguard the quality of testing and assessment. Furthermore, the assessments of literature theses and research projects are well organized. The panel also concludes that proper measures have been taken to raise awareness about the quality of assessment among examiners and to support them with the implementation of the assessment system. After studying a sample of final reports, the panel establishes that students realise the intended learning outcomes of the master's programmes in Ecology. The final reports show an adequate and high academic level, representative of a (very) good research environment

Pagina 3 van 5 and not rarely resulting in publication in academic peer-reviewed journals. Based on the performance of alumni the panel concludes that the programme prepares students well for an academic position on the labour market.

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

Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes	satisfactory
Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment	good
Standard 3: Assessment	good
Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes	good
General conclusion	<b>good</b>

#### **Besluit**

Ingevolge het bepaalde in artikel 5a.10, derde lid, van de WHW heeft de NVAO het college van bestuur van de Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam te Amsterdam in de gelegenheid gesteld zijn zienswijze op het voornemen tot besluit van 27 juni 2016 naar voren te brengen. Bij e-mail van 14 juli 2016 heeft de instelling laten weten geen opmerkingen te hebben.

De NVAO besluit accreditatie te verlenen aan de wo-master Ecology (120 EC; variant: voltijd; locatie: Amsterdam) van de Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam te Amsterdam. De opleiding kent de volgende afstudeerrichtingen: Ecology and Evolution, en Environmental Chemistry and Toxicology. De NVAO beoordeelt de kwaliteit van de opleiding als goed.

Dit besluit treedt in werking op 29 juli 2016 en is van kracht tot en met 28 juli 2022.

Den Haag, 29 juli 2016

De NVAO  
Voor deze:



Dr. A.H. Flierman  
(voorzitter)

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

Onderwerp	Standaard	Beoordeling door het panel
<b>1. Beoogde eindkwalificaties</b>	De beoogde eindkwalificaties van de opleiding zijn wat betreft inhoud, niveau en oriëntatie geconcretiseerd en voldoen aan internationale eisen.	<b>Voldoende</b>
<b>2. Onderwijsleeromgeving</b>	Het programma, het personeel en de opleidings specifieke voorzieningen maken het voor de instromende studenten mogelijk de beoogde eindkwalificaties te realiseren.	<b>Goed</b>
<b>3. Toetsing</b>	De opleiding beschikt over een adequaat systeem van toetsing.	<b>Goed</b>
<b>4. Gerealiseerde eindkwalificaties</b>	De opleiding toont aan dat de beoogde eindkwalificaties worden gerealiseerd.	<b>Goed</b>
<b>Eindoordeel</b>		<b>Goed</b>

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

Pagina 5 van 5 **Bijlage 2: panelsamenstelling**

- prof.dr. Jan Kijne (voorzitter), professor emeritus of BioScience, Leiden University;
- prof.dr. Ton Bisseling (vicevoorzitter), professor of Molecular Biology, Wageningen University;
- prof.dr. Jos Verhoeven (lid), professor emeritus of Landscape Ecology, Utrecht University;
- dr. Andries ter Maat (lid), Research Scientist, Max Planck Institute for Ornithology;
- Jeffrey Verhoeff BSc (student-lid), master's student Biology and Animal Sciences, Wageningen University.

Het panel werd ondersteund door drs. José van Zwieten, secretaris (gecertificeerd).