DUAL MASTER'S PROGRAMME HERITAGE STUDIES (120 EC)

CURATING ART AND CULTURES

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT AMSTERDAM

CONTENTS

This report was finalised on 3 April 2020.

REPORT ON THE DUAL MASTER'S PROGRAMME HERITAGE STUDIES (120 EC) OF VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT AMSTERDAM

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

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE PROGRAMME

Master's programme Curating Arts and Cultures

Name of the programme: Heritage Studies: Curating Art and Cultures
(Erfgoedstudies)CROHO number: 60836
Level of the programme: master's
Orientation of the programme: academic
Number of credits: 120 EC
Specializations or tracks: -
Location(s): Amsterdam
Mode(s) of study: dual
Language of instruction: English
Submission deadline NVAO: 01/05/2020

The visit of the assessment panel Arts and Culture to the Faculty of Humanities of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam took place from 11 until 13 December.

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE INSTITUTION

Name of the institution: Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
Status of the institution: publicly funded institution
Result institutional quality assurance assessment: positive

COMPOSITION OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

The NVAO has approved the composition of the panel on 28 January 2019. The panel that assessed the master's programme Curating Arts and Culture consisted of:
- Prof. dr. J. (Jan) Baetens, professor in Literary Theory and Cultural Studies at the KU Leuven (Belgium) [chair];
- Dr. J. (Jeroen) Boomgaard, lecturer in Art & Public Space at Gerrit Rietveld;
- Dr. M.T.A. (Marie-Thérèse) van Thoor, Associate professor of Heritage & Cultural Values in the section Heritage & Architecture at the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment of TU Delft;
- Prof. dr. J.B.H. (Johan) de Haan, Head Curator at Museum Paleis Het Loo, independent researcher and professor by special appointment Toegepaste Kunsten en Kunstnijverheid at Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen;
- Prof. dr. J. (Joost) Raessens, professor Media Theory at University of Utrecht;
- M (Mirjam) Deckers BA, research master student Arts & Culture at the University of Groningen [student member].

The panel was supported by dr. Fiona Schouten and drs. R.L. (Renate) Prenen, who acted as secretaries.

WORKING METHOD OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

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

On behalf of the participating universities, quality assurance agency QANU was responsible for logistical support, panel guidance and the production of the reports. Dr. Fiona Schouten was project manager for QANU. Dr. Fiona Schouten, Petra van den Hoorn MSc, dr. Jesseka Batteau, drs. Renate Prenen, drs. Erik van der Spek, Marcella van Schie MA and drs. Lieke Ravestein MBA acted as secretaries in the cluster assessment.

Panel members
The members of the assessment panel were selected based on their expertise, availability and independence. The panel consisted of the following members:
leden:
- Prof. dr. J. (Jan) Baetens [chair]
- Prof. dr. A. (Annick) Schramme [chair]
- Prof. dr. P.B.M. (Paul) van den Akker
- Dr. J. (Jeroen) Boomgaard
- Prof. dr. R.L. (Rosemarie) Buikema
- Prof. dr. A.S. (Ann-Sophie) Lehmann
- Prof. dr. K. (Karel) Vanhaesebrouck
- Prof. dr. H.J.G. (Henri) Beunders
- Em. prof. dr. S.L. (Sible) de Blaauw
- Drs. A.N. (Lex) ter Braak
- Em. prof. dr. C.A. (Claudine) Chavannes-Mazel
- Prof. dr. P.A.J.M. (Peter-Arno) Coppen
- Drs. P.H.G.J. (Patrick) Cramers
- Prof. dr. M. (Mark) Delaere
- Prof. dr. M. (Mark) Deuze
- Prof. dr. A. (Alexander) Dhoest
- Drs. M.J. (Marie-Jose) Eijkemans
- Em. prof. dr. R.E.O. (Rudi) Ekkart
- Prof. dr. phil. W.D. (Wolf-Dieter) Ernst
- Prof. dr. J.B.H. (Johan) de Haan
- Prof. dr. K. (Koenraad) Jonckheere
- Prof. dr. S. (Susan) Legene
- Prof. dr. P. (Philippe) Meers
- Drs. Y.H.M. (Yoeri) Meessen
- Prof. dr. J. (Joost) Raessens
- Prof. dr. M. (Margriet) Schavemaker
- Drs. E.A.M. (Liesbeth) Schöningh
- Prof. dr. C.B. (Cas) Smithuijsen
- Dr. M.T.A. (Marie-Thérèse) van Thoor
- Prof. dr. E. (Lies) Wesseling
- Dr. M (Marlous) Willemsen
- M (Mirjam) Deckers BA [student member]
- S.W.J. (Stef) van Ool BA [student member]
- V.L. (Vivian) van Slooten MA [student member]
- E.M. (Eeke) van der Wal MA [student member]
- Prof. dr. A. (Ann) Rigney [referent University of Amsterdam]

- Em. prof. dr. C. (Carel) Jansen [referent Taal- en cultuurstudies, Utrecht University]
- Prof. dr. E.J. (Liesbeth) Korthals Altes [referent Taal- en cultuurstudies, Utrecht University]
- Dr. J.W. (Jan Willem) Honig [referent Taal- en cultuurstudies, Utrecht University]
- Prof. dr. D. (Dominiek) Sandra [referent Taal- en cultuurstudies, Utrecht University]
- Dr. K.E. (Kim) Knibbe [referent Taal- en cultuurstudies, Utrecht University]

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

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

Before the site visit to the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, QANU received the self-evaluation reports of the programmes and sent these to the panel. A thesis selection was made by the panel's chair and the project manager. The selection existed of 15 theses and their assessment forms for each programme, based on a provided list of graduates between April 2014 and September 2019. A variety of topics and tracks and a diversity of examiners were included in the selection. The project manager and panel chair assured that the distribution of grades in the selection matched the distribution of grades of all available theses.

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

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

Site visit
The site visit to the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam took place from 11 until 13 of December. Before and during the site visit, the panel studied the additional documents provided by the programmes. An overview of these materials can be found in Appendix 4. The panel conducted interviews with representatives of the programmes: students and staff members, the programme management, alumni and representatives of the Board of Examiners. It also offered students and staff members an opportunity for confidential discussion during a consultation hour. No requests for private consultation were received.

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

Consistency and calibration
In order to assure the consistency of assessment within the cluster, various measures were taken:
1. The panel composition ensured regular attendance of (key) panel members, including the chair;
2. The manager was present at the panel discussion leading to the preliminary findings at all site visits.

Report
After the site visit, the secretary wrote a draft report based on the panel's findings and submitted it to the project manager for peer assessment. Subsequently, the secretary sent the report to the panel. After processing the panel members' feedback, the project manager sent the draft report to the Faculty in order to have it checked for factual irregularities. The project manager discussed the

ensuing comments with the panel's chair and changes were implemented accordingly. The report was then finalised and sent to the Faculty of Humanities and University Board.

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

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

Meets the standard
The programme meets the generic quality standard.

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

Does not meet the standard
The programme does not meet the generic quality standard.

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

Positive
The programme meets all the standards.

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

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

SUMMARY JUDGEMENT

Intended learning outcomes
Curating Art and Cultures is designed to train the curators of the future. It aims to develop students both academically and professionally, combining interdisciplinary knowledge with practical skills and insights into the responsibilities of the curator. The programme has a one-year professional component, the internship, and explicitly opts for the high art segment of the curatorial world by collaborating with larger institutions. The panel considers CAC's profile to be unique in the Netherlands and applauds the programme's clear connection with and view of the needs of the professional field. It recommends formalising the programme's strong professional connection by involving alumni and professionals in an advisory board. It also recommends adapting external communication in order to highlight its accessibility for non-Dutch students. The panel concludes that the intended learning outcomes match the programme's academic as well as professional orientation, reflect the Dublin descriptors for master's programmes and convey CAC's unique profile. It is pleased with the recent revision of the programme-specific ILOs, which has resulted in concise and coherent learning outcomes.

Teaching-learning environment
The panel praises the design and setup of CAC. It is impressed with the way academic and professional approaches are juxtaposed in the programme, allowing cross-fertilisation between the two perspectives. It is pleased that while half of the programme is made up of individual internships, the programme has measures in place to ensure that students have comparable experiences and realise the intended learning outcomes. It finds that the content and materials of the courses are topical, relevant and of a clearly academic level. It praises the programme for increasing the theoretical components in the core modules as well as the amount of attention paid to academic skills, while retaining the professional orientation of the courses. It applauds the variety in teaching methods.

The panel concludes that the programme is feasible. This is ensured by a careful selection process, extensive internship and thesis guidance, clear protocols and information concerning the thesis and internship, and a sense of community, not only among the students and staff, but also among the professionals involved in CAC and the programme's alumni. Students can experience issues when lessons or activities are scheduled in such a way that they lack preparation time, but the panel finds that feasibility is not threatened as long as the programme management ensures this remains the exception rather than the rule. The return to the thesis after the internship can cause delays, but the programme is planning adequate measures to address this issue. The panel is pleased that students are offered the opportunity to shape their own learning trajectory: they can choose from a sufficient number of electives, and the programme takes into account their interests and preferences when matching them with an internship institution. The panel advises the programme to look into ways to deal with scheduling issues stemming from the UvA's requirement to sign up early for electives, as a result of which most students opt for VU electives.

Recently, CAC has amplified the criteria for admission, so that the programme is now open to students with varying backgrounds. As a result, it has admitted students with BA degrees in anthropology, history, media studies, or linguistics. The panel learned that the perceived effects seem positive. It is pleased with this development and hopes that the more diverse alumni will also be an enrichment to the professional field.

CAC changed from Dutch to English in 2017-2018 in order to create a better synergy with the more internationalised context in which Dutch museums operate today and to open up to a more diverse student body. This switch created some issues: it is more difficult to find internships for international students, and they can run into communication issues on the job, in spite of being asked to gain a passive command of Dutch. The panel agrees with the motivation for the switch, since the programme focuses on the more diverse and international institutions. It finds CAC staff members to be well-equipped to offer their courses in English. It feels that since the programme has chosen

English as its main language, it should address the international market and the international perspective more explicitly in the curriculum. The programme could also formulate a more specific profile of the international students it would welcome.

The panel is satisfied with the quality of the staff members. The teaching staff experiences a high workload. The panel learned that this workload has recently been increased due to the fact that part of the UvA research master's programme Art of the Netherlands is currently being added on to CAC as a specialisation. Apart from the fact that the panel regrets the resulting stronger focus on old Dutch art in the international programme CAC, it feels that the CAC staff should not receive extra administrative and teaching burdens as a result. It recommends either reconsidering this change or providing CAC with the necessary means to continue running the programme with the existing high quality. In CAC, the two coordinators play a pivotal part in the success of the programme, which makes it vulnerable. The panel advises investigating whether more personnel could be used to support the internship process.

Student assessment
The panel considers assessment within CAC to be very varied and fitting. The assessment plan shows clearly that all learning outcomes are achieved. The panel advises the programme to investigate whether digital assessment would be a useful addition to current assessment practices. It particularly appreciates the fact that over the past academic year, the teaching team has reviewed the assessment programme intensively and has collectively drawn up the new assessment plan. According to the panel, this peer review approach enhances the quality of assessment and promotes a shared concern for safeguarding it. The panel is pleased with the assessment of the internship and the thesis in CAC, which are well designed and include input from the work field. The internship trajectory has a number of clearly marked formative assessment moments, and the assessment always follows the five focus areas stated in the internship guide. The panel is positive about the standard thesis assessment form used by the programme, which offers ample space for comments. It recommends also using this form for mid-term feedback during the writing of the thesis, so that students receive optimal feedback in the process.

The panel is pleased with the way the Board of Examiners safeguards the quality of assessment of the master's programme. It concludes that the Board is well aware of its formal tasks and responsibilities and that it works according to clear procedures. The panel appreciates the fact that the Examination Board does not limit itself to checking assessment quality, but that it also plays an active role in promoting it.

Achieved learning outcomes
The panel read a selection of CAC master's theses and considers them to be of an adequate to good academic level. It looked at internship dossiers and found them to be adequate, but it considers the dossiers to be lacking in theoretical depth and research quality. It confirmed that alumni tend to find suitable jobs as assistant or junior curators. The programme fully matches the professional requirements and expectations and provides its students with a very good preparation for the work field. The panel urges the university to consider master's students from other than research master's programmes for its internal PhD positions.

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

Master's programme Curating Arts and Culture

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

General conclusion   positive

The chair, prof. dr. Jan Baetens, and the secretary, dr. Fiona Schouten, 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: 3 April 2020.

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

> **Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes**
> The intended learning outcomes tie in with the level and orientation of the programme; they are geared to the expectations of the professional field, the discipline, and international requirements.

Findings

The 120 EC dual master's programme Heritage Studies, henceforth referred to as Curating Art and Cultures (CAC), is offered jointly by the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU) and the University of Amsterdam (UvA). Each university offers the programme independently, but in practice VU and UvA students follow the same courses from the same lecturers and have to pass the same assessments.

Curating Art and Cultures is designed to train the curators of the future. It aims to develop students both academically and professionally, combining interdisciplinary knowledge with practical skills and insights into the responsibilities of the curator – whether in museums or in other cultural institutions. The programme combines academic training and a one-year curatorial internship, during which students become acquainted with the acquisition and management of, research into, and presentation of objects. For this professional component, the programme works together with 15 leading Dutch museums and exhibition institutions, such as the Rijksmuseum and the CoBrA Museum.

The panel considers the programme to be unique in the Netherlands. CAC distinguishes itself from similar programmes through its one-year professional component, and explicitly opts for the high art segment of the curatorial world in collaborating with larger institutions. The panel noticed to its satisfaction that thanks to these partnerships, the programme management has a clear view of the developments and challenges that the professional field is faced with. For instance, although the programme has recently started admitting more students, it has now decided against further growth, since the working field cannot absorb more graduates. The panel advises formalising the programme's strong professional connection by involving alumni and professionals (who are currently involved in the programme's selection procedure) in an advisory board. In this way, the professional field is a formally represented stakeholder in the programme and can proactively advise on future developments.

The programme aims to reach more diversity in its student population and to attract more international students (see also Standard 2). The panel learned that contrary to the UvA, the VU does not yet present the programme as international in its external communication (e.g. on the website). Instead, the programme is presented to prospective students as Dutch-oriented. As a result, international students are drawn to UvA rather than VU. The panel recommends adapting external communication in order to highlight its accessibility for non-Dutch students.

The programme has nine general intended learning outcomes (ILOs) describing academic ability, and two programme-specific ILOs describing the master's level. These learning outcomes have been developed in the context of the UvA master's programmes and provide an accurate description of what can be expected of a humanities master's graduate. The learning outcomes reflect the Dublin descriptors for master's programmes and are of a clear academic level. Furthermore, CAC has programme-specific ILOs, which also follow the Dublin descriptors (see Appendix 1). These specific ILOs have recently been revised and modified by the VU team in cooperation with the UvA. Their number has been reduced, and they have been made more explicit and concrete. The panel is pleased with this revision: the new ILOs are concise and coherent. It considers the ILOs to clearly convey the programme's unique profile and to reflect its academic and professional orientation.

Considerations

Curating Art and Cultures is designed to train the curators of the future. It aims to develop students both academically and professionally, combining interdisciplinary knowledge with practical skills and insights into the responsibilities of the curator. The programme has a one-year professional component, the internship, and explicitly opts for the high art segment of the curatorial world by collaborating with larger institutions. The panel considers CAC's profile to be unique in the Netherlands and applauds the programme's clear connection with and view of the needs of the professional field. It recommends formalising the programme's strong professional connection by involving alumni and professionals in an advisory board. It also recommends adapting external communication in order to highlight its accessibility for non-Dutch students. The panel concludes that the intended learning outcomes match the programme's academic as well as professional orientation, reflect the Dublin descriptors for master's programmes and convey CAC's unique profile. It is pleased with the recent revision of the programme-specific ILOs, which has resulted in concise and coherent learning outcomes.

Conclusion

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

Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment
The curriculum, the teaching-learning environment and the quality of the teaching staff enable the incoming students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Findings

Curriculum

The curriculum of CAC (see appendix 2) starts with the course modules Collecting, Curating and Display (CCD) I and II (6 EC each). In these courses, students are presented with a broad overview of the theoretical and historical aspects of collecting, curating and display. In the first semester, they also follow 18 EC in electives and/or tutorials. In the second semester, they embark on their 60 EC internship, which runs from 1 February to 31 January. In parallel, on Fridays during semesters 2 and 3, they follow Curatorial Practices in the Contemporary World (CPCW) I and II (6 EC each). CPCW I provides students with the means to reflect on their own practice during the internship through excursions to various types of institutions around the Netherlands, and through close reading of and debate around key texts. CPCW I also includes a five-day excursion to Berlin. CPCW II is a research seminar in which students work towards a symposium on scholarly issues related to curatorial practices. The seminar helps students prepare for their thesis research. In the final semester, students finish the internship and write their thesis (18 EC).

The panel studied the curriculum and considers it to be well-designed. It is impressed with the way academic and professional approaches are juxtaposed in the programme, for instance through the parallel programming of CPCW and the internship, allowing cross-fertilisation between the academic and the professional perspectives. It is pleased to note that while half of the programme is made up of individual internships, the programme ensures that students have comparable experiences. Central to achieving this is a 'five-point plan' of the educational objectives of the internship agreed upon by the programme and its partner institutions, which is used in the preparation, supervision and assessment of the internship. The panel is satisfied with the way the programme guarantees that the individual trajectories always lead to the programme's learning outcomes.

The panel finds that the content and materials of the courses are topical, relevant and of a clearly academic level. Following a recommendation of the previous panel, the programme increased the theoretical components in the core modules and the attention paid to academic skills. CPCW II was changed into a research seminar, actively teaching students research skills before they embark on their thesis. The panel praises the programme for these effective improvements, which strengthen

CAC's academic strand. At the same time, it is glad to see that the courses have retained their professional orientation: representatives from the professional field are often involved in the courses, and excursions to institutions in the Netherlands and abroad are frequent.

Teaching methods
Teaching methods within CAC follow the LWWL concept of 'learning while working, working while learning'. The teaching methods include presentations, excursions, visits, workshops, discussions, peer feedback and the internship. The panel applauds this variety. It was pleased to learn that in their excursions, students also visit less 'high art' institutions in the Netherlands and abroad, thus becoming acquainted with a broad spectrum of institutions and approaches.

Feasibility and student-centred learning
CAC offers a maximum of 18 places due to the limited number of internships available (which was confirmed during the site visit by representatives of the working field). Applicants must have a bachelor's degree in art history, cultural studies, history, media studies, archaeology, anthropology, or related/equivalent programmes. They are selected based on their grade point average (at least 7.0), their CV, a written paper and a motivation letter. International candidates are asked to demonstrate a willingness to learn Dutch. After a first selection round, the remaining 20-25 applicants are asked to submit an opinion piece about one of the participating institutions or a similar institution in their home country. Finally, there is an interview with the programme coordinators and representatives from partner museums.

The panel considers this careful selection process beneficial to the programme's feasibility. Thanks to its admission policy, CAC has highly motivated students with a demonstrably high academic level and the necessary writing and communication skills. The fact that there is only a limited number of students in the programme also improves its feasibility: the lines of communication among students themselves as well as between students and the teaching staff are very short. The panel noticed that there is a sense of community, not only among the students and staff, but also among professionals involved in the programme and the programme's alumni. CAC graduates are sometimes still involved in the programme, either as guest professors or because they have ended up working at one of the partner institutions.

Recently, CAC has amplified the criteria for admission, so that the programme is now open to students with varying backgrounds. It has recently admitted students with BA degrees in anthropology, history, media studies, and linguistics. During the site visit, the panel spoke with some of these students and their teachers. It learned that both groups experience the increased diversity as positive. Students as well as teaching staff consider the new perspectives brought into class by students with other backgrounds than art history to be enriching. They also mentioned that the new admission policy has led to more reflection and discussion in class. Students with backgrounds in history or media studies noticed the transition phase of the programme in the sense that not all literature had yet been adapted to include the broadened approach and that teaching staff sometimes assumed more knowledge of art history than some students had. At the same time, they mentioned that these issues were being addressed and that on the whole they did not encounter great problems in following the curriculum, in spite of their different preparation. The panel is pleased with this development and hopes that the more diverse alumni will be an enrichment to the professional field.

It is clear to the panel that CAC's curriculum was designed to maximise its feasibility. The first semester, with the CCD courses, allows students to find their bearings and offers an overview of the relevant academic and professional fields, creating a level playing field among the students, whose previous education varies. The internship is set up in such a way that students return to the programme once every two weeks, allowing them to regularly step out of their professional role and reflect on it. Since the internship starts after the first semester, it is unavoidable that the electives have to be placed right at the start of the programme. Due to this timing, the choice students have is somewhat limited: the electives cannot exceed the space reserved for them. In practice, this means they can choose between VU and UvA electives. The panel is pleased that students are offered

the freedom to follow electives in this rather full programme. It did learn that the UvA requires students to sign up for a course much earlier than the VU, so that students tend to opt for VU courses due to planning issues. It recommends the programme to look into ways to solve this administrative issue.

The panel learned from its discussions with students and the programme management that the course meetings on Fridays during the internship period sometimes cause students to experience minor feasibility issues. The programme takes into account that the internship does not allow students much time to prepare for their classes. As a rule, these classes and excursions are organised every other Friday, allowing students to study and prepare for them on the Fridays when no activities are planned. However, it sometimes happens that students have lessons on consecutive Fridays. As a result, they do not always manage to prepare for their classes. The panel understood that this occurs only incidentally, for instance when an important guest speaker visits. It finds that feasibility is not threatened as long as the programme management ensures this remains the exception rather than the rule.

The programme management matches students with the available internship positions. Previously, students paid a visit to every partner institution and were matched with an institution based on their own interests and preferences. Occasionally, the programme sought new partnerships to accommodate the students' profiles and interests. Now, the number of students and partner institutions has become too large for this approach. Instead, students visit a selection of partner institutions and write a brief motivation letter for each institution about why they would consider themselves a suitable match. Based on this input, the programme coordinators look for a match. Students and the teaching staff are pleased with this procedure, which they consider effective. The panel praises this effort the programme makes to match students with internship positions, taking their interests and preferences into consideration.

The information provided to students prior to and during the internship is clear and extensive. Students as well as the partner institution, which signs a formal agreement before the internship starts, are well aware of the aims of the internship. The programme has created not only a 'five-point plan' outlining the various types of expertise the students are to acquire during the internship, ranging from organisation and policy to research and art handling, but also a list of 10 competencies related to this plan. Students have an institutional supervisor and a university supervisor (one of the two programme coordinators). At the start of the internship, they prepare a work plan in cooperation with their supervisors. On the job supervision takes place through weekly meetings with the institutional supervisor. As a general guideline, the student and the institutional supervisor meet with the university supervisor every two to three months. It is up to the student to arrange these meetings in a timely fashion. Before each meeting, the student submits a list of her/his activities since the previous meeting, following the scheme of the 'five-point plan'. In this way, the student's performance and the fulfilment of the work plan can be monitored and adjusted if necessary. Students also give and receive peer feedback on their internship during some of the Friday classes of CPCW I. The panel is impressed with the organisation of the internship and the amount of guidance students receive.

Upon reading some internship dossiers written by students (cf. Standard 4), the panel did gain the impression that the programme could instruct students better on achieving theoretical depth in these dossiers. It found that students tend to describe what they have done in their internship without much further analysis. The internship guide provides rather broad learning objectives, but these do highlight the importance of research and analysis. The panel advises the programme to point these learning objectives out more explicitly to students and to encourage them to analyse and substantiate their statements, using concrete examples.

Thesis writing and supervision take place according to a faculty-wide guideline and follow a trajectory with set deadlines and regular supervision meetings. The panel was told during the site visit that students sometimes struggle to return to their thesis after having been immersed in practice for so

long, which can lead to study delay. Some students are offered jobs immediately after completing their internship and put off writing the thesis. The programme is working on ways to address this and has started a thesis workshop per November 2019. The aim is to actively help students start on their thesis during or just after finishing the internship. The programme is also reaching out to its institutional partners to raise awareness concerning this issue. The panel appreciates these measures and expects them to have positive effects on the programme's feasibility.

Language
CAC changed its title and language of instruction from Dutch to English in 2017-2018. This switch is intended to create a better synergy with the more internationalised context in which Dutch museums operate today. The programme also wants to open up to a more diverse student body and admit students coming from Dutch University Colleges and universities abroad. The programme has encountered certain issues as a result of the language switch. The language used in museum contexts is still predominantly Dutch, which leads to some difficulties in finding internships for international students. These students can also run into communication issues on the job, in spite of the programme's explicit desire that international students gain at least a passive knowledge of Dutch.

The panel understands and agrees with the programme's motivation for the language switch, especially since CAC focuses on the larger institutions, which have a more diverse and international staff than the smaller Dutch museums. It considers CAC's staff members, some of whom have an international background, to be well-equipped to offer their courses in English. They are also aware of the intercultural skills needed to function in an international environment. The panel feels that since the programme has chosen English as its main language, it should offer a better preparation for the international market and include the international perspective more explicitly in the curriculum. The programme could also formulate a more specific profile of the international students it would welcome. The panel learned that expectations concerning the acquisition of the Dutch language have been made more explicit to new and prospective students recently, which the panel applauds.

Teaching staff
The teaching staff in the programme is highly appreciated by the students. All core university staff members hold university teaching qualifications and have an excellent network in the professional field, which they put to use for their students. The panel is satisfied with the quality of the staff .

The many guest lecturers are carefully selected and instructed by the programme management. Like elsewhere in the Faculty, staff quantity is an issue in the programme. The Faculty management acknowledges this issue and has formulated a policy to adapt the allocation system, but during the site visit the panel learned that the effects of this policy are not considered certain by the faculty's teaching staff. It was told by Faculty management that it can still be adapted if it does not yield the desired results reducing work pressure. The panel was pleased to learn that the programme will be allowed some space and autonomy in addressing the issue of work pressure.

The panel learned that the workload of the CAC staff has recently increased due to the fact that at the UvA, the research master's programme Art of the Netherlands has been discontinued. Part of that programme is currently being added on to CAC as a specialisation. Apart from the fact that the panel regrets the resulting stronger focus on old Dutch art in the international programme CAC, it feels that the CAC staff should not receive extra administrative and teaching burdens as a result. It recommends either reconsidering this change or providing CAC with the necessary means to continue running the programme with the existing high quality.

In the case of CAC, the two coordinators play a pivotal part in the success of the programme: they are important to its organisation and provide extensive guidance during the internship. The fact that so much responsibility lies with two key figures makes the programme vulnerable. The panel advises investigating whether more personnel could be used to support the internship process. It stresses

the importance of controlling the number of students allowed to enter the programme, in order to avoid a further increase of work pressure due to an increase in student numbers.

Considerations

The panel praises the design and setup of CAC. It is impressed with the way academic and professional approaches are juxtaposed in the programme, allowing cross-fertilisation between the two perspectives. It is pleased that while half of the programme is made up of individual internships, the programme has measures in place to ensure that students have comparable experiences and realise the intended learning outcomes. It finds that the content and materials of the courses are topical, relevant and of a clearly academic level. It praises the programme for increasing the theoretical components in the core modules as well as the amount of attention paid to academic skills, while retaining the professional orientation of the courses. It applauds the variety in teaching methods.

The panel concludes that the programme is feasible. This is ensured by a careful selection process, extensive internship and thesis guidance, clear protocols and information concerning the thesis and internship, and a sense of community, not only among the students and staff, but also among the professionals involved in CAC and the programme's alumni. Students can experience issues when lessons or activities are scheduled in such a way that they lack preparation time, but the panel finds that feasibility is not threatened as long as the programme management ensures this remains the exception rather than the rule. The return to the thesis after the internship can cause delays, but the programme is planning adequate measures to address this issue. The panel is pleased that students are offered the opportunity to shape their own learning trajectory: they can choose from a sufficient number of electives, and the programme takes into account their interests and preferences when matching them with an internship institution. The panel advises the programme to look into ways to deal with scheduling issues stemming from the UvA's requirement to sign up early for electives, as a result of which most students opt for VU electives.

Recently, CAC has amplified the criteria for admission, so that the programme is now open to students with varying backgrounds. As a result, it has admitted students with BA degrees in anthropology, history, media studies, or linguistics. The panel learned that the perceived effects seem positive. It is pleased with this development and hopes that the more diverse alumni will also be an enrichment to the professional field.

CAC changed from Dutch to English in 2017-2018 in order to create a better synergy with the more internationalised context in which Dutch museums operate today and to open up to a more diverse student body. This switch created some issues: it is more difficult to find internships for international students, and they can run into communication issues on the job, in spite of being asked to gain a passive command of Dutch. The panel agrees with the motivation for the switch, since the programme focuses on the more diverse and international institutions. It finds CAC staff members to be well-equipped to offer their courses in English. It feels that since the programme has chosen English as its main language, it should address the international market and the international perspective more explicitly in the curriculum. The programme could also formulate a more specific profile of the international students it would welcome.

The panel is satisfied with the quality of the staff members. The teaching staff experiences a high workload. The panel learned that this workload has recently been increased due to the fact that part of the UvA research master's programme Art of the Netherlands is currently being added on to CAC as a specialisation. Apart from the fact that the panel regrets the resulting stronger focus on old Dutch art in the international programme CAC, it feels that the CAC staff should not receive extra administrative and teaching burdens as a result. It recommends either reconsidering this change or providing CAC with the necessary means to continue running the programme with the existing high quality. In CAC, the two coordinators play a pivotal part in the success of the programme, which makes it vulnerable. The panel advises investigating whether more personnel could be used to support the internship process.

Conclusion
Master's programme Curating Arts and Culture: the panel assesses Standard 2 as 'meets the standard'.

Standard 3: Student assessment
The programme has an adequate system of student assessment in place.

Findings
Assessment within CAC follows the faculty-wide assessment policy, which was recently revised in order to bring it in line with the university's new assessment framework. Central to this assessment policy is the idea that quality of assessment depends on the quality of the teaching staff. As a result, peer feedback among staff members is deemed important. Following the assessment policy, CAC has its own assessment plan, which describes its vision on teaching and the way the programme leads towards the attainment of the learning outcomes. The assessment plan describes the educational vision of the degree programme (what are we training students to do?) and how the degree programme works towards achieving the learning outcomes. In particular, the assessment plan provides an insight into which forms of assessment are used in the courses that make up the curriculum; how the method of assessment contributes to the achievement of the learning objectives for that course; and which tests involve the assessment of skills or knowledge level at the final attainment level, and which at an intermediate level. The programme also uses an assessment file for every course, containing the course description as well as test matrices, model answers and/or written instructions and rubrics.

The panel is pleased with assessment policies and the way these are put into practice within the programme. It particularly appreciates the fact that over the past academic year (2018-2019), the teaching team has reviewed the assessment programme intensively and has collectively drawn up the new assessment plan. According to the panel, this peer review approach enhances the quality of assessment and promotes a shared concern for safeguarding it.

Assessment within the programme is very varied and fitting. The assessment plan shows clearly that all learning outcomes are assessed. For the academic part of the programme, assessment formats range from papers and presentations to self-evaluations and reports. The CCD courses make use of frequent formative assessments, such as participation in class discussions and peer feedback on the draft versions of the final project. The CPCW courses focus on presenting and participating; in CPCW II, the various assessments mirror the different steps in giving a lecture at a scholarly conference. For the oral presentation in this course, supervising curators from the museums are invited to attend and give feedback. The course culminates in a written paper. The panel considers the assessment of the courses to be well done. It advises the programme to investigate whether digital assessment would be a useful addition to current assessment practices.

The assessment of the internship takes place in close cooperation with the partner institution. As mentioned under Standard 2, the supervision is carefully regulated. The student builds up a dossier containing documents prepared for or after supervision meetings, progress reports and self-reflections. Halfway through, there is a formal progress talk. The internship trajectory thus has a number of clearly marked formative assessment moments. After the internship is concluded, the two supervisors and the student come together for the final assessment of the entire internship, based on the five focus areas stated in the internship guide and the ten competencies of the curator. The student prepares for this meeting by writing the final dossier, in which he/she discusses each of the aspects of the 'five-point plan'. During the meeting, the student's performance and the quality of the end products of the internship are discussed. Both supervisors document their findings using an assessment form. The dossier, the final discussions and the assessment forms are used to determine the final mark. The panel is positive about the thorough assessment of the internship. It studied a selection of internship dossiers during the site visit and agreed with their assessment.

The panel is also pleased with the assessment of the thesis. It is positive about the assessment form used by the programme, which offers ample space for qualitative comments. It recommends also using this form for mid-term feedback during the writing of the thesis, so that students receive optimal feedback in the process. It looked at a selection of theses and the accompanying assessment forms. It considers the assessments adequate, insightful and clearly motivated. The assessment of the thesis is done by the thesis supervisor. Where applicable, a curator from the museum is also involved as a second thesis supervisor. This supervisor is not formally an examiner, but gives input from a work field perspective. A second reader from the university department is always assigned as well. The panel appreciates this approach and considers the inclusion of a professional supervisor a valuable addition.

Examination Board
Within the VU FGW Examination Board there is a dedicated assessment committee which is responsible for assuring the quality of assessment. The committee monitors tests and theses and, where necessary, provides the relevant lecturer with recommendations for improvements. Lecturers are expected to provide feedback on the findings of the assessment committee. The assessment committee draws up an annual plan stating which assessment dossiers will be analysed and which matters with regard to assessment will receive attention that year. The assessment committee itself ensures that the tests and theses to be analysed are well distributed between the different programmes. Around twenty assessment dossiers and theses are analysed every year. For degree programmes in the Art & Culture cluster, including CAC, this amounts to an average of three or four assessment dossiers and theses.

During the site visit, the panel interviewed members of the Examination Board. Based on this discussion, it concludes that the Board is well aware of its formal tasks and responsibilities and that it works according to clear procedures. The panel appreciates that the Examination Board does not limit itself to checking assessment quality, but that it also plays an active role in promoting it. The Board members are competent and proactive, well informed and in control. The panel learned from the Board that as yet, there have been no complaints or cases of fraud or plagiarism connected to the master's programme CAC. According to the panel, this indicates that sufficient attention is paid to these issues in the curriculum.

Considerations
The panel considers assessment within CAC to be very varied and fitting. The assessment plan shows clearly that all learning outcomes are achieved. The panel advises the programme to investigate whether digital assessment would be a useful addition to current assessment practices. It particularly appreciates the fact that over the past academic year, the teaching team has reviewed the assessment programme intensively and has collectively drawn up the new assessment plan. According to the panel, this peer review approach enhances the quality of assessment and promotes a shared concern for safeguarding it. The panel is pleased with the assessment of the internship and the thesis in CAC, which are well designed and include input from the work field. The internship trajectory has a number of clearly marked formative assessment moments, and the assessment always follows the five focus areas stated in the internship guide. The panel is positive about the standard thesis assessment form used by the programme, which offers ample space for comments. It recommends also using this form for mid-term feedback during the writing of the thesis, so that students receive optimal feedback in the process.

The panel is pleased with the way the Board of Examiners safeguards the quality of assessment of the master's programme. It concludes that the Board is well aware of its formal tasks and responsibilities and that it works according to clear procedures. The panel appreciates the fact that the Examination Board does not limit itself to checking assessment quality, but that it also plays an active role in promoting it.

Conclusion
Master's programme Curating Arts and Culture: the panel assesses Standard 3 as
'meets the standard'.

Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes
The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Findings
The panel read a selection of CAC master's theses. It considers them to be of an adequate to good academic level. The themes dealt with are usually well-chosen, topical and very relevant from the perspective of the work field. The panel did notice that the theses can be quite lengthy. The panel also looked at 5 internship dossiers. It considers these dossiers to be of adequate level, but it does notice an unbalance between the practical and theoretical components. The panel considers the dossiers to be lacking in theoretical depth and research quality. Rather than describing the way they acquired certain skills and competencies, students should reflect on their acquisition and provide evidence of having gained them. Particularly since the internship is a large part of the curriculum, the panel feels the research component of these dossiers shows clear room for improvement.

The programme closely follows its graduates and provided the panel with an overview of the positions currently occupied by its alumni. The panel also interviewed a number of recent alumni, as well as representatives from the professional field. It concluded that alumni tend to find suitable jobs as assistant or junior curators. Some alumni end up as curators in the larger institutions; others are hired by smaller museums or find employment as exhibition or public programme coordinators, researchers or PhD students. The alumni mentioned to the panel that they felt very well prepared for their position. Representatives from the work field made it clear to the panel that the programme fully matches the professional requirements and expectations. The panel concludes that the programme provides its students with a very good preparation for the professional field.

The panel learned that CAC students are generally not considered for PhD positions within the VU, since they have not followed a research master's programme. Students regret this, especially since a PhD is appreciated and sometimes required in the curatorial work field. The panel agrees and urges the university to consider master's students from other than research master's programmes for its internal PhD positions.

Considerations
The panel read a selection of CAC master's theses and considers them to be of an adequate to good academic level. It looked at internship dossiers and found them to be adequate, but it considers the dossiers to be lacking in theoretical depth and research quality. It confirmed that alumni tend to find suitable jobs as assistant or junior curators. The programme fully matches the professional requirements and expectations and provides its students with a very good preparation for the work field. The panel urges the university to consider master's students from other than research master's programmes for its internal PhD positions.

Conclusion
Master's programme Curating Arts and Culture: the panel assesses Standard 4 as
'meets the standard'.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The panel assessed standards 1, 2 3, and 4 of the dual master's programme Heritage Studies (120 EC) as 'meets the standard'. Based on the NVAO decision rules regarding limited programme assessments, the panel therefore assesses the programme as 'positive'.

Conclusion
The panel assesses the *Master's programme Curating Arts and Culture* as 'positive'.

Dual master's prgramme Heritage Studies, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

a. Academic ability
The student who has completed the Master's degree programme:
1. should have insight into the key research methods in the field;
2. should be able to interpret, assess and take an individual position on academic practice – and the results thereof – within the field of study;
3. should be able to assess the academic practice in line with the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Academic Practice (see the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity on the website of the UvA: Academic Integrity);
4. should be able to assess relevant academic literature;
5. should be able to independently formulate questions with regard to the field of study, to operationalise those questions and represent them in a research plan;
6. should be able to independently carry out research in the field of study and report on that research orally and in writing in a way that complies with the common academic conventions in the field of study;
7. should be able to present any scientific knowledge and insights gained during the degree programme and transfer them to a broader audience than the academic community;
8. should be able to answer scientific questions using knowledge of a specialism within the degree programme;
9. should be able to work in a team and give and incorporate feedback in a constructive way.

b. Programme-specific exit qualifications
The student who has completed the Master's degree programme:
1. should have gained extensive and successful practical experience in the field at one or several relevant institutions outside the University of Amsterdam;
2. should be able to analyse and critically evaluate any (professional) experience gained in practice, resulting in a scientific reflection on the profession in general.

c Track-specific exit qualifications
Graduates of the Curating Art and Cultures track gain the following qualifications:
Knowledge and understanding
1. has obtained a sound historical and theoretical knowledge of and insight into the concepts, the most important scientific questions, research methods and developments in the field of museal and curatorial studies, and especially collecting and presenting (collecting, curating and display);
2. has obtained in-depth knowledge of and insight into one or more topics or themes/perspectives from disciplines in which the student has specialised: history of art, general humanities, history or archaeology;
3. has obtained sound and active knowledge of the function of objects of art and culture in the context of museums and cultural institutions;

Applying knowledge and understanding
1. is capable of applying historical, theoretical and methodological knowledge and insights independently to the analysis and interpretation of objects and research case studies;
2. is skilled in independently designing, preparing and conducting scientific research that makes use of primary and secondary sources and modern research methods;
3. is capable of implementing the historical, theoretical and methodological knowledge and insights of the specialist field in practice in museums and/or cultural institutions, especially collections and/or exhibitions;

Making judgements
1. can adopt a critical and self-reflective viewpoint regarding national and international scientific and societal discussions as well as developments in research in their specialist field;
2. is capable of reflecting critically on the acquisition, conservation, research into, communication about and presentation of objects of art and culture in the context of museums or cultural institutions;

Communication
1. can give a clear and well-supported presentation in writing or verbally about their own research results or those of others for a scientific audience, or for a lay public;
2. is capable of making scientific research more accessible to a wider audience using standard means of communication in the context of museums and/or cultural institutions;

Learning skills
1. has sufficiently acquired the abilities and skills useful for organisation and policy, research and registration, art handling, restauration and conservation, representation and communication, and creating exhibitions to exercise the position of conservator/ curator independently at an academic level;
2. has the qualifications required to follow a largely self-directed doctorate programme.

APPENDIX 2: OVERVIEW OF THE CURRICULUM

Year 1/Semester 1

Collecting, Curating and Display I (6 EC)*	Collecting, Curating and Display II (6 EC)*	[Tutorial/ elective (6 EC)]
Elective (6 EC)	Elective (6 EC)	

*CCD I + II constitute a single module of 12 EC.

Year 1/Semester 2

Internship (6 EC)*	Internship (6 EC)*	Internship (6 EC)*
Curatorial Practices in the Contemporary World I (6 EC)	Internship (6 EC)*	

*The internship constitutes one module of 60 EC.

Year 2/Semester 1

Internship (6 EC)*	Internship (6 EC)*	Internship* (6 EC)
Curatorial Practices in the Contemporary World II (6 EC)	Internship (6 EC)*	

Year 2/Semester 2

Internship (6 EC)*	Internship (6 EC)*	
Thesis (18 EC)		

*The internship constitutes one module of 60 EC.

APPENDIX 3: PROGRAMME OF THE SITE VISIT

DAG 1		**Woensdag 11 december 2019**
09.30	09.45	Ontvangst
09.45	12.00	Voorbereidend overleg panel en inzien documenten
12.00	12.45	**Interview formeel verantwoordelijken**
12.45	13.15	Lunch
13.15	14.15	**Interview inhoudelijk verantwoordelijken**
14.15	14.30	Panel intern overleg
14.30	15.15	**Interview studenten B Media, kunst, design en architectuur**
15.15	16.00	**Interview docenten B Media, kunst, design en architectuur**
16.00	16.30	Pauze/ intern overleg
16.30	17.15	**Interview studenten M Kunst- en Cultuurwetenschappen**
17.15	18.00	**Interview docenten M Kunst- en Cultuurwetenschappen**

DAG 2		**Donderdag 12 december 2019**
09.00	10.30	Aankomst, intern overleg panel, inzien documenten en inloopspreekuur (10.00-10.30)
10.30	11.15	**Interview studenten master Erfgoedstudies (vt)**
11.15	12.00	**Interview docenten master Erfgoedstudies (vt)**
12.00	12.30	Intern overleg
12.30	13.00	Lunch
13.00	13.30	**Interview OLC**
13.30	14.15	**Interview examencommissie**
14.15	14.45	Pauze/ intern overleg
14.45	15.30	**Interview studenten master Erfgoedstudies (du)**
15.30	16.15	**Interview docenten master Erfgoedstudies (du)**
16.15	17.45	Panel intern opstellen voorlopige bevindingen

DAG 3		**Vrijdag 13 december 2019**
09.15	10.00	Aankomst, intern overleg panel
10.00	11.00	**Eindgesprek management**
11.00	12.15	Panel intern opstellen voorlopige bevindingen
12.15	12.45	Lunch
12.45	13.30	Panel intern opstellen voorlopige bevindingen en voorbereiden mondelinge rapportage
13.30	14.30	**Ontwikkelgesprek**
14.30	14.45	Pauze/ intern overleg
14.45	15.15	**Mondelinge rapportage voorlopig oordeel**

Dual master's prgramme Heritage Studies, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

APPENDIX 4: THESES AND DOCUMENTS STUDIED BY THE PANEL

Prior to the site visit, the panel studied 15 theses of the dual master's programme Curating Arts and Culture. Information on the selected theses is available from QANU upon request.

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

Assessment files

- Collecting, Curating and Display I+II 18-19
- Curatorial Practices 18-19

Internship documents

- Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen
- Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen
- Dordrechts Museum

Annual reports

- Jaarverslag toetskamer Faculteit der Geesteswetenschappen 2018-2019
- Jaarverslag examencommissie Faculteit der Geesteswetenschappen 2017-2018
- Jaarverslag opleidingscommissie Kunst en Cultuur 2018-2019
- Jaarverslag opleidingscommissie Kunst en Cultuur 2017-2018
- Jaarverslag CLUE+ 2018

General information

- Facultaire scriptieregeling Bachelor
- Scriptiehandleiding Ba MKDA
- Facultaire scriptieregeling Master
- Scriptiehandleiding masteropleidingen Kunst en Cultuur
- Facultaire stageregeling (NB: geldt niet voor Ma Erfgoedstudies duaal / Curating Art and Cultures)
- Regels en richtlijnen examencommissie FGW 2019-2020
- Introductieboekje studiejaar 19/20, Ba MKDA
- Kader Onderwijskwaliteitszorg FGW (concept)
- Toetskader VU