

Human Geography and Spatial Planning

**Faculty of Geosciences
Utrecht University**

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CONTENTS

Report on the master's programmes Development Studies, Geographical Sciences, Human Geography and Spatial Planning of Utrecht University.....	5
Administrative data regarding the programmes.....	5
Administrative data regarding the institution.....	6
Quantitative data regarding the programmes.....	6
Composition of the assessment committee	6
Working method of the assessment committee	7
I: Development Studies.....	11
Summary judgement.....	13
Description of the standards from the Assessment framework for limited programme assessments	15
II: Geographical Sciences	27
Summary judgement.....	29
Description of the standards from the Assessment framework for limited programme assessments	32
III: Human Geography.....	43
Summary judgement.....	45
Description of the standards from the Assessment framework for limited programme assessments	48
IV: Spatial Planning	61
Summary judgement.....	63
Description of the standards from the Assessment framework for limited programme assessments	66
Appendices.....	79
Appendix 1: Curricula vitae of the members of the assessment committee	81
Appendix 2: Domain-specific frameworks of reference	83
Appendix 3: Intended learning outcomes	89
Appendix 4: Overview of the curricula.....	95
Appendix 5: Quantitative data regarding the programmes.....	97
Appendix 6: Programme of the site visit	103
Appendix 7: Theses and documents studied by the assessment committee	107
Appendix 8: Declarations of independence	109

This report was finalised on 20-02-2014.

Report on the master's programmes Development Studies, Geographical Sciences, Human Geography and Spatial Planning of Utrecht University

This report considers the NVAO's Assessment framework for limited programme assessments as a point of departure.

Administrative data regarding the programmes

Master's programme Development Studies

Name of the programme:	Development Studies
CROHO number:	60731
Level of the programme:	master's
Orientation of the programme:	academic
Number of credits:	60 EC
Specialisations or tracks:	International Development Studies*
Location(s):	Utrecht
Mode(s) of study:	full time
Expiration of accreditation:	31-12-2014

* International Development Studies is registered under the official programme name Development Studies.

Master's programme Geographical Sciences

Name of the programme:	Geographical Sciences
CROHO number:	60732
Level of the programme:	master's
Orientation of the programme:	academic
Number of credits:	120 EC
Specialisations or tracks:	Geographical Information Management and Applications (GIMA)*
Location(s):	Utrecht, Delft, Enschede, Wageningen
Mode(s) of study:	full time, part time
Expiration of accreditation:	31-12-2014

* Geographical Information Management and Applications (GIMA) is officially registered under the programme name Geographical Sciences.

Master's programme Human Geography

Name of the programme:	Sociale Geografie*
CROHO number:	66620
Level of the programme:	master's
Orientation of the programme:	academic
Number of credits:	60 EC
Specialisations or tracks:	Economische Geografie, Geo-Communicatie, Urban Geography**
Location(s):	Utrecht

Mode(s) of study: full time, part time
Expiration of accreditation: 31-12-2014

* For this report, the official Dutch name of the programme is translated to the English name: Human Geography.

** For this report, the official Dutch names of the tracks are translated to the English names: Economic Geography and Geo-Communication.

Master's programme Spatial Planning

Name of the programme: Planologie*
CROHO number: 66622
Level of the programme: master's
Orientation of the programme: academic
Number of credits: 60 EC
Specialisations or tracks: -
Location(s): Utrecht
Mode(s) of study: full time, part time
Expiration of accreditation: 31-12-2014

* For this report, the official Dutch name of the programme is translated to the English name: Spatial Planning.

The visit of the assessment committee Human Geography and Spatial Planning to the Faculty of Geosciences of Utrecht University took place on 9, 10, 11 October 2013.

Administrative data regarding the institution

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

Quantitative data regarding the programmes

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

Composition of the assessment committee

The assessment of the master's programmes Development Studies, Geographical Sciences, *Sociale Geografie* (Human Geography) and *Planologie* (Spatial Planning) of Utrecht University is part of the cluster assessment Human Geography and Spatial Planning, for which the committee also assessed the Human Geography and Spatial Planning programmes of the University of Amsterdam, the Radboud University Nijmegen and the University of Groningen.

The committee that assessed the Human Geography and Spatial Planning cluster consisted of eight members:

- Prof. H.F.L. (Henk) Ottens (chair), emeritus professor of Human Geography at Utrecht University.
- Prof. H.H. (Herman) van der Wusten, emeritus professor of Political Geography at the University of Amsterdam.
- Prof. H.M.J. (Herman) van den Bosch, professor of Management Sciences at the Open University.
- Prof. W.A.M. (Wil) Zonneveld, professor of Urban and Regional Development at Delft University of Technology.
- Prof. R. (Robert) Hassink, professor of Economic Geography at the Christian Albrechts University in Kiel.
- Prof. A.J. (Ton) Dietz, professor of Development in Africa and director of the African Studies Centre in Leiden.
- M. (Madelon) Post, MSc (student member), graduated master's student Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Amsterdam.
- J. (Jikke) van 't Hof, BSc (student member), master's student Human Geography at the Radboud University Nijmegen.

Based on expertise and possible conflicts of interest, a subcommittee was formed for every site visit. The committee that assessed the Utrecht bachelor's programme *Sociale Geografie en Planologie* and the master's programmes Development Studies, Geographical Sciences, *Planologie* (Spatial Planning) and *Sociale Geografie* (Human Geography) consisted of:

- Prof. H.F.L. (Henk) Ottens (chair);
- Prof. H.H. (Herman) van der Wusten;
- Prof. H.M.J. (Herman) Van den Bosch;
- Prof. W.A.M. (Wil) Zonneveld;
- Prof. R. (Robert) Hassink;
- Prof. A.J. (Ton) Dietz;
- M (Madelon) Post, MSc (student member).

The project manager of the assessment was Mrs. C.J.J. (Chantal) Gorissen, MSc, QANU staff member. Mrs. J.J. (Jasne) Krooneman, MSc, QANU staff member, acted as secretary during the site visit in Utrecht. Mrs. J.J. (Jasne) Krooneman was responsible for the finalisation of the assessment reports of the Radboud University Nijmegen, Utrecht University and the University of Groningen.

Appendix 1 contains the curricula vitae of the committee members.

Working method of the assessment committee

Preparation

On 22 April 2013 the committee held a preparatory meeting. During this preparatory meeting, the committee was instructed regarding the regulations of the assessments. In addition, it discussed its working method and the Human Geography and Spatial Planning Domain-Specific Framework of Reference (see appendix 2).

After receiving the critical reflections, the project manager checked the quality and completeness of the provided information. Only after approval, the project manager forwarded the critical reflections to the chair and the committee members. The committee

members read the critical reflections, and sent their questions to the project manager and chair. The chair of the committee compiled the questions per interview.

In dialogue with the chair and coordinator of the relevant university, the project manager designed a visiting timetable. On request and within the frames of the committee, the educational programmes selected interview partners.

On request of the chair, the project manager composed a representative sample of theses. By doing so, the project manager took the grading categories (satisfactory, more than satisfactory, good), the various specialisations and the year of graduation into account. The chair divided the theses among the committee members. Each committee member assessed two theses per educational programme. In order to warrant the consistency of the assessments, a by QANU designed thesis evaluation form was used. An overview of the assessed theses can be found in appendix 7. In case of an 'unsatisfactory' assessment, a second committee member evaluated the thesis as well.

In consultation with the chair, the project manager selected a representative set of course and assessment material for each educational programme, which was available during the site visit. In addition, common documentation, such as reports of the Board of Examiners and the Programme Committee, results of evaluations and management information, was requested. Studying these documents, the committee followed the NVAO guideline.

Site visit

Each site visit began with an internal meeting. During this internal meeting, the committee discussed its working method and the thesis evaluations. In addition, it considered the questions related to the critical reflection.

During each site visit, the committee interviewed a (representative) delegation of the faculty management, the management of the educational programme, students, teachers, the Board of Examiners and the Programme Committee. The committee studied the selected course and assessment material, and reserved some time in the visiting timetable for the consultation 'hour'. During the site visit at Utrecht University, nobody made use of this consultation 'hour'.

The last day of each site visit contained a presentation of the preliminary findings.

Report

Based on the findings of the committee, the secretary composed draft reports. Prior to sending these reports to the relevant university for the check of factual irregularities, they were presented to the committee. The factual irregularities found by the university were presented to the chair. If necessary, the chair discussed the factual irregularities with the committee members. Thereafter, the reports were finalised.

Decision rules

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

Generic quality

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

Unsatisfactory

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

Satisfactory

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

Good

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

Excellent

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

I: Development Studies

Summary judgement

This report provides an overview of the findings and considerations of the committee regarding the master's programme Development Studies of Utrecht University. The committee based its judgement on information acquired from the critical reflection, a selected number of theses, the interviews during the site visit, additional reading material which was available during the site visit, and the digital learning environment. The committee found both positive aspects as well as points for improvement. After a careful consideration, it concluded that the master's programme Development Studies satisfies the requirements for accreditation.

Standard 1

The committee believes that the domain-specific framework of reference is adequately formulated, but that it could be specified more clearly. It argues that a better defined and detailed domain-specific framework of reference would benefit the participating programmes in establishing their own orientation within this domain. The profile of the programme revolves around the central objective to equip students with conceptual and empirical knowledge as well as research skills necessary in understanding and analysing contemporary issues pertaining to international development in broad geographical contexts and at varied (local, regional and international) levels. The committee is satisfied with the aim to train students for their future career, be it in academic research or the professional field. Therefore, it argues that there is a good fit between the orientation and profile of the programme, and affirms that the intended learning outcomes target the correct academic level and match this dual orientation.

Standard 2

The curriculum, which is divided into four periods and comprises 60 EC, consists of nicely structured courses, together forming a coherent whole, according to the committee. It particularly appreciates the *Development Theories* and *Development Themes*, and is pleased with the intertwined solid methodological line in the programme, which contributes to the academic orientation. In addition, it argues that the intended learning outcomes are translated into the curriculum in a very consistent manner.

The University Utrecht's didactic model is not entirely clear as a concept, the committee states. Especially the appreciation of teachers, which is a new item in 'BaMa 3.0', needs close attention. It is more enthusiastic about the teaching methods, which fit the integrated, comparative approach of the programme, facilitating a problem-oriented analysis of complex issues in development geography. The courses *Advanced Methods & Techniques for Development Studies*, *Research Preparation* and *Internship/Thesis* in particular contribute to the academic character of the programme. The committee is happy with the training in writing a NWO-proposal, as it pushes students towards an advanced academic approach.

Although the committee understands that some delays due to difficult fieldwork locations cannot be avoided, it argues that the programme should try to further decrease the delay in graduation. An easy acceptance of extensions in the writing process is unfair to those who worked hard to meet the deadline, the committee states.

The committee is convinced that the programme has well qualified, dedicated teaching staff. However, it has some serious worries regarding the quantity of the teaching staff. It noted that the workload for staff members is too high, and finds it disturbing that no action has been taken since the last visitation. It has the impression that the teaching staff for this

particular master's programme struggles probably even harder than the staff of other master's programmes as they are involved in the Sustainable Development programme as well. Evaluations are executed adequately, and the programme specific quality control is of sufficient quality. Nevertheless, the committee would like to point out that the Programme Committee should adopt an active, instead of reactive, attitude.

Standard 3

The committee believes that the assessment policy is satisfactory. Each course has at least two assessments, the assessment instruments are diversified, two teachers jointly develop assessments and the resit-policy is rather tough. It is pleased with the great variation of examinations and believes that they fit the content of the programme and target the right academic level. The committee is confident about the execution of the master thesis. It states that the research-internship and thesis writing are well supervised and students are provided with a great range of research-internships to find a placement. The committee is convinced that the internship and thesis is a good element in the curriculum and contributes to the theoretical, methodological and practical competences that will be useful for their career in further academic research, development policy and practice sector as well other work fields that require analytical, communication and project implementation skills as well as cross-cultural competences. In addition, it is generally satisfied with the overall level achieved of the master's theses. The theses are well-cared for, depart from a clear objective and satisfactory methodology. The committee likes the idea of writing short journalistic articles upon completing the thesis. According to the committee, the satisfaction of the students and the general level of the theses prove that the learning outcomes are indeed achieved at the end of the master's programme Development Studies.

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

Master's programme Development Studies:

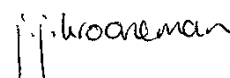
Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes	satisfactory
Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment	satisfactory
Standard 3: Assessment and achieved learning outcomes	satisfactory
General conclusion	satisfactory

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

Date: 20-02-2014



Prof. H.F.L. (Henk) Ottens



J.J. (Jasne) Krooneman, MSc.

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.

Findings

This standard first provides an insight into the committee's findings regarding the domain-specific framework of reference (1.1). Subsequently, attention is paid to the profile and orientation (1.2) and the intended learning outcomes and their orientation (1.3).

1.1 Domain-specific framework of reference

The universities participating in the Human Geography and Spatial Planning cluster assessment (the University of Amsterdam, the Radboud University Nijmegen, the University of Groningen, and Utrecht University) jointly prepared a domain-specific framework of reference (appendix 2).

The committee studied the domain-specific framework of reference and finds it rather broad and general. Even though it is clear that the field of Human Geography and Spatial Planning is a broad domain and integrative and multidisciplinary by nature, the committee feels that it would be beneficial if the domain could be specified in more detail. A clearly defined domain-specific framework of reference, positioned in the international discussion about the nature of the disciplines, would challenge the participating programmes to establish their own orientation within the domain more clearly. In addition, the committee feels that a more clearly defined framework of reference would make students more aware of the domain they are studying and that it could support the legitimation of the field. The current joint framework should be considered a first step that deserves a follow-up by the participating faculties/departments. Furthermore, developing a joint approach to national and international benchmarking could contribute to position the programmes more effectively. This is predominantly a problem for the Human Geography part of the framework and to a lesser extent for the Spatial Planning part.

The committee recommends the programmes involved in this assessment to further elaborate the domain-specific framework of reference, if possible in collaboration with a few other programmes which have not been involved in the present accreditation round. The framework could be further specified and then serve as a clearer basis to indicate both similarities and differences among the orientations of the programmes in this field.

Nevertheless, the committee argues that the described domain-specific qualifications are appropriate for a master's programme within the field of Human Geography and Spatial Planning.

1.2 Profile and orientation

Taking the domain-specific framework of reference as point of departure, the master's programme Development Studies has formulated its own profile. As can be read in the critical reflection, the master's programme is a multi- and interdisciplinary field that aims to understand social, economic, political, technological and cultural aspects of societal change, particularly in Asia, Latin America and Africa. Within the master's programme Development Studies, connections are made with the research programme through the topics, research approaches and the internship. The themes present in the research programme are embedded and elaborated in different courses in the master's programme Development Studies. Since the programme has its roots in geography, there are certain geographical accents, such as the context-sensitivity, examining societal change within a geographical, historical, comparative and global perspective; as well as paying attention to particular themes such as environmental issues and mobility.

From the critical reflection it becomes clear that the central objective of the programme is to equip students with conceptual and empirical knowledge as well as research skills necessary in understanding and analysing contemporary issues pertaining to international development in broad geographical contexts and at varied (local, regional and international) levels. The programme management believes that upon completion of the programme, students should have acquired theoretical, methodological and practical competences that will be useful for their career in further academic research, development policy, and development practice as well as other work fields that require understanding of world affairs, international experiences and analytical, communication and project implementation skills.

This objective reveals that the programme is academic and professional oriented, with an emphasis on research, through the compulsory internship abroad.

The committee has studied the profile of the master's programme Development Studies and is of the opinion that it is clearly specified, and adequately formulated. It is satisfied with the aim to train students for their further career, be it in academic research or the professional field. It therefore feels that there is a good fit between the orientation (master level) and profile of the programme.

1.3 Intended learning outcomes and academic and professional orientation

As included in appendix 3, the management of the master's programme Development Studies has formulated intended learning outcomes that fit within the domain-specific framework of reference. In addition, they match with the European requirements with respect to level, as established by the Dublin descriptors. The intended learning outcomes vary from the competence of developing solutions for complex (spatial) societal problems (intended learning outcome 3) to identifying and understanding working cultures in other disciplines or sectors (intended learning outcome 19). They also reflect a broad academic and professional orientation. Graduates of the programme should possess the competence to qualify for a third cycle (PhD) project (intended learning outcome 20), for example, and integrate the communicative actions by different stakeholders in a complex societal issue, and play a role in linking these to each other (intended learning outcome 14).

The committee has studied the intended learning outcomes and argues that they target the correct academic level and consist of the right, balanced academic and professional future orientation.

Considerations

The committee studied the domain-specific framework of reference, the profile and orientation, and the intended learning outcomes of the master's programme Development Studies. It felt that the broad domain-specific framework of reference is described in an appropriate manner to fit any master's programme within the field of Human Geography and Spatial Planning. However, it argues that it would be beneficial if the domain was specified more clearly, particularly given the rapid changes in the world of development assistance and global linkages. The committee is pleased with the adequately formulated and clearly specified profile of the master's programme Development Studies. It believes that the profile fosters a good balance of an academic and professional orientation, which is also well embedded in the intended learning outcomes. The intended learning outcomes also cover a variety of competences, such as developing solutions for complex (spatial) societal problems and identifying and understanding working cultures in other disciplines or sectors. The committee finds this diversity of the competences suitable for the programme.

Conclusion

Master's programme Development Studies: the committee assesses Standard 1 as satisfactory.

Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment

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

Explanation:

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

Findings

This standard provides an insight into content, structure and coherence of the curriculum (2.1) of the master's programme Development Studies. In section 2.2, the didactic concept is analysed. Special attention is paid to the relation between the learning outcomes and the curriculum (2.3) and in section 2.4 the academic orientation of the master's programme is analysed. The feasibility of the programme is described in section 2.5 and the quality and quantity of the teaching staff form the centre of attention in section 2.6. Briefly, internationalisation is discussed (2.7). This standard concludes with an analysis of the programme-specific quality control (2.8).

2.1 Content, structure and coherence of the curriculum

The master's programme Development Studies has provided a schematic overview of the curriculum in appendix 4. It offers a structured series of courses and time for the research internship and thesis. The one-year programme comprises a 60 EC curriculum, which is divided into four periods.

In the first period of the curriculum, which lasts from September to November, students follow two courses: *Development Themes* (7.5 EC) and *Development Theories* (7.5 EC). In *Development Themes*, students are provided with conceptual and empirical knowledge of current development trends, from a geographical perspective. *Development Theories* is a course which critically examines the major approaches and theories that dominate thinking about development at present, and have done so in the past several decades.

From November to January, which is the second period, students attend lectures of three courses: *Development Practices* (5 EC), *Advanced Methods & Techniques for Development Studies* (5 EC), and *Research Preparation* (5 EC). *Development Practices* provides students insight into how theories are influencing policies of development agencies and how these are translated into concrete interventions/actions by development practitioners. *Advanced Methods & Techniques for Development Studies* is designed to enhance the research skill and technique level of the students in analysing and interpreting both quantitative and qualitative research with a particular focus on geographical research in development context. The second period is concluded with the course *Research Preparation* in which students are trained in the overall design and execution of their research plan, including the clear formulation of the research problem, the research objective and the leading research questions; in the presentation of the relevant contextual information and theoretical perspectives, including the construction of a conceptual model and a set of working hypotheses.

In the third period, which stretches from February to August, students work on their *Research Internship/Thesis* (30 EC). As stated in the critical reflection, the research internship is designed to give students an opportunity to conduct a substantial, field-work based individual research on a chosen topic related to international development and hence gain deeper understanding

of development practices. The majority of the students conduct an internship related to the core research themes presented in the *Development Themes* course. The number of internships offered by the master's programme exceeds the number of students, hence every student is guaranteed a first, and only very rarely, second priority internship placement. In addition to their master thesis, students are requested to write a short journalistic article based on their own research findings. Those articles are compiled and published in a student-edited volume *Development around the World*.

The committee studied the courses offered in the master's programme Development Studies and is very satisfied with the content of the curriculum. It argues that the courses are structured appropriately and form a coherent whole. The committee particularly appreciates the courses *Development Theories* and *Development Themes*, and supports the intertwined solid methodological line in the programme, which contributes to the academic orientation. It states that the structure of the curriculum prepares students thoroughly for the relatively long period of the research internship and thesis writing.

2.2 Didactic concept

The committee examined which didactic concept forms the basis of the offered education.

The teaching concept and formats derive from the Utrecht University's didactic model which, according to the advice report of 2011 (Adviesrapport Utrechts Onderwijsmodel 3.0), is characterised by an obvious distinction between the bachelor and master stage, flexibility and freedom of choice, personal and activating education, and a clear assessment policy. Since the second half of 2011, the model was extended with the project 'BaMa 3.0', which aims at helping students get better results, challenge students to get the best out of themselves and their education, support teachers to effectively make use of their time, and appreciate teachers more clearly.

The committee studied Utrecht University's didactic model and found that it is not entirely clear as a concept. It argues that the didactic model is what one would expect as a standard for academic education: it does not contain any remarkable or outstanding didactic visions. The committee finds that the teaching methods are more concrete. The staff uses several forms to transfer knowledge, such as lectures, tutorials, (computer) exercises, seminars, fieldwork trips, presentations, tests and exams. Those teaching methods fit the integrated, comparative approach of the programme, which facilitates problem-oriented analyses of complex issues in development geography. Students are, as stated in the critical reflection, required to acquire academic knowledge and skills independently, with ample staff supervision and support, through a well-balanced combination of individual and group learning exercises. The committee is pleased with the wide range of teaching methods, and thinks they are creative and match the content of the curriculum very well. It especially appreciates the numerous seminars, which are interactive and aimed to challenge students intellectually.

2.3 Representation of the intended learning outcomes in the curriculum

The committee analysed the representation of the intended learning outcomes in the curriculum and is of the opinion that they are translated to the courses in a very consistent manner. Intended learning outcome 4 (design an original research proposal) and 5 (conduct a research project) for example, are embedded in the courses *Research Preparation* and *Research Internship/Thesis*. In the course *Research Preparation* students are trained in the design of their research, and in the *Research Internship/Thesis* students have to conduct their own research. Intended learning outcome 3 (identify and understand possible interventions that are based

on the outcomes of research in Development Studies) is clearly linked to the course *Development Practices*, in which students are provided with insight into how theories influence policies of development agencies and how these are translated into concrete interventions. Intended learning outcome 7 (apply a series of advanced research techniques) matches with the course *Advanced Methods & Research Techniques for Development Studies*. In this course students are, among other things, trained in the carrying out of interviews in a foreign language and in the hands-on implementation of various research techniques, including GIS, SPSS, and Nvivo. The committee appreciates such clear representations of the intended learning outcomes in the curriculum.

2.4 Academic orientation

As stated in the critical reflection, and as briefly discussed in section 1.3, the master's programme Development Studies is both academic and professional oriented, with an emphasis on research through the compulsory internship abroad. According to the committee, the didactic methods and the curriculum really stimulate an academic orientation. Especially the courses *Advanced Methods & Techniques for Development Studies*, *Research Preparation* and *Internship/Thesis* contribute to the academic character of the programme. The training in writing a NWO-proposal really pushes students towards an advanced academic approach. It is content about the academic character of the programme and argues that academic skills are trained intensively.

2.5 Feasibility

As can be read in the critical reflection, the nominal duration of the master's programme Development Studies is 12 months. According to the programme, international students were the fastest in finishing their studies, possibly because of the high financial costs that an extension entails. Students with a background in the Human Geography and Spatial Planning bachelor's programme at Utrecht University took the longest time to complete their master's programme. As causes, the programme mentions that some students wanted to conduct a longer research internship, some needed more time to produce a higher-quality thesis, some were simultaneously enrolled in another master's programme, and others faced unavoidable personal/familial circumstances. The number of students that needed one additional year to finish their master's programme decreased over time however, and the last three years there were no such cases within the student population. The committee understands that some situations cannot be avoided, but argues that the programme should try to further decrease the delay in graduation. It believes that students who ignore the deadline for their thesis writing should not be awarded with higher grades than those who take the deadline into account. This would mean that the time period needed to finalise the master's thesis should be included in the process evaluation part of the master's thesis assessment form.

2.6 Teaching staff

The committee focussed on the quality and quantity of the teaching staff at the master's programme Development Studies

Quality

The staff employed in the master's programme Development Studies ranges from junior lecturers who have recently obtained their PhD degree, to senior lecturers with ample experiences. All the staff members hold either a Basic Teaching Qualification (BKO) or Senior Teaching Qualification (SKO). All tenured positions are, by policy, to be taken by staff members holding a PhD degree. All staff members are active in both teaching and research.

From the interviews at the site visit, as well as the available information in the critical reflection and documentation of the programme committee, the committee is convinced that the programme houses qualified and dedicated teaching staff.

Quantity

When it comes to the quantity of teachers, the committee is less satisfied. For several years, the student-staff ratio has fluctuated around 1:40. Although the appointment of junior staff members had a positive effect on the ratio, it rose soon afterwards due to an increase of student numbers. The committee noted that the teaching staff struggles with the high workload, and argues that the allocation of new staff members, which is supposedly based on the workload of the different sections within the department, is not transparent. Although the management tries to lower the workload, the committee argues that at faculty and/or university level action has to be taken.

In case of the master's programme Development Studies, the workload for teaching staff is even higher than in other master's programmes at the Faculty of Geosciences. The staff members of Development Studies are also involved in the teaching and thesis supervision of students enrolled in the master's programme Sustainable Development. The committee is very worried by the extreme workload of the teaching staff. Extra action at the faculty and university level is warranted.

2.7 Internationalisation

Over the past few years, the master's programme has become increasingly international. The number of international students has grown, and the student population has become a good mix of national and international students. In addition, students face a compulsory research-oriented internship of at least 14 weeks, which has to be conducted in a developing or transition country. This overseas internship contributes to the international outlook of the programme and most students consider it as a crucial and attractive part of the programme. Unsurprisingly, during the entire programme, all courses are taught in English.

The committee is pleased to see this internationalisation and the connected compulsory research-internship. During the interviews students were indeed very enthusiastic about the overseas opportunities provided by the programme. The committee argues that the curriculum is structured in a coherent way to facilitate, and prepare students for the internships.

2.8 Programme-specific quality control

In student evaluations, the specific module's workload, the pedagogical and didactic quality of the lecturers, literature, the assessment methods, feedback and the relation between the module and the programme are assessed. As is stated in the critical reflection, results of the individual course evaluations are sent to the lecturer, who responds to the outcome and formulates points for improvement for next year. Student evaluations are also discussed during the staff and Advisory Board meeting. From 2011 onwards, graduates are asked how they experienced the curriculum in an exit questionnaire. Another centralised evaluation of the programme is derived from the outcomes of the newly developed biennial STOGO (Applied Geographical Research Foundation) labour market research in 2008, 2010 and 2012. Furthermore, a group evaluation is conducted on Return Day, an event held in June welcoming students back.

From the interview with the Programme Committee it became clear that the evaluations are executed adequately. However, the committee believes that the Programme Committee

predominantly functions in a reactive manner, as action is solely taken on the basis of the student evaluations. It advises the Programme Committee to become more (pro)active in their quality control tasks.

Considerations

The committee is pleased with the content of the curriculum of the master's programme Development Studies. It finds that the courses are adequately structured, form a coherent whole, and prepare the students well for the relatively long period of the research internship and thesis writing. The committee appreciates the representations of the intended learning outcomes in the courses, and believes that academic skills are trained quite intensively and that the programme has a clear academic and professional orientation.

The University Utrecht's didactic model is, according to the committee, not entirely clear as a concept. The committee is of opinion that the programme should continue its efforts to reduce delays in graduation. It is pleased with the international outlook of the programme, including the compulsory overseas research-internship.

The programme houses well qualified and dedicated teaching staff, according to the committee. However, when it comes to the quantity of the teaching staff it has serious worries. The allocation of new staff members based on the number of students enrolled is not transparent, and the lecturers struggle with a very high workload. Due to the fact that lecturers of Development Studies are also involved in teaching and thesis supervision in the master's programme Sustainable Development, the staff probably has an even higher workload than in other master's programmes.

The programme specific quality control is of sufficient quality. Evaluations are executed adequately, according to the committee. Nevertheless, it would appreciate a transition of the Programme Committee from a reactive towards a (pro)active attitude.

Conclusion

Master's programme Development Studies: the committee assesses Standard 2 as satisfactory.

Standard 3: Assessment and achieved learning outcomes

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

Explanation:

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

Findings

This standard considers the findings regarding the assessment system (3.1) and subsequently deals with the question whether the graduate students are able to achievement of the learning outcomes (3.2).

3.1 Assessment system

The committee analysed the assessment system of the master's programme Development Studies and focussed on the assessment policy, including the functioning of the Examination Committee, the examinations and the master thesis procedure.

Assessment policy

As stated in the critical reflection, the master's programme applies a system of continuous assessment, in which all components of the curriculum are assessed. Grading is done on a 1 – 10 scale, and a final grade of 5.5 is needed to pass a course. A non-rounded off final grade below 5.5 but above 5.0 gives the student the opportunity for repair in which the student gets a supplementary test or assignment. The tests and models are archived by the Teaching Institute. Although the Teaching Institute is responsible for the establishment of a proper assessment structure, the individual lecturers are responsible for the actual application of the assessment. The Examination Committee has the final responsibility for the quality of exams. In addition, it has a supervisory role and it takes action where necessary or when requested to do so by staff and/or students.

The committee believes that the assessment policy is satisfactory. Each course counts at least two assessments, the assessment instruments are diversified, two teachers jointly develop assessments and the resit-policy is rather tough.

Examinations

The committee looked at various types of exams, such as written examinations, individual assignments, papers/reports/essays, oral presentations, and project work. It believes that there is enough diversity and that the exams are at a satisfactory academic level. It argues that the content of the exams is adequate and states that the examination is consistent.

Master Thesis

For their master thesis, students compulsory engage in a research-internship overseas. They can choose from an increasing number of internships linked to research projects, such as 'Land Governance for Equitable and Sustainable Development: Dealing with New Pressures and Competing Claims' (LANDac) and the Agriculture Beyond Food Programme (NWO). However, students can also organise their own research internship. As briefly discussed in section 2.1, the majority of the students conduct an internship related to the core research themes presented in the *Development Themes* course. Students are expected to execute the research plan that they have drafted for the *Research Preparation* course. They work under

supervision of their supervisors at the master's programme Development Studies, in close collaboration with the host organisations in the 'field'. Every year, a number of staff members of the master's programme visits some of the students in the field to give feedback and to discuss their research with the host organisations. During their internship, students are required to draft a mid-term report and present their preliminary findings at the host organisation. After their research period, students have to write their master's thesis. All master's theses are evaluated by two lecturers: the supervisor and the second reader. A standard assessment form is used to assess the thesis.

From the interview with students it became clear that they sometimes struggle with the limited time available for the internship and thesis writing. Nevertheless, the committee is convinced that the internship and thesis is a remarkably good element in the curriculum and truly contributes theoretical, methodological and practical competences that will be useful for their career in further academic research, development policy and practice sector as well other work fields that require analytical, communication and project implementation skills as well as cross-cultural competences. It regrets that teachers no longer have the possibility of visiting students in the field.

3.2 Achievement of the learning outcomes

By reading fourteen theses, the committee analysed the achieved learning outcomes of graduate students. The theses were carefully selected, taking into account a proportional distribution of low, average and high grades.

After studying the theses, the committee concluded that it is generally satisfied with the overall level achieved. The theses are well-cared for and depart from a clear objective. The level of the theses is adequate for a master's programme. The committee is content about the short journalistic article students have to write upon completing the thesis.

The committee believes that the research-internship adds value to the programme, and contributes to the programme's academic and professional orientation.

The satisfaction of the students and the general level of the theses prove that the learning outcomes are indeed achieved at the end of the master's programme Development Studies, according to the committee.

Considerations

The committee believes that the assessment policy is satisfactory. Each course counts at least two assessments, the assessment instruments are diversified, two teachers jointly develop assessments and the resit-policy is rather tough. It argues that the programme has sufficient examinations and examination types at an academic level. The committee is pleased with the master thesis procedure, and believes that there is a very systematic manner of working and that students are supervised very well. It is happy with the wide range of available internships and the freedom students have in choosing their placement. It appreciates the fact that lecturers visit their students abroad. The internships add value to the programme, and the committee is convinced that at the end of the master's programme, students achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Conclusion

Master's programme Development Studies: the committee assesses Standard 3 as satisfactory.

General conclusion

The committee assesses the *master's programme Development Studies* as satisfactory.

II: Geographical Sciences

Summary judgement

This report provides an overview of the findings and considerations of the committee regarding the master's programme Geographical Sciences of Utrecht University in cooperation with Delft University of Technology, University of Twente and Wageningen University. The committee based its judgement on information acquired from the critical reflection, a selected number of theses, the interviews during the site visit, additional reading material which was available during the site visit, and the digital learning environment. The committee found both positive aspects as well as points for improvement. After a careful consideration, it concluded that the master's programme Geographical Sciences satisfies the requirements for accreditation.

Standard 1

The master's programme Geographical Sciences is a joint programme of four Dutch universities: Utrecht University, Delft University of Technology, University of Twente and Wageningen University. Staff members from each institute participate in the execution of the programme, and the contact days between students and teachers are held sequentially at each of these institutes. The programme director and secretariat rotate every four years among the institutes involved. This is a unique form of cooperation.

The committee studied the domain-specific framework of reference, the profile and orientation, and the intended learning outcomes of the master's programme Geographical Sciences. The goal of the inter-university master's programme is to provide students with academic, master-level education in state-of-the-art knowledge, skills, and tools of geo-information science and technology. The primary focus of the programme lies on geo-information applications and geo-information management.

Linking the curriculum to the domain-specific framework of reference, which is in fact the Geographic Science & Technology Body of Knowledge (GI-BoK), might not be the best option. According to the committee, the programme predominantly matches the 'knowledge body' analytical methods and organisational issues. Fortunately, it has defined its own and clear profile, which is more detailed and formulated adequately. The committee is also pleased with the academic orientation of the programme, which is embedded in the explicit scientific learning outcomes, the academic skills and the thesis work. It believes that the compulsory internship adds to the professional orientation of the programme.

Standard 2

Geographical Sciences is a 120 EC master's programme with a focus on geo-information applications and geo-information management. The programme is available full-time and part-time and in both versions the curriculum consists of 8 modules: 6 subject modules of 10 EC each, an internship module of 30 EC and a thesis module of 30 EC. Part-time students take the modules sequentially: modules 1, 2, and 3 in year one, modules 4, 5, and 6 in year two, the internship (or thesis) module in year three and the thesis (on internship) module in year four. Therefore, the total duration of the part-time programme is four years. The programme for the full-time students lasts two years. In year one, the full-time students take modules 1, and 4, 2 and 5, and 3 and 6 together. In year two, they complete their internship and thesis modules.

The committee read the curriculum description in the critical reflection and the digital learning environment, interviewed teachers, students, alumni and the programme committee, and focussed on the course material which was available during the site visit. In addition, it

studied the academic orientation of the programme and the intended learning outcomes. As a result, the committee is of the opinion that the curriculum of both the part-time and full-time programme has a coherent structure and that the intended learning outcomes are very clearly represented in the modules. It confirms the academic orientation of the programme and affirms that the programme combines the specialities of the different universities in a very good manner.

The teaching concept and formats derive from the Utrecht University's didactic model which is extended with the project 'BaMa 3.0' in 2011. This new project aims at helping students get better results, challenge students to get the best out of themselves and their education, support teachers to effectively make use of their time, and appreciate teachers more clearly. The committee studied Utrecht University's didactic model and found that is not entirely clear as a concept. It argues that the didactic model is what one would expect as a standard for academic education: It does not contain any remarkable or outstanding didactic visions. However, the committee is more pleased with the didactic vision of the programme itself, which is applied in threefold: active and self-directed learning, a progression from basic to advanced learning, and learning is always followed by application. The committee believes that the programme is feasible.

Regarding the quality of the teaching staff, the committee argues that this is adequate, but simultaneously advises to increase the percentage of teachers holding a PhD and BKO or SKO. The quantity of the teaching staff is adequate as well. From the interview with teaching staff it became clear that the work pressure is high, but evenly spread over the four involved universities. Teachers are provided with 50 hours to guide students during their thesis procedure, which the committee appreciates.

The programme-specific facilities, such as RTK-GPS, map tables, total stations, terrestrial lidar, ArcGIS, GeoMedia Pro, Flowmap, VoIp (mainly Skype), video conferencing tools like Adobe Connect, Dropbox, LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter, are diverse and very suitable to the content and didactics of the programme.

Evaluations are executed adequately, and the programme specific quality control is of sufficient quality. Nevertheless, the committee would like to point out that the Programme Committee should adopt a (pro)active, instead of reactive, attitude.

Standard 3

The committee believes that the assessment policy is adequately formulated and executed. It finds the working method of the Examination Committee thorough, and is positive about the cooperation of the four universities within the Examination Committee. It is happy with the great variation of examinations and believes that they fit the content of the programme and target the right academic level. The committee appreciated the continuous assessment, but wonders whether the total number of 60 assessments might be too much. The committee is confident about the execution of the master thesis, which is very well structured and supervised. The result of this well organised procedure is visible in the high percentage of published theses. The committee is also satisfied about the level of the master theses. The committee supports the decision to change the order of internship and thesis writing to reduce the delay in graduation. Simultaneously, it affirms that this popularity of graduates on the labour market indicates the quality of the programme. The committee is convinced that the internship adds value and that at the end of the master's programme, students achieve the intended learning outcomes.

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

Master's programme Geographical Sciences:

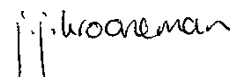
Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes	satisfactory
Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment	satisfactory
Standard 3: Assessment and achieved learning outcomes	satisfactory
General conclusion	satisfactory

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

Date: 20-02-2014



Prof. H.F.L. (Henk) Ottens



J.J. (Jasne) Krooneman, MSc.

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.

Findings

This standard first provides an insight into the committee's findings regarding the domain-specific framework of reference (1.1). Subsequently, attention is paid to the profile and orientation (1.2) and the intended learning outcomes and their orientation (1.3).

1.1 Domain-specific framework of reference

Contrary to the jointly prepared domain-specific framework of reference for university programmes participating in the Human Geography and Spatial Planning cluster assessment, Geographical Sciences refers to another framework of reference (see appendix 2). In the critical reflection, the programme management links the curriculum of Geographical Sciences to the Geographic Science & Technology Body of Knowledge (GI-BoK). This GI-BoK has been developed by the University Consortium for Geographical Information Science (UCGIS), which is a worldwide representation of universities and professional associations in the field of Geo-information Science. GI-BoK covers ten knowledge areas: analytical methods, conceptual foundations, cartography and visualisation, design aspects, data modelling, data manipulation, geocomputation, geospatial data, geoinformation science and technology and society, and organisational and institutional aspects.. Those 'bodies of knowledge' are further divided into units and topics.

The committee has studied the domain-specific framework of reference and finds that it is formulated adequately to cover the field of Geoinformation Science and Technology. However, the committee thinks that in the format of a structured listing of 350 weighted topics it does not provide an adequate framework to derive learning outcomes from. It needs more qualitative elaboration. The Geographical Sciences programme's profile covers all knowledge areas but stresses the analytical methods and organisational issues. As, mentioned, the committee would like to have seen a more qualitative description and justification of the profile of the programme.

1.2 Profile and orientation

The master's programme Geographical Sciences is a joint programme of four Dutch universities: Utrecht University, Delft University of Technology, University of Twente and Wageningen University. Staff members from each institute participate in the execution of the programme, and the contact days between students and teachers are held sequentially at each of these institutes. The programme director and secretariat rotate every four years among the institutes involved. This is an unique form of educational interuniversity cooperation.

As stated in the critical reflection, the goal of the interuniversity master's programme is to provide students from the Netherlands and abroad with an academic, master-level education in state-of-the-art knowledge, skills, and tools of geo-information science and technology. In the master's programme Geographical Sciences, the analytical methods, which include methods and techniques to process geodata in order to arrive at analytical results, receive most attention. Organisational & institutional aspects, which refer to the management of geo-information systems, including hardware, software, dataware, humanware, within and between organisations (orgware), are also included in the domain-specific intended learning outcomes of the programme. The 'knowledge bodies' conceptual foundations, cartography and visualisation, design aspects and data modelling, are less well specified in these outcomes. Data acquisition and topics like photogrammetry, remote sensing, and land surveying get limited attention in the programme. Dissemination of legal economic, and ethical aspects of geo-information science and technology are also only limitedly covered.. The primary focus is on geo-information applications and geo-information management.

The committee has studied the profile of the programme and finds that it fits the orientation of a master's programme. It affirms that the programme profile is detailed and formulated adequately.

1.3 Intended learning outcomes and academic and professional orientation

As included in appendix 3, the programme has divided the intended learning outcomes into three categories: domain-specific, scientific and general learning outcomes.

According to the information in the critical reflection, the orientation of the programme is academic. This orientation is implemented in three ways. First of all, explicit scientific learning outcomes are identified. Secondly, academic skills such as literature search, report writing, presentation, and peer review are embedded in the entire programme. Finally, the thesis work is strongly linked to current research themes in the partners' institutes and to the specialisation of the supervisors.

The committee has studied the intended learning outcomes and argues that they target the correct academic level and consist of a mixture of an academic and professional orientation.

Considerations

According to the committee, the programme has identified a well-defined and clear domain-specific framework of reference, but one that might not suit the programme properly. It affirms that it predominantly matches the reference framework's analytical and organisational aspects, but that the other 'knowledge bodies' are less well represented. Fortunately, the programme has formulated a more detailed own profile, in which it states that the primary focus lies on geo-information applications and geo-information management.

According to the committee, the profile of the programme matches the orientation and intended learning outcomes. It has a clear academic and, to a lesser extent, professional orientation, which is represented in the intended learning outcomes.

Conclusion

Master's programme Geographical Sciences: the committee assesses Standard 1 as satisfactory.

Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment

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

Explanation:

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

Findings

This standard provides an insight into content, structure and coherence of the curriculum (2.1) of the master's programme Geographical Sciences. In section 2.2 the didactic concept is analysed. Special attention is paid to the relation between the learning outcomes and the curriculum (2.3) and in section 2.4 the academic orientation of the master's programme is analysed. The feasibility of the programme is described in section 2.5 and the quality and quantity of the teaching staff form the centre of attention in section 2.6. Briefly, the facilities are discussed (2.7). This standard concludes with an analysis of the programme-specific quality control (2.8).

2.1 Content, structure and coherence of the curriculum

Geographical Sciences is a master's programme which has no bachelor's counterpart. The total programme is worth 120 EC. The programme is available full-time and part-time. The findings, considerations and conclusions of the committee apply to both modes of study, unless explicitly stated otherwise.

Full-time

As can be seen in the overview of the curriculum (see appendix 4), the nominal duration for full-time students is two years. The programme is split into four programme elements.

Programme element 1

The first element of the programme starts with an *introduction* to the curriculum, the electronic learning environment, and tools to facilitate communication during distance learning (module 0). In addition, in this module the views of the different universities on geo-information science and technology are presented and intake interviews are held with each student. The introduction is followed by three modules: *methods & techniques*, *basic applications*, *management in organisations*. Module 1 (*methods & techniques*) focuses on basic geo-information methods and techniques for the entire geo-information process, such as data acquisition, storage, manipulation and analysis, visualisation, and begins with building academic skills. In *basic applications* (module 2), students apply the knowledge and skills gained in module 1 in a realistic project, working in a small team. There is an emphasis on methodological reflection on their own work and monitoring that of a counter group. The *management in organisations* module teaches management of geo-information within and for an organisation.

Programme element 2

In the second element of the programme, students attend another three modules: *project management*, *advanced methods & techniques*, and *advanced applications*. The period begins with module 4, *project management*, in which students learn how to set up a project, use project management tools, and evaluate geo-information projects. Thereafter, they attend *advanced methods & techniques* (module 5), which consists of two parts: a broad first phase, discussing several compulsory advanced topics, and an in-depth phase, focussing on one of the broad

topics. In module 6, *advanced applications*, students integrate and apply the knowledge and skills acquired in the previous modules. They work in a team on a selected case, plan the project, prepare, analyse, and visualise the data, produce a poster, and write a scientific report about the project.

Programme element 3

Programme element 3 is reserved for an internship, a compulsory part of the programme and equivalent to a study load of 30 EC. The internship period offers students opportunities for professional orientation. The entry requirement for an internship is that at least five out of six modules must be completed. Internships are done in companies, organisations and research institutes in the Netherlands or abroad. As stated in the critical reflection, from September 2012 students have the opportunity to follow one or two MSc courses within the internship period at universities in the Netherlands or abroad. There are two conditions: an internship must still be at least 20 EC and the extra MSc courses must be relevant and complementary to the Geographical Sciences programme.

Programme element 4

In programme element 4, students show their ability to apply and integrate the theoretical knowledge and skills obtained earlier in the programme. They write a thesis, and demonstrate their skills to pursue independent research. Students must have completed at least five out of six of the modules, and the module that is not yet complete must be near completion in order to enter the master's thesis period.

Part-time

As can be seen in the overview of the curriculum (see appendix 4), the nominal duration for part-time students is four years. This means that every period described above refers to one academic year. Apart from the duration, there are no differences between the full-time and part-time programme.

The committee read the curriculum description in the critical reflection and the digital learning environment, interviewed teachers, students, alumni and the programme committee, and focussed on the course material which was available during the site visit. As a result, the committee is of the opinion that the curriculum, followed either part-time or full-time, has a coherent structure.

2.2 Didactic concept

The committee examined which didactic concept forms the basis of the offered education.

The teaching concept and formats derive from the Utrecht University's didactic model which, according to the advice report of 2011 (Adviesrapport Utrechts Onderwijsmodel 3.0), is characterised by an obvious distinction between the bachelor and master stage, flexibility and freedom of choice, personal and activating education, and a clear assessment policy. Since the second half of 2011, the model was extended with the project 'BaMa 3.0', which aims at helping students get better results, challenge students to get the best out of themselves and their education, support teachers to effectively make use of their time, appreciate teachers more clearly.

The committee studied Utrecht University's didactic model and found that is not entirely clear as a concept. It argues that the didactic model is what one would expect as a standard for academic education: it does not contain any remarkable or outstanding didactic visions.

The master's programme has formulated its own didactic vision in addition to BaMA 3.0. The educational approach is applied in threefold: active and self-directed learning, a progression from basic to advanced learning, and learning is always followed by application.

The first main concept, active and self-directed learning, is visible in the blended learning design: students gain academic knowledge independently by self-study of the course material, and they acquire skills by carrying out tasks and assignments. Each of the modules starts with three days of intensive contact at one of the universities. The contact days precede a period of twelve weeks in which students work at home. All modules end with two contact days, held at a different university than at the start of the module. Active and self-directed learning emerges clearly in the final part of the programme, which is based on individual work during an internship period and a period of independent research or development and writing of the thesis.

The second concept, a progression from basic to advanced learning, is visible in the link between module 1 and 2 (basic learning) with module 5 and 6 (advanced learning). As stated in the critical reflection, there is an increasing integration of concepts, theories, methods and tools.

The third concept, learning is always followed by application, is embedded in module 1 and 5 in which methods and techniques are offered in a structured way, and module 2 and 6 which both include the application in realistic cases to enhance understanding. In the internship and thesis integration and application culminate.

From the interview with students it became clear that they indeed need to be very active and self-directed in order to get through the twelve week home studies period. Although the discussions should be on blackboard, not everyone does access and hence most of the interaction takes place on Facebook. The students also noted that the way teachers contribute to the programme differs greatly. Due to the fact that they are from different universities, with different specialities, there is a variation in how teachers approach the students of the programme. The students therefore believe that it is desirable if the working methods of teachers would be harmonised better.

The committee agrees with the students, and advises the programme management to rethink and refresh the blended learning design, used for more than ten years now, taking into consideration recent developments in e-learning and virtual classroom facilities. Nevertheless, the committee thinks the didactic vision is still of sufficient quality to guarantee good education.

2.3 Representation of the intended learning outcomes in the curriculum

The programme has provided a schematic overview to indicate the representation of the intended learning outcomes in the curriculum. According to this scheme, intended learning outcome 1, identify and understand geo-information concepts, methods and techniques, is, for example, represented in module 1 (*methods & techniques*). In this module students have to describe and understand the basics of the geo-information process, including the role of data modelling, and they have to understand the basics of data acquisition, data storage, data analysis, and visualisation technologies. In addition, students have to understand the basics of quality issues of geo-information and apply the basic methods in handling geo-information using the ArcGIS software. Intended learning outcome 7, communicate clearly with specialists and non-specialists to present and discuss the outcomes of research and design projects, is, among others, represented in module 4 (*project management*). In this module,

students have to describe and understand the structure of organisations, and they have to understand and use methods and techniques of project management to read and prepare a project proposal. In addition, they have to identify and formulate objectives, tasks, resources, deliverables of a project, and they have to identify and specify the phases in a project, as well as to break down the project in activities and sub-activities. Next, they have to identify the need for human resources and allocate human resources within a geo-information project at an operational level, use appropriate tools to evaluate geo-information project proposals and results, and use indicators to measure project performance.

The committee studied the schematic overview, read the module descriptions in the critical reflection and the digital learning environment, and is of the opinion that the intended learning outcomes are very clearly represented in the curriculum.

2.4 Academic orientation

According to the critical reflection, the programme is academically oriented. It linked its intended learning outcomes to Dublin descriptors, and provides an overview of how the academic skills are embedded in the curriculum. From this schematic overview it becomes clear that the programme identifies several academic skills which are linked to modules and learning activities. For example, the academic skill information acquisition (library skills), is explicitly present in module 1 and 2. The academic skill formulation of research problems is present in module 1, and the academic skill research communication is treated in module 8. Working in (interdisciplinary) research teams is part of module 4, for example, and the critical analysis and evaluation of research results is trained in module 8. Overall, the committee believes that the academic orientation is strong since the curriculum contains many research methods and pays a lot of attention to GIS.

The committee is very pleased with the academic orientation of the programme. The programme takes the good things of the universities involved and combines them in a good manner. According to the committee, the internship offers students useful opportunities for a professional orientation as well.

2.5 Feasibility

As stated in the critical reflection, the length of study until graduation has declined: for part-time students from 45 months in 2006 to 30 in 2009; for full-time students from 40 months in 2006 to 24 months in 2010. A pause in studies occurs more often among part-time students, and they also quit their education more often than full-time students. According to the programme management, students frequently underestimate the workload. It might also be related to other situations, such as personal or family problems, switching to another study and recently, high tuition fees. The number of dropouts has declined steadily: from 5 in cohort 2006 to 1 or 0 in most recent cohorts.

A delay in studies often occurs in the internship and thesis phase. From the interviews it became clear that from 2014 onwards students are encouraged to first write the thesis, and then apply for an internship placement. The committee welcomes this change in order of activities.

The committee finds that the programme is feasible. It encourages the programme to continue to inform students in advance about the workload and intensity of the curriculum.

2.6 Teaching staff

The committee focussed on the quality and quantity of the teaching staff at the master's programme Geographical Sciences.

Quality

Of the instructors, 65% hold a PhD and play an active role in research, national and international projects, scientific committees and organisations. In addition, 40% holds a basic or higher teaching qualification (BKO or SKO).

The committee is convinced that the programme houses very experienced staff members. However, it believes that the percentage of teachers holding a PhD and BKO or SKO is a point for improvement. It would like to see an increase in those percentages over the years to come and that all involved institutes follow the same approach in this respect. Nevertheless, the committee believes that the average of twenty years teaching experience guarantees a sufficient quality of the teaching staff.

Quantity

The standards regarding student-staff ratios differ among the partners involved, as is stated in the critical reflection. Calculation of an overall, common ratio would therefore be rather misleading. Nonetheless, the universities have agreed on a standard of 4% support time, which includes teaching, supervision, assessments, and education-related staff consultations. A student-staff ratio of 1:25 is the outcome of this 4% standard, leading to 67.2 hours of support time for full-time students, and 33.6 hours of support time for part-time students. In practice however, the programme management states that this turns out to be much more.

The committee argues that the quantity of staff members is adequate. It noted that the work pressure is high, but evenly spread over the universities involved.

2.7 Facilities

As stated in the critical reflection, the programme has several programme-specific facilities. To begin with, students may acquire a laptop via the notebook programme for students of the University of Twente. Secondly, students have access to several hardware and software facilities, such as workstations with two screens, a usability lab, RTK-GPS, map tables, total stations, terrestrial lidar, ArcGIS, GeoMedia Pro, Flowmap, etcetera. For spatial data support in the research phase students can use Geodesk. Thirdly, for the period that students work at home, several types of software and communication media are used. Examples are VoIp (mainly Skype), video conferencing tools like Adobe Connect, Dropbox, LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter. The committee considers the various facilities available as very adequate for the content and didactics of the programme.

2.8 Programme-specific quality control

Evaluation, which is part of the plan-do-check-act cycle, takes place at the end of each module and again at the end of the academic year. In addition, in module 7, students write a reflection report. Generally, the response rates of evaluations carried out at the end of a module are rather low, while the response rates of evaluations carried out at the last contact day of a module is much higher. Since there is quite some variation in the format, content and response rates, a streamlining operation is on-going, in cooperation with the Programme Committee.

In order to become a student member of the Programme Committee, one has to apply and get invited for an interview. The Programme Committee meets six times a year, in which all evaluations are discussed. From the interview with the Programme Committee it became clear that the evaluations are executed adequately and continuously improved. However, the committee believes that the Programme Committee predominantly functions in a rather reactive manner. It finds it remarkable that action is solely taken on the basis of the student

evaluations. It advises the Programme Committee to become more (pro)active in its quality control function.

Considerations

The master's programme Geographical Sciences (120 EC) has a curriculum which is split into four programme elements. The first two programme elements include modules, and the last two elements include the internship and thesis writing. In the full-time version of the programme students attend programme element one and two during the first academic year, and programme element three and four in the second year. Part-time students however, take an entire academic year for each programme element. Hence, the nominal duration of their studies is four years.

The committee is pleased with the curriculum of both the part-time and full-time programme, and believes it has a coherent structure. In addition, the committee affirms that the intended learning outcomes are clearly represented in the programme, and contribute to the academic orientation of the programme as well.

The committee argues that the Utrecht University's didactic model applied in this inter-university programme is not entirely clear as a concept, and states that it is what one would expect as a standard for academic education: it does not contain any remarkable or outstanding didactic visions. It is more happy with the didactic vision of the programme itself, which is applied in threefold: active and self-directed learning, a progression from basic to advanced learning, and learning is always followed by application. However, when the programme started in 2008, it was at the forefront in didactic approaches (basically distant learning within an inter-university programme). The past period can be regarded as a period of consolidation. Nevertheless, the committee would like to have seen some innovation in didactics because in today's world, so many more things are possible.

The programme is feasible. There is sufficient and adequate staff available. The committee recommends to increase the percentage of PhD and BKO or SKO holders over the coming years.

The facilities of the programme are diverse and suit the content and didactics well. The committee regrets that the Programme Committee predominantly functions in a reactive manner. It would like to see the Programme Committee to become more (pro)active.

Conclusion

Master's programme Geographical Sciences: the committee assesses Standard 2 as satisfactory.

Standard 3: Assessment and achieved learning outcomes

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

Explanation:

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

Findings

This standard considers the findings regarding the assessment system (3.1) and subsequently deals with the question whether the graduate students are able to achievement of the learning outcomes (3.2).

3.1 Assessment system

The committee analysed the assessment system of the master's programme Geographical Sciences and focussed on the assessment policy, including the functioning of the Examination Committee, the examinations and the master thesis procedure.

Assessment policy

As stated in the critical reflection, the programme has a strategy which implies continuous assessment by a variety of methods throughout the curriculum. In order to motivate students to study continuously, 60 assessments are held in total. Weightings of different assessment components are determined by a so-called module team. Students are informed about the types of assessment and weightings per module in the course catalogue, and, in more detail, at the start of each module. Grading is usually done on a scale of 1-10, and sometimes on a pass/fail basis.

Based on the information from the critical reflection, the documentation of the Examination Committee and the interviews, the committee wonders whether the number of 60 assessments is not too much. It understands that students should be encouraged to study continuously, but thinks that this type of continuous assessment might have a negative effect on student motivation and room for self-exploration by students.

Nevertheless, the committee believes that the assessment policy as a whole is adequately formulated and executed. It finds the working method of the Examination Committee thorough, and is positive about the cooperation of the four universities within the Examination Committee.

Examinations

The committee studied many types of exams, such as project proposals, mid-term project plans, final reports, intermediate/midterm reports, SWOT analyses final report, papers, process reports, internship reports/papers, personal reflections, tasks and poster presentations. It states that there is enough diversity and that the exams are at a satisfactory academic level. It finds that the content of the exams is adequate and that the examination is consistent.

Master Thesis

The master thesis is a mandatory part of the programme and the research deals with a specific need or issue that is relevant to the present-day practice of geo-information management and

application. In some cases the student proposes a subject for the thesis; sometimes it originates from a project carried out in module 6 or 7; but in most instances the subject is chosen from a list supplied by the lecturers. This list contains topics that are closely linked to the specialisations and research of the staff. The thesis process is, as described in the critical reflection, well-structured and organised into four phases. To begin with, a student fills in a 'research identification' form as soon as the topic is selected and supervision has been arranged. Second, the topic is elaborated in an extended research proposal or thesis plan. This proposal has to be approved by the supervisor(s) and a responsible professor. Then, after completing the first chapters of the thesis, the student gives a mid-term presentation. Once the research has been completed and the thesis is written, the student needs the approval of the main supervisor and responsible professor for a thesis presentation and a public defence, led by the Thesis Examination Committee (TEC). The entire thesis process is monitored by coordinators of module 8, and during the thesis period regular meetings and other forms of contact with the supervisor(s) take place. Students are encouraged to think about the thesis topic right from the beginning of the programme. The thesis assessment is done by the Thesis Examination Committee, consisting of the main supervisor, a reviewer from another university and the chair of the GIMA Examination Committee.

The committee is very enthusiastic about the thesis process: it is well structured and supervised.

3.2 Achievement of the learning outcomes

By reading fourteen theses, the committee analysed the achieved learning outcomes of graduate students. The theses were carefully selected, taking into account a proportional distribution of low, average and high grades.

After studying the theses, the committee concluded that it is generally satisfied with the overall level achieved. The theses start with a clear objective and, generally, the research deals with advanced analytical and/or organisational issues and methods. The committee finds it remarkable that about one third of the students publish their thesis work. This is unprecedented when compared with the other master's programmes under consideration. The committee would like to encourage this development.

From the interviews it became clear that many students extend the duration of their internship: as they are wanted on the labour market. The committee supports the decision to change the order of internship and thesis writing to reduce the delay in graduation. Simultaneously, it affirms that this popularity on the labour market indicates the quality of the programme.

The satisfaction of the labour market with the graduates and the general level of the theses prove that the learning outcomes are indeed achieved at the end of the master's programme Geographical Sciences, according to the committee.

Considerations

The committee believes that the assessment policy is adequately formulated and executed. It finds the working method of the Examination Committee thorough, and is positive about the cooperation of the four universities within the Examination Committee. The committee has some doubts about the necessity of 60 assessments during the entire programme and fears that it might reduce student motivation. The committee argues that there is enough diversity

in the examinations, and that they fit the content of the programme and target a satisfactory academic level. In addition, it affirms that the thesis process is well structured and supervised. The committee is pleasantly surprised to note the high number of theses published every year. The theses start with a clear objective and deal with advanced issues and methods. It believes that the satisfaction of the labour market is visible in the availability of many internships, and therefore is happy with changing the curriculum in such a way that students first write their thesis, and then attend the internship. The committee is convinced that at the end of the programme, the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Conclusion

Master's programme Geographical Sciences: the committee assesses Standard 3 as satisfactory.

General conclusion

The committee assesses the *master's programme Geographical Sciences* as satisfactory.

III: Human Geography

Summary judgement

This report provides an overview of the findings and considerations of the committee regarding the master's programme Human Geography of Utrecht University. The committee based its judgement on information acquired from the critical reflection, a selected number of theses, the interviews during the site visit, additional reading material which was available during the site visit, and the digital learning environment. The committee found both positive aspects as well as points for improvement. After a careful consideration, it concluded that the master's programme Human Geography satisfies the requirements for accreditation.

Standard 1

The committee studied the domain-specific framework of reference, the profile and orientation, and the intended learning outcomes of the master's programme Human Geography. The programme exists of three different tracks, Economic Geography, Geo-Communication and Urban Geography, which are worth 60 EC each. The programme has formulated a profile and orientation and constructed several intended learning outcomes at the correct academic level for the entire master's programme. However, they do not address the speciality of the three, significantly different tracks. The committee believes that the intended learning outcomes and the profile fit within the broad domain-specific framework of reference, but are too general. It is satisfied with the inclusion of a professional orientation besides the academic orientation.

Standard 2

The master's programme Human Geography consists of three 60 EC master's tracks: Economic Geography, Geo-Communication and Urban Geography. In the full-time version of the programme, each track takes up one academic year. In the part-time stream, the programme takes two academic years to complete. In period one and two of the programme, students attend three courses in the master specialisation subject, and one course in advanced research methods and techniques. In period three and four, the learning activity is independent research – individually developed, organised and conducted – in the shape of the internship and thesis work. Part-time students attend lectures at the same time as full-time students, but the theoretical courses are taken first. According to the committee, the curricula of the three master tracks have a coherent structure in which the learning outcomes are embedded. The committee regrets that there is no real integration of the curricula of those tracks nor between the students or staff members. The different tracks are presented and treated as different master programmes, so the 'umbrella' of Human Geography does not seem very relevant.

The teaching concept and formats derive from the Utrecht University's didactic model which is extended with the project 'BaMa 3.0' in 2011. This new project aims at helping students get better results, challenge students to get the best out of themselves and their education, support teachers to effectively make use of their time, and appreciate teachers more clearly. The committee studied Utrecht University's didactic model and found that is not entirely clear as a concept. It argues that the didactic model is what one would expect as a standard for academic education: it does not contain any remarkable or outstanding didactic visions. However, the committee finds that the teaching methods are more concrete. The staff uses several forms of transferring knowledge, such as lectures, tutorials, seminars, assignments, project work, computer exercises and fieldwork trips. The committee is very pleased with the wide range of teaching methods, and thinks they match the content of the curriculum very well.

The master's programme Human Geography is predominantly academically oriented, which the committee appreciates. It believes that in order to optimise the learning environment for students, more workspace is required. Currently, there is a shortage of rooms available for group work.

The feasibility of the programme could be improved as well, according to the committee. It therefore it is happy with the new protocol that has been developed to stimulate the severely delayed students to keep on track and finish their thesis as soon as possible.

The committee is convinced that the programme houses qualified and dedicated teaching staff. However, it has some serious worries regarding the quantity of the teaching staff. It noted that the workload for staff members is too high.

Evaluations are executed adequately, and the programme specific quality control is of sufficient quality. Nevertheless, the committee would like to point out that the Programme Committee should adopt an active, instead of reactive, attitude.

Standard 3

The committee believes that the assessment policy is satisfactory. Each course counts at least two assessments, the assessment instruments are diversified, two teachers jointly develop assessments and the resit-policy is rather tough.

It is pleased with the great variation of examinations and believes that they fit the content of the programme and target the right academic level. The committee is confident about the execution of the master thesis. Although there are some differences in length of the report due to a combination with or without an internship, the overall level achieved is of sufficient quality. It would like to see students to be somewhat more creative regarding the topic and methodology of the thesis, and adopt an international outlook. In addition, it regrets that currently theory is sometimes under-exposed, and would like to see theory in a more central position in the thesis. The committee is convinced that the internship adds value and that at the end of the master's programme, students achieve the intended learning outcomes. Nevertheless, the committee thinks that an internship of 15 EC as part of an academic master's programme (Geo-Communication) is too generous and would like to see that this specialisation is brought in line with the other two Human Geography specialisations in this respect (7,5 EC internship; 22,5 EC thesis).

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

Master's programme Human Geography:

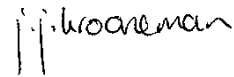
Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes	satisfactory
Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment	satisfactory
Standard 3: Assessment and achieved learning outcomes	satisfactory
General conclusion	satisfactory

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

Date: 20-02-2014



Prof. H.F.L. (Henk) Ottens



J.J. (Jasne) Krooneman, MSc.

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.

Findings

This standard first provides an insight into the committee's findings regarding the domain-specific framework of reference (1.1). Subsequently, attention is paid to the profile and orientation (1.2) and the intended learning outcomes and their orientation (1.3).

1.1 Domain-specific framework of reference

The universities participating in the Human Geography and Spatial Planning cluster assessment (the University of Amsterdam, the Radboud University Nijmegen, the University of Groningen, and Utrecht University) jointly prepared a domain-specific framework of reference (appendix 2).

The committee studied the domain-specific framework of reference and finds it rather broad and general. Even though it is clear that the field of Human Geography and Spatial Planning is a broad domain and integrative and multidisciplinary by nature, the committee feels that it would be beneficial if the domain could be specified in more detail. A clearly defined domain-specific framework of reference, positioned in the international discussion about the nature of the disciplines, would challenge the participating programmes to establish their own orientation within the domain more clearly. In addition, the committee feels that a more clearly defined framework of reference would make students more aware of the domain they are studying and that it could support the legitimation of the field. The current joint framework should be considered a first step that deserves a follow-up by the participating faculties/departments. Furthermore, developing a joint approach to national and international benchmarking could contribute to position the programmes more effectively. This is predominantly a problem for the Human Geography part of the framework and to a lesser extent for the Spatial Planning part.

The committee recommends the programmes involved in this assessment to further elaborate the domain-specific framework of reference, if possible in collaboration with a few other programmes which have not been involved in the present accreditation round. The framework could be further specified and then serve as a clearer basis to indicate both similarities and differences among the orientations of the programmes in this field.

Nevertheless, the committee argues that the described domain-specific qualifications are appropriate for a master's programme within the field of Human Geography and Spatial Planning.

1.2 Profile and orientation

According to the critical reflection, Human Geography is a master's programme that builds on the qualifications of bachelor or pre-master students regarding knowledge, skills and academic attitude. Its mission is to foster an advanced understanding of complex spatial issues, structures, behaviour, and their representations. In addition, the programme also emphasises the application of academic knowledge and understanding to current socio-spatial challenges by means of individual research projects and design projects related to geographical information and communication, targeting various audiences. In this way, the programme aims to prepare students for positions as independent, critically thinking human geographers in various fields of work.

The programme offers three specialisation tracks of 60 EC each: Economic Geography, Geo-Communication and Urban Geography. The first two are taught in Dutch, the third in English. As stated in the critical reflection, these specialisations are comparable with respect to their aims, intended learning outcomes and structure of the curriculum and assessment procedures. They differ in content, however, as each is focused on specific academic and professional fields. For that reason, the committee finds it regrettable that there are no separate profiles for the three tracks.

The committee studied the profile of the master's programme Human Geography and feels that it definitely matches an academic master's level. It is satisfied with the programme's mission to foster an advanced understanding of complex spatial issues, structures, behaviour, and their representations. However, it questions how the three specialisation tracks are combined in one profile while they are in practice so different from each other. It would be more evident to have three separate profiles, according to the committee.

1.3 Intended learning outcomes and academic and professional orientation

As stated in a more extensive manner in appendix 3, the management of the master's programme Human Geography has formulated the following learning outcomes:

1. Students have knowledge and understanding of: socio-spatial issues, causes and consequences, of the theory, nature, history, and methodology in the master specialisation, and of policy interventions;
2. Students can apply their knowledge and understanding in: research or design projects, (literature analysis, empirical research, conclusions, recommendations) and in professional organisations;
3. Students can make judgements regarding: selecting techniques/skills, using techniques/skills, the effects of complex societal developments and interventions, societal implications, academic attitude;
4. Students can communicate their knowledge by: presentation and communication, addressing the right audience, argumentation and discussion, convincing a professional organisation;
5. Students have learning skills which they can use to: update knowledge, actively participate in debates, plan and conduct an individual research, work in groups, learn about other disciplines, qualify for a PhD project.

The committee studied the intended learning outcomes and is of the opinion that they are too generally formulated. Due to the existence of three specialisation tracks, the committee believes that the programme should have developed detailed learning outcomes for each track. In fact, the master's programme Human Geography does not exist as such: it functions as an 'umbrella' for the three different tracks that function as if they were separate master's

programmes. The committee believes that either this ‘umbrella’ should be removed, and three different master programmes should be created, or that the three tracks should be integrated (more) intensively. At the moment, there is hardly any interaction between the tracks, apart from a methodology course.

The committee finds that the programme has a focus on training students as researchers. The intended learning outcomes include, for example, training in research projects, learn about other disciplines and qualify for a PhD project. These outcomes clearly aim at an academic orientation. Training in presentation and communication, convincing a professional organisation and applying knowledge and understanding in recommendations and professional organisations are skills that can facilitate the entrance to the labour market. Hence, the outcomes seem to have a professional orientation as well. The committee states that the intended learning outcomes are targeted at the correct academic level and consist of the right, balanced future orientation.

Considerations

The committee studied the domain-specific framework of reference, the profile and orientation, and the intended learning outcomes of the master’s programme Human Geography. It argues that at the moment the domain-specific framework of reference is broad, but solidly founded and that the profile and orientation fit an academic master’s level. The committee regrets that there are no different profiles for the three specialisation tracks, since they are aimed at quite different fields within the domain of Human Geography. The intended learning outcomes of the master’s programme as a whole are formulated in general terms. The committee furthermore regrets that specialisation tracks do not have their own additional learning outcomes. The committee noted that the three different specialisation tracks seem to function as separate master’s programmes rather than specialisations (see section 2.1). Therefore, the committee argues that the intended learning outcomes and the profile could and should be made more specific for each track. Despite the committee’s critical remarks, it finds that the intended learning outcomes prepare students for both an academic as well as a professional career in Human Geography.

Conclusion

Master’s programme Human Geography: the committee assesses Standard 1 as satisfactory.

Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment

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

Explanation:

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

Findings

This standard provides an insight into content, structure and coherence of the curriculum (2.1) of the master's programme Human Geography. In section 2.2 the didactic concept is analysed. Special attention is paid to the relation between the learning outcomes and the curriculum (2.3) and in section 2.4 the academic orientation of the master's programme is analysed. The feasibility of the programme is described in section 2.5 and the quality and quantity of the teaching staff form the centre of attention in section 2.6. Briefly, the facilities are discussed (2.7). This standard concludes with an analysis of the programme-specific quality control (2.8).

2.1 Content, structure and coherence of the curriculum

The master's programme Human Geography offers three specialisation tracks with the same structure: Economic Geography, Geo-Communication and Urban Geography.

Full-time

Each master's track, be it Economic Geography, Geo-Communication or Urban Geography, is worth a total of 60 EC and takes up one academic year. As stated in the critical reflection, three courses are offered in the master specialisation subject and one course in advanced research methods and techniques during the first semester. In the second semester the learning activity is independent research – individually developed, organised and conducted – in the form of the internship and thesis work. The first semester is split into period one and two, and the second semester comprises of period three and four.

Part-time

Students opting for the part-time stream in Human Geography attend half of the normal full-time courses. Consequently, the part-time stream takes two academic years to complete. Part-time students attend lectures at the same time as full-time students, but the theoretical courses are taken first. The findings of the committee apply to both the full-time and part-time programme, unless specifically stated otherwise.

Economic Geography

The Dutch taught master's track Economic Geography is split into four periods. Students attend two courses in the first period: *Ondernemerschap in de regio* (Entrepreneurship in the Region) and *Multinationale ondernemingen* (Multinational Firms). In *Ondernemerschap in de regio* (7.5 EC) new and small enterprises are considered as the engine of the local and regional economy. In *Multinationale ondernemingen* (7.5 EC) however, the central theme is the relationship between international enterprises and the region.

In the second period, students attend the course *Ruimtelijk economisch beleid in Europa* (Spatial-Economic Policy in Europe). This course (7.5 EC) focuses on the regional economic developments in Europe and the knowledge-based economy. *Advanced M&T Geography and*

Planning (7.5 EC) is the only course which overlaps the three specialisation tracks. The focus is on the various phases in research: preparation, execution, analysis and reporting.

During the third and fourth period of the programme, students work on their thesis. They can choose to solely work on their thesis (30 EC), or include an internship in this period. If they choose the last option, their thesis will be worth 22.5 EC and the internship 7.5 EC.

Geo-Communication

The specialisation track Geo-Communication is taught in Dutch. The curriculum is structured according to four periods. During the first period, students attend the course *Beeldvorming: Geografie & samenleving* (Representation: Geography & Society). In this course (7.5 EC) several academic perspectives are applied to consider the role of geographical knowledge in society. In the same period, the course *Atelier Educatief Ontwerpen* (Design Studio for Geographical Information) (7.5 EC) is offered. In the first half of this course, the theory and methodology of designing are treated. During the second half of this course, students create a design product.

The second period of the track consists of three courses: *Landschap als arena* (Landscape as Arena), *Praktijkoriëntatie; werkvelden en actueel debat* (Work field orientation), and *Advanced M&T voor Geo-communicatie* (Advanced Methods & Techniques for Geo-communication). In *Landschap als arena* (7.5 EC) the landscape is considered as an arena in which different actors fight their battles. Students choose a certain theme or problem which is present in the landscape and write a paper. In *Praktijkoriëntatie; werkvelden en actueel debat* (3.75 EC) students collect relevant literature and policy documents, visit organisations and interview key persons. In the course *Advanced M&T voor Geo-communicatie* (3.75 EC) the preparation, execution, analysis and reporting of a research project are discussed.

During the third and fourth period of the programme, students work on their thesis. They can choose to solely work on their thesis (30 EC), or include an internship in this period. If they choose the last option, there are two possibilities: their thesis will be worth 22.5 EC and the internship 7.5 EC or the thesis and internship will each be worth 15 EC.

Urban Geography

Urban Geography is the only English taught master's track in the master's programme Human Geography. The curriculum of Urban Geography is, just as the curriculum of the other specialisation tracks, divided in four periods. In the first period, students will attend the course *Advanced Urban Geography – Understanding temporal and spatial dynamics in cities* (7.5 EC). In this course, transformation processes in urbanised societies are studied from two perspectives: the daily life perspective and the life course perspective. Central to this course is to develop a better understanding of the dynamics in and meanings of physical spatio-temporal contexts for urban transformation processes. Also in this period the course *Advanced M&T Geography and Planning* (7.5 EC) is offered. In this course, students focus on different stages in the research process: preparation, execution, analysis and reporting.

In the second period, students can choose to follow *Urban Daily Life – Cultures, consumption and mobilities* (7.5 EC) or *Living in the city – Migration, residential mobility and neighbourhood effects* (7.5 EC). *Urban Daily Life – Cultures, consumption and mobilities* focuses predominantly on understanding daily activities and the mobility of individuals for work, shopping, leisure and other purposes. In *Living in the city – Migration, residential mobility and neighbourhood effects* the emphasis is on individual's life-paths through time and across urban space, and the implications of these paths for cities and neighbourhoods are discussed. All students attend

Urban reflections in practice: Field trip (7.5 EC). During a fieldtrip to a European or American city students analyse contemporary dynamics, developments and transformations in metropolitan regions.

During the third and fourth period of the programme, students work on their thesis and internship. They can choose to solely work on their thesis (30 EC), or include an internship in this period as well. If they choose the last option, their thesis will be worth 22.5 EC and the internship 7.5 EC.

The committee studied the three Human Geography master tracks, Economic Geography, Geo-Communication and Urban Geography. It read the curriculum descriptions in the critical reflection and the digital learning environment, interviewed teachers, students, alumni and the programme committee, and focussed on the course material which was available during the site visit. As a result, the committee is of the opinion that the three curricula all have a coherent structure. It is satisfied about the content of the courses offered and appreciates the possibility of conducting an internship in the second semester. Unfortunately, the committee could not detect any cohesion between the three different tracks. This absence of linkages between the curricula of the three tracks fits in the committee's statement that one could doubt the existence of the 'umbrella' Human Geography, and confirms the need for three separate programme profiles (see section 1.2).

2.2 Didactic concept

The committee examined which didactic concept forms the basis of the offered education.

The teaching concept and formats derive from the Utrecht University's didactic model which, according to the advice report of 2011 (*Adviesrapport Utrechts Onderwijsmodel 3.0*), is characterised by an obvious distinction between the bachelor and master stage, flexibility and freedom of choice, personal and activating education, and a clear assessment policy. Since the second half of 2011, the model was extended with the project 'BaMa 3.0', which aims at helping students get better results, challenge students to get the best out of themselves and their education, support teachers to effectively make use of their time, appreciate teachers more clearly.

The committee studied Utrecht University's didactic model and found that is not entirely clear as a concept. It argues that the didactic model is what one would expect as a standard for academic education: it does not contain any remarkable or outstanding didactic visions. The committee finds that the teaching methods used in the programme are more concrete. The staff uses several forms of transferring knowledge, such as lectures, tutorials, seminars, assignments, project work, computer exercises and fieldwork trips. The committee is pleased with the wide range of teaching methods, and thinks they match the content and didactics of the curriculum very well.

2.3 Representation of the intended learning outcomes in the curriculum

The committee analysed the relation between the learning outcomes and the curriculum. It also focussed on the cohesion and composition within the curriculum.

As discussed in section 1.3, the management of the master's programme Human Geography has formulated several learning outcomes. According to the critical reflection, these intended learning outcomes are embedded in the curriculum in different manners. The first learning outcome for example, can be found in the track Economic Geography in the courses: *Ondernemerschap in de regio*, *Multinationale ondernemingen*, *Ruimtelijk economisch beleid in Europa*, the

thesis and internship. In the track Geo-Communication, the first learning outcome is embedded in the courses: *Landschap als arena, Beeldvorming: Geografie & samenleving, the thesis and internship*. The track Urban Geography comprises the first learning outcome as well, namely in the courses: *Advanced Urban Geography – Understanding temporal and spatial dynamics in cities, Urban Daily Life – Cultures, consumption and mobilities, Living in the city – Migration, residential mobility and neighbourhood effects, Urban reflections in practice: Field trip, the thesis and internship*. For each learning outcome, there is a list of courses which contribute to the realisation of it. The second learning outcome for example, which includes the application of knowledge and understanding in a design project, is present in the course *Atelier Educatief Ontwerpen* in the Geo-Communication track, where students create a design product in the second half of the course.

The committee studied the courses and learning outcomes and is of the opinion that there is a clear relation between them. However, due to the very general nature of the formulated learning outcomes, the committee thinks it is sometimes difficult to detect the exact translation of these outcomes in the different courses.

2.4 Academic orientation

In the critical reflection, the programme is described as academically oriented. It argues that the master's programme Human Geography further develops and extends the broad base of academic knowledge and academic skills that was established in a bachelor's programme. It also states that it runs from theory and academic debate at one end, to application in empirical research or professional practice and relevant targeted communication aimed at real-world stakeholders at the other end.

The committee agrees with the critical reflection that the programme is predominantly academically oriented. Although it prepares students for a professional career as well, it is first and foremost directed towards acquiring an academic attitude. A good example of a course in which there is a clear construction of an academic approach is the *Advanced M&T* course, which runs through all three tracks. In this course, students focus on different stages in the research process: preparation, execution, analysis and reporting.

According to the committee, the academic orientation is adequate and sufficiently translated in the curriculum.

2.5 Feasibility

As stated in the critical reflection, many students take longer than a year to complete the programme. In the period 2004-2011, the average was 22 months. Although the length has shortened considerably since 2008-2009, currently students graduate on average almost six months later than the nominal programme duration. According to the programme management, the main reason for this delay is that students want to invest more time in improving the quality of their thesis or internship. Recently, a new protocol has been developed to stimulate the severely delayed students to keep on track and finish their thesis as soon as possible. The committee fully agrees with this protocol and advises the programme to continue to reduce delays.

2.6 Teaching staff

The committee focussed on the quality and quantity of the teaching staff at the master's programme Human Geography.

Quality

The positions of involved teaching staff range from junior lecturers who have recently obtained a master's degree to senior lecturers with ample teaching and research experience. Almost all senior staff members are active in both teaching and research. Tenured positions are limited to staff members holding a PhD. At present, 21 lecturers teach modules in Human Geography. In total, 9 hold a Senior Teaching Qualification (SKO), 8 hold a Basic Teaching Qualification (BKO), and 3 are in the process of obtaining a BKO.

From the interviews at the site visit, as well as the available information in the critical reflection and documentation of the Programme Committee, the committee is convinced that the programme houses well qualified and dedicated teaching staff.

Quantity

When it comes to the quantity of teachers, the committee is less satisfied. For several years, the student-staff ratio in the department has fluctuated around 1:40. Although the appointment of junior staff members had a positive effect on the ratio, it rose soon afterwards due to an increase of student numbers. The committee noted that the teaching staff struggles with the high workload, and argues that the allocation of new staff members, which is supposedly based on the workload of the different sections within the department, is not transparent.

During the site visit, many interviewees referred to the 'BaMa 3.0' project, which states that teachers should be appreciated more clearly. The committee feels that the workload for teachers is currently unacceptably high, and has the impression that teachers are not appreciated as such. Although the management tries to lower the workload, the committee argues that at faculty and/or university level action has to be taken.

2.7 Facilities

As stated in the critical reflection, the Faculty's new Study Landscape, with 70 work spaces, is open to all university students. From the interview with students it became clear that the facilities have recently improved, but that students still have difficulties finding a workspace. There is, and this is also confirmed by the alumni, a shortage of rooms available for group work. The committee agrees with the students that the facilities are adequate but that more workspace is required.

2.8 Programme-specific quality control

When it comes to the programme-specific quality control, the programme is subject to four evaluation systems through which students, graduates and alumni can reflect on the entire curriculum.

First, as stated in the critical reflection, graduating master students fill in the exit questionnaire. A second source of information is the National Student Survey, which is sent out each year in February/March and queries students about their educational programme. To overcome some drawbacks of the National Student Survey, such as a lack of information on the internship, a third evaluation system is in place in which master tracks arrange their own evaluation. However, for this evaluation in May/June, a standard evaluation is absent. A fourth evaluation is derived from the outcomes of the STOGO's (Applied Geographical Research Foundation) bi-annual Alumni Labour Market survey.

Apart from those evaluation types, it is standard procedure for participating students to evaluate all courses they attend. At the end of each period, the course coordinator has to

reflect on the points and then change the course accordingly. In addition, after every period, the Programme Committee summarises the main student evaluation outcomes, which are then reported to the Programme Director. As can be read in the critical reflection, for every course the outcome of the evaluations and the coordinator's reaction are published on Blackboard. The outcomes are also discussed at meetings with lecturers and in the individual assessments of the lecturer involved.

From the interview with the Programme Committee it became clear that the evaluations are executed adequately. However, the committee believes that the Programme Committee predominantly functions in a reactive manner. It finds it remarkable that action is solely taken on the basis of the student evaluations. It advises the Programme Committee to become more (pro)active in their quality control tasks.

Considerations

The committee thinks that the curricula of the three master tracks Economic Geography, Geo-Communication and Urban Geography have a coherent structure in which the learning outcomes are embedded. However, it regrets that there is no real integration between those three tracks. Due to its clear division, not only between the curricula but also in the descriptions on the website, the attitude of the teachers and students, the difference in language of instruction, etcetera, the committee questions the way Human Geography presents itself. Since the learning outcomes are formulated in a rather general manner, it is difficult to trace the exact translation of these outcomes in all courses provided in the different master tracks. The committee argues that it would be better to disconnect those tracks entirely, and have three different master's programmes. Alternatively, the three tracks should become more integrated.

The University Utrecht's didactic model is, according to the committee, not entirely clear as a concept. The committee finds the academic orientation of the master's programme adequate. Although the facilities have recently been improved, the committee believes that more workspaces and available rooms for group work are required. The committee is pleased with the newly implemented protocol which stimulates severely delayed students to keep on track and finish their thesis as soon as possible. It also hopes that further measurements will be taken to reduce the delay of other students as well.

The committee is sure that the programme houses qualified and dedicated teaching staff. When it comes to the quantity of the teaching staff however, it has some serious worries. The allocation of new staff members, which is supposedly based on the workload of the different sections within the department, is not transparent and the committee noted that the teaching staff struggles with the high workload.

The programme specific quality control is of sufficient quality. Evaluations are executed adequately, according to the committee. Nevertheless, it would appreciate a transition of the Programme Committee from a reactive towards an (pro)active attitude.

Conclusion

Master's programme Human Geography: the committee assesses Standard 2 as satisfactory.

Standard 3: Assessment and achieved learning outcomes

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

Explanation:

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

Findings

This standard considers the findings regarding the assessment system (3.1) and subsequently deals with the question whether the graduate students are able to achievement of the learning outcomes (3.2).

3.1 Assessment system

The committee analysed the assessment system of the master's programme Human Geography and focussed on the assessment policy, including the functioning of the Examination Committee, the examinations and the master thesis procedure.

Assessment policy

As stated in the critical reflection, the master's programme applies a system of continuous assessment, in which all components of the curriculum are assessed. Grading is done on a 1 – 10 scale, and a final grade of 5.5 is needed to pass a course. A non-rounded off final grade below 5.5 but above 5.0 gives the student the opportunity for repair in which the student gets a supplementary test or assignment. The tests and models are archived by the Teaching Institute. Although the Teaching Institute is responsible for the establishment of a proper assessment structure, the individual lecturers are responsible for the actual application of the assessment. As stated in the critical reflection, since 2011 a Faculty Advisory Council for Examinations has been in place. This council randomly reviews course tests, master theses and their assessment forms. The Examination Committee has a supervisory role. When students finalise the programme, it makes a final check of the course results and grades. In addition, it takes action where necessary or when requested to do so by staff and/or students.

The committee believes that the assessment policy is satisfactory and is pleased with the work of the Advisory Council. Each course counts at least two assessments, the assessment instruments are diversified, two teachers jointly develop assessments and the resit-policy is rather tough.

Examinations

The committee observed many types of exams, such as written examinations, individual assignments, duo papers, presentations for seminars, project work, literature reports, etcetera. It believes that there is enough diversity and that the exams are at a sufficient academic level. It argues that the content of the exams is adequate and states that the examination is consistent.

Master Thesis

Students in all master tracks may decide, in consultation with the master coordinator, whether and how to combine their thesis and internship. The majority of the students take the same subject for their thesis and internship. All theses are evaluated by two lecturers, and a standard form is used to assess it. All internships are carried out under the responsibility of a staff member of Human Geography.

After interviewing many people involved in the master's programme Human Geography, the committee believes that there is a systematic manner of working when it comes to the thesis procedure. However, due to the realisation of the master thesis procedure according to personal preferences, there is a difference in length of the theses, especially in Geo-Communication where the 'shortest' thesis is worth 15 EC compared with a minimum of 22,5 EC in the other two specialisations. The committee also noted a discrepancy regarding the combination of the thesis and internship: very frequently a problem definition is explained prior to theory. It has the impression that students choose their thesis topic related to their internship, and then search for matching theory. In this way, practice seems to have more value than theory, which, in an academic programme, is contrary to its dominant orientation.

3.2 Achievement of the learning outcomes

By reading fourteen theses, the committee analysed the achieved learning outcomes of graduate students. The theses were carefully selected, taking into account a proportional distribution of low, average and high grades.

After studying the theses, the committee concluded that it is generally satisfied with the overall level achieved. The theses are well-cared for and have a clear objective and research execution. The level of the theses is adequate for a master's programme, though the committee thinks that the content is not very surprising or creative and innovative. The fact that there are 15 EC theses and 22,5 EC theses is overall well visible when comparing the scientific level of their content. It also argues that the subjects are very much related to the Netherlands, and often do not have a substantive international outlook. The committee would not mind to see some more imaginative approaches in future.

From the interview with alumni it became clear that the internships are highly appreciated. They argued that due to the internships and assignments the programme is well connected to the labour market. The committee also believes that the internships add value to the programme, but would like to warn the students not to have theory and methodology under-exposed in their theses.

The satisfaction of the graduates and the general level of the theses prove that the learning outcomes are indeed achieved at the end of the master's programme Human Geography, according to the committee. Nevertheless, the committee thinks and internship of 15 EC as part of an academic master's programme (in the Geo-Communication track) is too generous and would like to see that this specialisation is brought in line with the other two Human Geography specialisations in this respect (7,5 EC internship; 22,5 EC thesis).

Considerations

The committee believes that the assessment policy is satisfactory. Each course counts at least two assessments, the assessment instruments are diversified, two teachers jointly develop assessments and the resit-policy is rather tough. It argues that the programme has sufficient examinations and examination types at an academic level. Regarding the master thesis, the committee states that there is a systematic manner of working though there are some differences in size due to the combination with the internship. Nevertheless, it is generally satisfied with the overall level achieved. It would like to see students to be somewhat more creative regarding the topic and methodology of the thesis, and have an international outlook. In addition, it points out that currently theory is sometimes under-exposed as a consequence of the emphasis on practical relevance of the thesis. The internships add value to the

programme, and the committee is convinced that at the end of the master's programme, students achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Conclusion

Master's programme Human Geography: the committee assesses Standard 3 as satisfactory.

General conclusion

The committee assesses the *master's programme Human Geography* as satisfactory.

IV: Spatial Planning

Summary judgement

This report provides an overview of the findings and considerations of the committee regarding the master's programme Spatial Planning of Utrecht University. The committee based its judgement on information acquired from the critical reflection, a selected number of theses, the interviews during the site visit, additional reading material which was available during the site visit, and the digital learning environment. The committee found both positive aspects as well as points for improvement. After a careful consideration, it concluded that the master's programme Spatial Planning satisfies the requirements for accreditation.

Standard 1

The committee studied the domain-specific framework of reference, the profile and orientation, and the intended learning outcomes of the master's programme Spatial Planning. It argues that the domain-specific framework of reference is rather broad and generally formulated, while the profile of the programme is clearly formulated but of limited width. According to the committee, the design component is missing in the profile of the programme, and the profile should be better benchmarked. Although the committee understands the social science approach of the profile, it nevertheless advises the management to broaden the profile of the programme, position it more clearly in the (inter)national field of spatial planning, and explicitly use it for recruitment material. The committee appreciates the twofold, academic as well as professional, orientation of the programme. It believes that the management should avoid the emphasis on a rather classical professional orientation, while currently traditional planning jobs in governments occupations disappear and/or change. When it comes to the intended learning outcomes, the committee finds that they are clearly formulated and target the right academic level, but recommends the programme management to reconsider how the link with the Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP) end terms is presently formulated. The AESOP end terms date back to 1995 and are too broad for the content of the programme, according to the committee.

Standard 2

The master's programme Spatial Planning, which consists of 60 EC, has a full-time and a part-time version. The findings of the committee apply to both the full-time and part-time programme, unless specifically stated otherwise. The full-time version takes up one academic year to complete, while the part-time version takes two years to finish. The curriculum is split into four periods. In the first period students attend the courses *Beyond National Planning* and *Advanced Methods and Techniques*. In the second period students follow *Governance, Policy Analysis and Spatial Process Management*, and they begin writing their research proposal or internship design. In period three and four students work on their internship and master thesis, and they conclude the programme in period four with a *Literature Study*.

The committee has studied the curriculum and believes that it has a clear and coherent structure, but that the content of the courses and their academic orientation could be strengthened. The committee is critical about the *Literature Study*, in which students have to study individually and are questioned about the entire body of acquired knowledge in an oral examination. It feels that students should be offered content courses instead. In addition, the committee feels that the representation of the intended learning outcomes in the curriculum could be improved. It advises the programme management to explicitly represent the intended learning outcomes in the offered courses.

The teaching concept and formats derive from the Utrecht University's didactic model which is extended with the project 'BaMa 3.0' in 2011. This new project aims at helping students get better results, challenge students to get the best out of themselves and their education, support teachers to effectively make use of their time, and appreciate teachers more clearly. The committee studied Utrecht University's didactic model and found that is not entirely clear as a concept. It argues that the didactic model is what one would expect as a standard for academic education: it does not contain any remarkable or outstanding didactic visions. Furthermore, the committee believes that the didactic focus of the programme on increasing independence learning, differs too much from the principle of activating education. Currently, the number of contact hours is limited, and the committee advises to increase contact hours, challenges and the study load.

The committee supports the programme management to continue with implementing measures to reduce student delay. It finds that the master's programme houses good teaching staff, but is seriously worried about the workload of the staff. The committee noted that the teaching staff struggles with the high workload, and argues that the appointment of new staff members, which is supposedly based on the workload of the different sections within the department, is not transparent. Evaluations are executed adequately, according to the committee. Nevertheless, it would appreciate a transition of the Programme Committee from a reactive towards a (pro)active attitude.

Standard 3

The committee believes that the assessment policy is satisfactory. Each course counts at least two assessments, the assessment instruments are diversified, two teachers jointly develop assessments and the resit-policy is rather tough.

The types of examination are rather diverse, and the committee argues that they target a satisfactory academic level. The content of exams is adequate and consistent. The committee is also confident about the execution of the master thesis. It states that there is a systematic manner of working, and appreciates the combination with an internship. However, the committee likes to warn the programme management that theory should not become underexposed as a consequence of the internship, in which students tend to emphasise a professional orientation. Nevertheless, the committee is satisfied with the overall level achieved.

When it comes to the connection with the labour market, the committee believes that this is particularly facilitated by the opportunity of conducting an internship. It argues that the fact that many students take up part-time or full-time jobs during the last phase of their internship period, proves that the intended learning outcomes are reached.

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

Master's programme Spatial Planning:

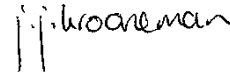
Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes	satisfactory
Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment	satisfactory
Standard 3: Assessment and achieved learning outcomes	satisfactory
General conclusion	satisfactory

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

Date: 20-02-2014



Prof. H.F.L. (Henk) Ottens



J.J. (Jasne) Krooneman, MSc.

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.

Findings

This standard first provides an insight into the committee's findings regarding the domain-specific framework of reference (1.1). Subsequently, attention is paid to the profile and orientation (1.2) and the intended learning outcomes and their orientation (1.3).

1.1 Domain-specific framework of reference

The universities participating in the Human Geography and Spatial Planning cluster assessment (the University of Amsterdam, the Radboud University Nijmegen, the University of Groningen, and Utrecht University) jointly prepared a domain-specific framework of reference (appendix 2).

The committee studied the domain-specific framework of reference and finds it rather broad and general. Even though it is clear that the field of Human Geography and Spatial Planning is a broad domain and integrative and multidisciplinary by nature, the committee feels that it would be beneficial if the domain could be specified in more detail. A clearly defined domain-specific framework of reference, positioned in the international discussion about the nature of the disciplines, would challenge the participating programmes to establish their own orientation within the domain more clearly. In addition, the committee feels that a more clearly defined framework of reference would make students more aware of the domain they are studying and that it could support the legitimation of the field. The current joint framework should be considered a first step that deserves a follow-up by the participating faculties/departments. Furthermore, developing a joint approach to national and international benchmarking could contribute to position the programmes more effectively. This is predominantly a problem for the Human Geography part of the framework and to a lesser extent for the Spatial Planning part.

The committee recommends the programmes involved in this assessment to further elaborate the domain-specific framework of reference, if possible in collaboration with a few other programmes which have not been involved in the present accreditation round. The framework could be further specified and then serve as a clearer basis to indicate both similarities and differences among the orientations of the programmes in this field.

Nevertheless, the committee argues that the described domain-specific qualifications are appropriate for a master's programme within the field of Human Geography and Spatial Planning.

1.2 Profile and orientation

Spatial Planning is a Dutch taught master's programme of 60 EC. As stated in the critical reflection, the aim of the programme is to equip students with conceptual, theoretical and empirical knowledge with respect to current planning themes. Throughout the programme, students should acquire a range of research skills and research methodologies, a critical attitude to understand and properly analyse current planning themes within their context, and appropriate planning methodologies to deal with the current planning issues within planning practice. In the critical reflection, the management of the programme argues that Spatial Planning is designed to build two types of competences: academic and professional.

The committee studied the profile of the programme, and finds it clearly formulated, but of limited width. First of all, the committee states that the design component of planning – in the sense of developing and evaluating planning responses to spatially relevant issues – could be emphasised much more clearly. From the interview with teachers it became clear that it is a conscious decision to leave out a design element and specifically focus on a spatial, social-science oriented framework. The teachers argued that this focus would better match the other social geographical programmes offered at Utrecht University. Secondly, the committee believes the profile is not sufficiently benchmarked. It misses the comparison of the programme with other programmes (inter)nationally. In the critical reflection the programme management states that it is difficult to make a comparison with programmes abroad since most spatial planning schools are part of a design discipline, and not part of a social science discipline like the Spatial Planning master's programme at Utrecht University. Nevertheless, the committee advises the management to broaden the profile of the programme, position it more clearly in the (inter)national field of spatial planning, and explicitly use it for recruiting new students.

1.3 Intended learning outcomes and academic and professional orientation

As stated in appendix 3, the management of the master's programme Spatial Planning has formulated seven intended learning outcomes. Those seven intended learning outcomes are based on three central aims of the programme:

- To offer a coherent and balanced high-quality master's programme focusing on spatial planning themes, planning theory and research methodology;
- To acquire scientific knowledge, research skills and a critical attitude to be able to scientifically investigate and critically understand spatial planning issues and processes within their context;
- To gain professional insight into current planning themes and up-to-date practices of planning issues to be able to contribute to the solution of planning issues in their societal context.

Next to linking the intended learning outcomes to the three aims of the programme, the programme management has also linked the intended learning outcomes to the Dublin descriptors and the Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP) end terms.

According to the committee, the intended learning outcomes are clearly formulated and target the right academic level. The committee is also of the opinion that the intended learning outcomes are adequately linked to the Dublin descriptors. However, the committee advises the management to reconsider the link with the AESOP end terms ('Core requirements for a high quality European Planning Education; AESOP working Group on the Curriculum of Planning Education'). The committee finds it problematic that the AESOP end terms date back to 1995, and have never been officially ascertained. In addition, these 'requirements' do

seem to match the list of AESOP end terms provided in the critical reflection. Hence, to the committee it seems as if the list presented in the critical reflection is a selection from the university, rather than the full list of the AESOP end terms itself. The committee believes that the AESOP end terms are too broad for the content of the programme as well.

The committee appreciates the twofold, academic as well as professional, orientation of the programme. However, when it comes to the professional orientation, the committee would like to remark that the programme should pay attention to not focusing too much on a public planning perspective. According to the committee, it is no longer common practice that spatial planners are solely employed by the government. For instance, independent corporations increasingly hire planners. The committee notes that the programme has, at least partially, a somewhat classical professional orientation, while traditional occupations disappear rapidly. During the interview with teachers, the professional orientation was discussed. Teachers of the programme argued that recently the content of two courses has been moved away from a public planning orientation. The committee welcomes this and considers those adjustments as a step in the right direction.

Considerations

The committee studied the domain-specific framework of reference, the profile and orientation, and the intended learning outcomes of the master's programme Spatial Planning. It argues that at the moment the domain-specific framework of reference is broad, but solidly founded. However, when it comes to the profile of the programme, the committee finds it of limited width and advises the management to position it more clearly in the (inter)national field of spatial planning, and explicitly use it for recruiting new students.

The intended learning outcomes are clearly formulated, fit the content of the programme, and target the correct academic level. The committee states that the intended learning outcomes are adequately linked to the Dublin descriptors. The committee is less satisfied about the link with the Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP) end terms. According to the committee, these end terms have never been officially ascertained, and are too broad for the content of the programme.

The committee appreciates the twofold, academic as well as professional, orientation of the programme. It believes that the management should avoid the emphasis on a rather classical professional orientation, while currently traditional governmental planning jobs disappear. Recent adjustments in the content of two courses show the programme's intention to shift away from the traditional government focus and can be considered as a step in the right direction, according to the committee.

Conclusion

Master's programme Spatial Planning: the committee assesses Standard 1 as satisfactory.

Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment

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

Explanation:

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

Findings

This standard provides an insight into content, structure and coherence of the curriculum (2.1) of the master's programme Spatial Planning. In section 2.2 the didactic concept is analysed. Special attention is paid to the relation between the learning outcomes and the curriculum (2.3) and in section 2.4 the academic orientation of the master's programme is analysed. The feasibility of the programme is described in section 2.5 and the quality and quantity of the teaching staff form the centre of attention in section 2.6. This standard concludes with an analysis of the programme-specific quality control (2.7).

2.1 Content, structure and coherence of the curriculum

The 60 EC master's programme Spatial Planning consists of two versions: full-time and part-time. The full-time stream takes up one academic year to complete, while the part-time streams takes two years to finish. The curriculum of the programme is split into four periods. Full-time students attend period one and two in the first half, and period three and four in the second half of the academic year. For part-time students, period one comprises the first half of the first academic year, and period two the second half of the first academic year. Period three and four fill respectively the first half and second half of the second academic year. The findings of the committee apply to both the full-time and part-time programme, unless specifically stated otherwise.

Period 1

In the first period of the programme, students attend the course *Beyond National Planning* (7.5 EC). According to the critical reflection, this course focuses on theoretical approaches in research and planning, predominantly the Actor-Network Approach. Students also follow the course *Advanced Methods and Techniques* (7.5 EC), in which special attention is paid to research methodology and research methods and techniques.

Period 2

In the second period of the programme, students are enrolled in the course *Governance, Policy Analysis and Spatial Process Management* (7.5 EC). As stated in the critical reflection, the principles of governance and policy analysis are highlighted and their impact on spatial planning is broadly discussed. In addition, spatial process management is introduced as an approach for planners to address spatial problems in a professional way. Parallel to this course, students make the first steps in the *Internship/Master thesis* (7.5 EC). During this period, students begin search for an internship organisation and start drawing the research design for their master's thesis.

Period 3

The work in the internship and thesis writing gets a boost in the third period of the programme, when students spend a total of 15 EC on the *Internship/Master thesis*. Frequently, students combine a research-oriented internship with a research master thesis topic of their

own interest. As stated in the critical reflection, the research-oriented internship is especially designed to give students the opportunity to conduct substantial, fieldwork based, individual research on a self chosen topic related to spatial planning.

Period 4

The programme is concluded with another 7.5 EC for the *Internship/Master thesis*, and a *Literature Study* (7.5 EC). According to the information in the critical reflection, students can choose their literature from a list of textbooks and they can propose additional planning related literature of their own choice, which is subject to the approval by the responsible professor. A final test takes place in the form of an oral examination: it is expected that the students will be able to reflect upon the entire body of acquired knowledge.

The committee has studied the curriculum and states that it satisfies the standards, but that content of some courses could be strengthened. The committee believes the curriculum has a clear and coherent structure, but should contain more theory, and have a broader academic basis.

From the interview with students it became clear that they are unsatisfied about the *Literature Study*. The students argued that they expected more depth and broadness in the programme, and that instead of a self-conducted literature study, they would like to have an in-depth theoretical course which adds to the width of the programme. The committee agrees with the students and advises the programme management to reconsider especially this particular part of the curriculum content.

2.2 Didactic concept

The committee examined which didactic concept forms the basis of the offered education. The teaching concept and formats derive from the Utrecht University's didactic model which, according to the advice report of 2011 (Adviesrapport Utrechts Onderwijsmodel 3.0), is characterised by an obvious distinction between the bachelor and master stage, flexibility and freedom of choice, personal and activating education, and a clear assessment policy. Since the second half of 2011, the model was extended with the project 'BaMa 3.0', which aims at helping students get better results, challenge students to get the best out of themselves and their education, support teachers to effectively make use of their time, appreciate teachers more clearly.

The committee studied Utrecht University's didactic model and found that is not entirely clear as a concept. It argues that the didactic model is what one would expect as a standard for academic education: it does not contain any remarkable or outstanding didactic visions. The committee finds that the teaching methods used in the programme are more concrete. The staff uses several forms of transferring knowledge, such as lectures, tutorials, seminars, gaming sessions and group assignments.

In the critical reflection, the programme management argues that they offer increasing independence in learning. The committee warns that this differs from the University's didactic model of personal and activating education. According to the committee, the course *Beyond National Planning* does not seem to fit into the model of student activating education since it only contains lectures and no tutorials or interactive sessions with students (this course has been drastically changed in the 2013-2014 curriculum). The *Literature Study* can be considered as the opposite: there are no lectures, and students have to study the entire course by themselves. The *Literature Study* is concluded with an oral examination, which is the only moment of contact between teacher and student and during which the entire body of

acquired knowledge is tested. The committee is critical about the oral examination as it is the first time in the entire curriculum that students are confronted with this kind of examination. It confirms the committees feeling that the didactic concepts and formats should be reconsidered and implemented more explicitly.

2.3 Representation of the intended learning outcomes in the curriculum

The committee analysed the relation between the learning outcomes and the curriculum. It also focussed on the cohesion and composition within the curriculum.

As discussed in section 1.3, the management of the master's programme Spatial Planning has formulated several learning outcomes. The learning outcome that claims that students have obtained knowledge in recent theoretical approaches to planning issues and are capable to use their insights in research and professional debates on planning issues, can be partially retrieved in the course *Beyond National Planning*. In this course, there is a focus on theoretical approaches in research and planning. The course *Advanced Methods and Techniques*, which is designed to enhance the student's research skills and techniques for performing, analysing and interpreting both quantitative and qualitative research, contributes to the learning outcome that states that students are able to analyse spatial processes as well as planning processes.

According to the committee, the representation of the intended learning outcomes could be better embedded in the curriculum. It could not retrieve all learning outcomes in the curriculum, and the ones that are represented are sometimes only partially embedded or not embedded adequately. The committee advises to more explicitly represent the intended learning outcomes in the offered courses.

2.4 Academic orientation

According to the critical reflection, the curriculum of the master's programme Spatial Planning is academic in two ways. First, the broad academic knowledge and skills for which the bachelor programme provides the basic requirements return in the master's programme where they are further developed and extended. Second, attention is paid to advanced disciplinary knowledge on subjects, theories and methodologies.

The committee finds the academic orientation could be improved. The only course that deals with research skills is *Advanced Methods and Techniques*, which is, content wise, a good course. However, the committee argues that this course is only 7.5 EC, and departs where the bachelor's programme has left. The committee questions the assumption that all students come from the bachelor's programme into the master's programme. The master's programme should also be available to students from other (inter)national universities.

2.5 Feasibility

As stated in the critical reflection, the average duration for finishing the master's programme Spatial Planning is twenty months. According to the programme management, the delay in graduation is largely due to the internship and thesis period. The management argues that during this period most students take up part-time or even full-time jobs. Consequently, the staff spends more time on the supervision of the internships and theses than formally allocated. Therefore, a protocol for delayed students is developed. Those students will receive an e-mail containing a warning and an action plan. The committee supports this action and advises the programme management to continue with implementing measures to reduce student delay.

When it comes to support of students the committee argues that, especially during the *Literature Study*, supervision has to be improved. Currently, students have to conduct a lot of work individually. The number of contact hours is limited. The committee argues that students need more challenge, and the study load should be increased. Nevertheless, the present programme is a feasible one.

2.6 Teaching staff

The committee focussed on the quality and quantity of the teaching staff at the master's programme Spatial Planning.

Quality

Presently, six staff members are involved in the master's programme Spatial Planning. Two of these teachers hold a Senior Teaching Qualification (SKO), and three a Basic Teaching Qualification (BKO). According to the critical reflection, one staff member is in the process of obtaining a BKO. The committee is a bit surprised that only one professor is involved in the programme, and that not all staff members are actively involved in research projects. It nevertheless argues that the programme houses good teaching staff.

Quantity

When it comes to the quantity of teachers, the committee is less satisfied. For several years, the student-staff ratio in the department has fluctuated around 1:40. Although the appointment of junior staff members had a positive effect on the ratio, it rose soon afterwards due to an increase of student numbers. The committee noted that the teaching staff struggles with the high workload, and argues that the allocation of new staff members, which is supposedly based on the workload of the different sections within the department, is not transparent.

During the site visit, many interviewees referred to the 'BaMa 3.0' project, which states that teachers should be appreciated more clearly. The committee feels that the workload for teachers is currently unacceptably high, and has the impression that teachers are not appreciated as such. Although the management tries to lower the workload, the committee argues that at faculty and/or university level action has to be taken.

2.7 Programme-specific quality control

As can be read in the critical reflection, the master's programme Spatial Planning is subject to four evaluation systems. First, graduates are requested to fill in an exit questionnaire. Second, each year the National Student Enquiry (NSE) sends out a questionnaire. Third, at the Return Day, which is held in June, the master's programme is evaluated. Fourth, the Applied Geographical Research Foundation (STOGO) holds a bi-annual labour market enquiry among alumni.

From the interview with the Programme Committee it became clear that student evaluations are executed adequately. However, the committee believes that the Programme Committee predominantly functions in a reactive manner. It finds it remarkable that action by the programme management is solely taken on the basis of the student evaluations, not on the basis of initiative of the Programme Committee itself. It advises the Programme Committee to become more (pro)active stance in their quality control tasks and advises the programme management to seriously consider the input provided by the Programme Committee.

Considerations

The committee has studied the curriculum and states that it satisfies the standards, but that content of the courses and their academic orientation could be strengthened. According to the committee, the curriculum has a clear and coherent structure, but can benefit from more theory, and having a broader academic basis. In addition, the committee finds that the representation of the intended learning outcomes in the curriculum can be optimised as well.

The Utrecht University's didactic model is not entirely clear as a concept, the committee believes. Activating education, which is part of the Utrecht University's didactic model, is not executed thoroughly in the master's programme Spatial Planning. Increasing independence in learning, which is the didactic focus within the programme, does not necessarily result in activating education, according to the committee.

The committee supports the programme management to continue with implementing measures to reduce student delay. Since students have to conduct a lot of work individually, the number of contact hours is rather limited. The committee agrees with the students that they need more in-depth courses and challenges in the master's programme, and that the study load should be increased.

The master's programme houses good teaching staff, although the committee has some serious worries about the quantity of teachers involved. The allocation of new staff members, which is supposedly based on the workload of the different sections within the department, is not transparent and the committee noted that the teaching staff struggles with the high workload.

The programme specific quality control is of sufficient quality. Evaluations are executed adequately, according to the committee. Nevertheless, it would appreciate a transition of the Programme Committee from a reactive towards a (pro)active attitude.

Conclusion

Master's programme Spatial Planning: the committee assesses Standard 2 as satisfactory.

Standard 3: Assessment and achieved learning outcomes

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

Explanation:

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

Findings

This standard considers the findings regarding the assessment system (3.1) and subsequently deals with the question whether the graduate students are able to achievement of the learning outcomes (3.2).

3.1 Assessment system

The committee analysed the assessment system of the master's programme Spatial Planning and focussed on the assessment policy, including the functioning of the Examination Committee, the examinations and the master thesis procedure.

Assessment policy

The master's programme Spatial Planning applies a system of continuous assessment, in which all components of the curriculum are assessed. In this system, the final grade for a course module depends on the grades of several different types of assessments, such as assignments, presentations, group seminars and intermediate tests. As can be read in the critical reflection, all written tests have answering models, expressing what is expected from a student to achieve a passing grade, and how the various parts of an answer contribute to the final test grade. In this way, consistency in grading and transparency to students is ensured.

The committee believes that the assessment policy is satisfactory. Each course counts at least two assessments, the assessment instruments are diversified, two teachers jointly develop assessments and the resit-policy is rather tough.

Examinations

The committee looked at several types of exams, such as assignments, presentations, group seminars, intermediate tests and an oral exam. It believes that there is enough diversity and that the exams are at a satisfactory academic level. It argues that the content of the exams is adequate and states that the examination is consistent. However, the committee is, as mentioned earlier, not satisfied with the oral exam for the *Literature Study*. This is an important exam, of which the type is not introduced earlier in the curriculum. In addition, contrary to all other courses, the oral exam for *Literature Study* is solely assessed by one staff member.

Master Thesis

From the interview with students it became clear that they get a supervisor appointed for their master thesis/internship. In some cases they choose their own supervisor. The same procedure applies to the topic of the master thesis. Students can come up with their own topic, or they can choose a topic from a list published on Blackboard. Students have to arrange their own internship, but suggestions are available on Blackboard as well. Generally, students consider the internship as an important facet of the curriculum. The majority of the students combines the subject of the internship with that of the master thesis.

The committee is very pleased with the professional opportunities of an internship, but warns that the thesis should not be too professionally oriented as a result. The committee noted that in a number of cases, students have written their thesis with an emphasis on the professional implications rather than a discussion of the academic positioning. Many students mentioned academic theories in their thesis, but did not use them for analytical purposes. The committee noted that it happens rather frequently that students treat academic theories only after the problem definition, and therefore theory tends to go missing in the analysis or conclusion.

3.2 Achievement of the learning outcomes

By reading fourteen theses, the committee analysed the achieved learning outcomes of graduate students. The theses were carefully selected, taking into account a proportional distribution of low, average and high grades.

After studying the theses, the committee concluded that it is generally satisfied with the overall level achieved. The level of the theses is adequate for a master's programme, although the committee warns that as a result of the internships, the academic orientation is sometimes underexposed.

According to the committee, the master's programme Spatial Planning is currently focussing on a rather classical orientation when it comes to the labour market. The committee argues that, although changes have recently been made, the programme tends to emphasis on the public planning side when it comes to career opportunities. Due to the internship, which students can arrange by themselves, there is a close and renewed connection to the labour market. The committee warns that students should not take up part-time or full-time jobs before finishing their master's programme. The fact that they can find jobs that easily shows that the intended learning outcomes are reached at the end of the programme.

Considerations

The committee believes that the assessment policy is satisfactory. Each course counts at least two assessments, the assessment instruments are diversified, two teachers jointly develop assessments and the resit-policy is rather tough.

When it comes to examinations, the committee observed several types of exams, such as assignments, presentations, group seminars, intermediate tests and an oral exam. The committee finds that there is enough diversity and that the exams are at a satisfactory academic level. It argues that the content of the exams is adequate and states that the examination is consistent.

Regarding the master thesis, the committee states that there is a systematic manner of working, but warns that theory should not be underexposed as a consequence of the professionally oriented internship. Nevertheless, the committee is generally satisfied with the overall level achieved.

The fact that many students take up part-time or full-time jobs during the last phase of their internship period, proves that the intended learning outcomes are reached. The committee states that there is a good connection with the labour market as a result of the internship opportunities.

Conclusion

Master's programme Spatial Planning: the committee assesses Standard 3 as satisfactory.

General conclusion

The committee assesses the *master's programme Spatial Planning* as satisfactory.

Appendices

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

Prof. Henk Ottens is retired professor of Human Geography at Utrecht University. He specialised in urban development, town and country planning, and geo-information. He was dean of the Faculty of Spatial Sciences and director of the national research institute NETHUR. At present, he is chair of the Royal Dutch Geographical Society. Ottens was and is active in numerous Dutch and foreign managerial functions, including several education audits in the Netherlands and Flanders.

Prof. Herman van der Wusten was professor of Political Geography at the University of Amsterdam (1984-2001) and the first full-time dean of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences at the UvA (1997-2001). He is still active as emeritus researcher and author writing on two themes: the formation and design of political centres and the EU as a new sort of political unit. Van der Wusten previously took part in various reviews in the Netherlands, Flanders and Austria.

Prof. Herman van den Bosch is professor of Management Sciences, particularly Management Education. He develops and teaches courses in innovation management and academic skills. He investigates the role of institutions of higher education in regional development and innovation. Van den Bosch contributed to a series of international education audits and accreditations of new courses in business administration, economics and liberal arts & science. He taught workshops and courses in distance learning, education management and quality of care both nationally and abroad. Van den Bosch was dean of the Faculty of Management Sciences of the Open University from October 2001 to September 2011. In this position he was responsible for implementing the bachelor/master structure, activating distance learning and developing a training programme for professionals. Van den Bosch publishes in the fields of educational organisation, innovation of scientific education and the role of ICT, the role of knowledge institutions in innovation (regional or wider), and during his period in Nijmegen, in the fields of geography education, quality of care and education management.

Prof. Wil Zonneveld is professor of Urban and Regional Development at the Faculty of Architecture, Delft Technical University. His research focuses on the conditions for strategic spatial planning and the relationship between strategic planning and operational decision-making, often while considering the influence of European environmental guidelines. He has been the editor of various specialist journals and is Editor-in-Chief of the open access *European Journal of Spatial Development* and publishes continuously in scientific and professional journals and books. Zonneveld was a guest researcher for extended periods at both the Scientific Council for Government Policy and the former Netherlands Institute for Spatial Research. He was a member of a review committee in 2010-2011 that evaluated the quality of education at the three academising courses for Urban Development and Spatial Planning in Flanders.

Prof. Robert Hassink is professor of Economic Geography at the Christian Albrechts University of Kiel (Germany) and visiting professor in the School of Geography, Politics & Sociology at Newcastle University (United Kingdom). After receiving his PhD in 1992 from Utrecht University Hassink has worked as a research fellow, consultant, assistant and temporary professor at several research institutes and universities in the Netherlands, Germany, Norway and South Korea. Over the years he has carried out various research projects on regional innovation policies, industrial restructuring and regional economic development in Western Europe and East Asia. Currently, Hassink is project leader of the

research project '10-ECRP-007 Cluster life cycles – the role of actors, networks and institutions in emerging, growing, declining and renewing clusters', sponsored by the European Science Foundation and the German Research Foundation. Hassink has published widely in English, Dutch, German, French and Korean and is author and co-author of nine books and official research reports, 16 chapters in edited volumes, 37 articles in journals included in the Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) and 14 articles in other journals. From 2006 until 2011 Hassink was editor of the Critical Surveys Section of the journal *Regional Studies*.

Prof. Ton Dietz is a Human Geographer, who graduated from the former Catholic University of Nijmegen (1976) and obtained his doctorate at the University of Amsterdam (1987). He was awarded an honorary doctorate from Moi University in Eldoret (Kenya) (2007). Dietz worked at the University of Amsterdam from May 1976 to July 2012, as professor of Human Geography from 1995, specialising in the social-economic geography of developing countries (especially Africa) and environment and development (political environmental geography). Between 2002 and 2007 he was director of the research school CERES part-time (resource studies for development) in Utrecht and also professor of Social Sciences there. Since May 2010 Dietz has been director of the Africa Studies Centre in Leiden, initially for 0.8 fte and then full-time from July 2012. In Leiden he is professor of African Development in the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences. In Amsterdam Dietz was director first of the research institute AGIDS and later of the broader research institute AMIDST. He has held many managerial posts in and outside the university.

Madelon Post, MSc. graduated from the Urban and Regional Planning master's programme at the University of Amsterdam in 2013. In 2012 she obtained her bachelor's diploma in Spatial Planning at the same university, specialising in Urban development & Real estate and Strategic planning of urban regions. For her master's thesis she conducted the study "The end for church buildings?", which scrutinised dominant factors in demolition decisions for unused church buildings in the Netherlands. Post has gained experience with boards and committees as treasurer and committee member of the student union Sarphati, and as a member of the student accommodation committee of ASVA.

Jikke van 't Hof, BSc. is a student of the Human Geography master's programme at the Radboud University of Nijmegen. She completed the Human Geography and Spatial Planning bachelor's programme (specialising in Human Geography) at the same university. Van 't Hof gained committee and board experience at the student union Mundus, and in the 2011 – 2012 academic year she was chair of the student section of the Geography, Spatial Planning and Environment education committee at the Radboud University Nijmegen.

Appendix 2: Domain-specific frameworks of reference

Domain-specific framework of reference Development Studies, Human Geography and Spatial Planning

Domain specific frame of reference for the reaccreditation of the master programmes in the domain of Human Geography and Spatial Planning (including Population Studies, Environmental and Infrastructure Planning, Vastgoedkunde and Environment)

Approved by the 'Disciplineoverleg Sociale Geografie en Planologie' of the Vereniging van Universiteiten VSNU, May 16th, 2012, Utrecht

Introduction

The accreditation of the Master programmes in the domain of Human Geography and Spatial Planning comes to an end in December 2014. The assessment of the programmes will take place in 2013. The 'Disciplineoverleg Sociale Geografie en Planologie' of the VSNU took the initiative to develop a common domain specific frame of reference for the reaccreditation. The reaccreditation regards all bachelor and master programmes within the domain, i.e. the bachelor programmes Human Geography and Planning at University of Amsterdam, Groningen University and Utrecht University, the bachelor programme Environmental and Infrastructure Planning at Groningen University and the bachelor programme Geography, Planning and Environment at Radboud University Nijmegen and the master programmes Human Geography and Urban and Regional Planning at University of Amsterdam, Cultural Geography, Economic Geography, Vastgoedkunde, Socio-Spatial Planning, Environmental and Infrastructure Planning and Population Studies at Groningen University, Human Geography, 'Planet Europe' and Spatial Planning at Radboud University Nijmegen and Human Geography, International Development Studies and Planning at Utrecht University and the interuniversity master programme Geographical Information Management and Applications (GIMA) at University Utrecht, Delft University of Technology, University of Twente and Wageningen University.

This frame of reference is based on the Dublin descriptors. The frame of reference forms partly a continuation of examples from the Netherlands ('Het referentiekader van de visitatie Sociale Geografie, Planologie en Demografie 2007'¹ for the bachelor and master programmes in the domain of Human Geography and Spatial Planning, the 'Domeinspecifieke Referentiekader Sociologie 2011' for the bachelor and master programmes Sociology, 'Het Referentiekader CA/OS 2011' for the bachelor and master programmes Anthropology and Non-Western Sociology and the 'Domeinspecifiek referentie kader 2011' for the bachelor programmes Social Sciences). At the same time it is inspired by foreign examples: Flanders², United Kingdom³ and Australia⁴ and the Association of European Schools of Planning AESOP⁵.

¹ Onderwijsvisiteer Sociale Geografie, Planologie en Demografie. Utrecht: QANU, 2008, p. 17-20.

² De Onderwijsvisiteer Geografie Vlaanderen. Den Haag: NVAO, 2009, pp. 18-28.

³ Geography 2007. Gloucester: The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, 2007.

⁴ Geography Learning and Teaching Academic Standards Statement. Canberra: Australian Learning & Teaching Council, 2010.

⁵ Eindtermen voor planologieopleidingen, geformuleerd door de Werkgroep Onderwijs van de Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP), In: Onderwijsvisiteer Sociale Geografie, Planologie en Demografie. Utrecht: QANU, 2008, pp.21.

A domain specific frame of reference formulates the domain specific requirements for the educational programmes in a broad sense. These requirements deal with two issues:

1. What do we expect from a graduate?
2. What do we expect from the educational programmes?

The Master programme (second cycle) builds upon the competences that students have acquired in the Bachelor (first cycle), and prepares for the PhD (third cycle) and the labour market. Master programmes (or tracks within a programme) are more specialized than bachelor programmes. According to the Bologna treaty, Master programmes must be treated as complete programmes. Students entering a Master programme may have finished a related Bachelor programme at the same Faculty or University, a Bachelor programme at another institution, or in another discipline (with or without extra preparatory courses to fulfill entry requirements of the Master). This means that Master programmes must take into account a diverse institutional and/or disciplinary background of students entering the Master.

The domain of Human Geography and Spatial Planning in the Netherlands

The domain of Human Geography and Spatial Planning is a broad domain with a clear core, but also with specific profiles of the various educational programmes. The domain specific frame of reference emphasizes the common characteristics. At the same time it provides a frame for the unique profiles of the separate programmes. In the self assessment reports, each programme will illuminate the specific profile and the positioning of the profile within the domain of Human Geography and Spatial Planning in the Netherlands.

The complex relationship between human beings and their environment is the core of the domain of Human Geography and Spatial Planning. A time-space perspective and thinking in terms of different scale levels (local, regional, national, global) and the relationship between these levels is fundamental in the domain of Human Geography and Spatial Planning. Graduates in the domain focus on developments within and differences between economic, social and political systems, cultures and landscapes and the relationships between these developments and differences, worldwide. An international orientation is of vital importance. Core concepts in the domain are space, place, location, region, scale, networks, linkages, time-space behaviour, place attachment, spatial quality, spatial design and spatial intervention. In the past decades, issues such as social-spatial inequality, allocation of resources, social and spatial/environmental justice, sustainability, governance, (social and spatial) diversity and identity have also become core issues in the domain. The domain focuses not only on the analysis of these issues, but also on issues of design and management of interventions directed to the solutions to social-spatial problems. In the last decades, the domain of Human Geography and Spatial Planning has become more closely connected with other social sciences. Conversely, a spatial turn took place within other social sciences. The integrative and multidisciplinary nature of the domain of Human Geography and Spatial Planning forms the distinctive characteristic of this domain within the field of social sciences with a focus on the time-space dimension. However, the educational programmes differ in terms of degree and nature of interdisciplinarity. Graduates in the domain of Human Geography and Spatial Planning demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the domain as a whole; however, their knowledge and understanding reflect the specialist knowledge and understanding that characterizes the educational and research programmes of their own university. The self assessment reports will elaborate on the local profile.

Experiential learning plays an important role in Human Geography and Spatial Planning teaching and learning. Fieldwork with data collection in situ forms an important instrument for understanding the time and space bound character of social, demographic, cultural, political and economic phenomena and developments. Graduates in the domain of Human Geography and Spatial Planning learn to understand spatial heterogeneity within and between countries by experiencing diversity in an unfamiliar context.

Graduates in the domain of Human Geography and Spatial Planning have knowledge and understanding of social research methods and techniques and can apply their knowledge adequately. Furthermore, they are able to apply domain specific research methods and techniques.

The programmes prepare for a diverse professional field. Graduates are employed in a broad range of professional functions and economic sectors. Researcher, teacher, consultant, civil servant and project manager are typical professions for graduates. An integrative approach and a clear relationship with spatial and regional perspectives are characteristic aspects of these professions, in particular in the early stages of the professional career. Graduates of specialized master programmes are usually employed in related sectors, such as spatial planning, urban policy, housing, regional policy, transport and infrastructure planning or environmental policy. The self-assessment reports of the various programmes will specify in which professions graduates are employed.

Qualifications Master

Qualifications that signify completion of the second cycle (Master) are awarded to students who:

Dublin descriptor Knowledge and understanding:

Have demonstrated knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances that typically associated with Bachelor's level, and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context;

- Have advanced knowledge and understanding of the nature, history, theory and methodology of the respective discipline or specialisation within the domain of Human Geography and Spatial Planning and are able to apply this knowledge;
- Have advanced knowledge and understanding of the socio-spatial diversity, complexity and dynamics of societal structures, processes and behaviours;
- Have advanced knowledge and understanding of possible interventions that are based on the outcomes of research in their respective discipline or specialisation, and of the need and methods of critical assessment of such interventions.

Dublin descriptor Applying knowledge and understanding

Can apply their knowledge and understanding, and problem solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study;

- Are able to design an original research proposal or plan for a complex societal issue, in an independent way. In this they integrate knowledge and skills learnt in the bachelor and master phases relating to theory, methodology, research methods and techniques, and interpretation;
- Are able to conduct a research project with a minimum of supervision, also in unfamiliar contexts; they are able to integrate theoretical knowledge, to apply social research

methodology and appropriate research methods and techniques, to interpret data in a valid way and to formulate appropriate conclusions;

- Are able to develop solutions for complex (spatial) societal problems, both individually and in a team of professionals with different expertise.

Dublin descriptor Making judgements

Have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements with incomplete or limited information, but that include reflecting on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgements;

- Are able to apply a series of advanced research techniques (data collection, processing, analysis and interpretation) and generic skills (oral, written, visual and mixed presentation; design of relevant policy recommendations; knowledge and use of ICT; working in a team).
- The techniques and skills are relevant to the respective discipline or specialization;
- Are able to apply these in the analysis of contemporary societal questions;
- Are able to analyse and evaluate the effects of complex spatial developments and interventions;
- Have developed an academic attitude that induces them constantly to critically reflect on their academic behavior;
- Have developed an attitude that induces them to take into account the societal consequences and the ethical implications of academic research. They are able and feel the responsibility to participate in public debates and to formulate policy recommendations.

Dublin descriptor Communication

Can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously;

- Are able to communicate in written and spoken manner with the groups in society for which their research has implications or is relevant in another way. They are able to participate in academic debates on the basis of arguments and communicate their analysis convincingly;
- Are able to listen to, use, integrate, and reproduce complex and unfamiliar arguments given by others;
- Are able to integrate the communicative actions by different stakeholders in a complex societal issue, and play a role in linking these to each other. They are able to play a mediating role between actors with competing goals by stimulating the exchange of ideas.

Dublin descriptor Learning skills

Have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous

- Are able to keep up with developments in their respective disciplines in an independent manner;
- Are capable of recognizing and analyzing developments in society in an independent manner, and to anticipate on these in the public debate;

- Are able to continue experiential learning processes in an independent manner;
- Are able to work in an (interdisciplinary) team, and to recognize and communicate the contribution and added value of their own discipline or specialisation in the team;
- Have advanced knowledge of and are aware of research and working cultures in other disciplines or sectors;
- Are able to qualify for a third cycle (PhD) project.

Qualifications Master programmes

To be able to reach the above qualifications students may expect from the Master programme that it:

- Has a strong focus on academic research, both theoretical and applied;
- Teaches students the state of the art in the discipline and its historical development at an advanced level;
- Teaches students to recognize and critically discuss the theoretical and methodological foundations of the discipline at an advanced level;
- Require students to complete their Master programme with a research project through which they individually demonstrate their ability to design and execute an advanced and relevant research project, and to present the results, usually in the form of a written thesis;
- Offers students an effective, stimulating and challenging learning environment, with possibilities to participate in empirical data collection in the field, also in an unfamiliar spatial context; and to participate in excursions and visits to institutions or commercial agencies that may be relevant to the students' later careers. Teaching materials and equipment are state-of-the-art and challenging, also in the field of ICT. Teachers play a stimulating, active and coaching role;
- Offers students sufficient and relevant opportunities for specialization within the discipline;
- Offers students a clear view of the opportunities and chances to continue their educational or professional careers after graduation;
- Offers students an adequate academic advisory system;
- Has a well/functioning system of internal educational quality control;
- Guarantees close connection between education and research;
- Has an adequate system of staff management, including professionalization and an equal position of teaching and research in the career perspectives of academic staff;
- Monitors and controls the disciplinary and generic competences of students entering the Master programme;
- Takes into account the diverse background of students entering the Master.

Geographic Information Science & Technology Body of Knowledge

Edited by David DiBiase, Michael DeMers, Ann Johnson, Karen Kemp, Ann Taylor Luck, Brandon Plewe, and Elizabeth Wentz

UNIVERSITY CONSORTIUM FOR GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SCIENCE

Analytical Methods

AM1 Academic and analytical origins

- 1-1 Academic foundations
- 1-2 Analytical approaches

AM2 Query operations and query languages

- 2-1 Set theory
- 2-2 Structured Query Language (SQL) and attribute queries
- 2-3 Spatial queries

AM3 Geometric measures

- 3-1 Distances and lengths
- 3-2 Direction
- 3-3 Shape
- 3-4 Area
- 3-5 Proximity and distance decay
- 3-6 Adjacency and connectivity

AM4 Basic analytical operations

- 4-1 Buffers
- 4-2 Overlay
- 4-3 Neighborhoods
- 4-4 Map algebra

AM5 Basic analytical methods

- 5-1 Point pattern analysis
- 5-2 Kernel and density estimation
- 5-3 Spatial cluster analysis
- 5-4 Spatial interaction
- 5-5 Analyzing multidimensional attributes
- 5-6 Cartographic modeling
- 5-7 Multi-criteria evaluation
- 5-8 Spatial process models

AM6 Analysis of surfaces

- 6-1 Calculating surface derivatives
- 6-2 Interpolation of surfaces
- 6-3 Surface features
- 6-4 Intervisibility
- 6-5 Friction surfaces

AM7 Spatial statistics

- 7-1 Graphical methods
- 7-2 Stochastic processes
- 7-3 The spatial weights matrix
- 7-4 Global measures of spatial association
- 7-5 Local measures of spatial association
- 7-6 Outliers
- 7-7 Bayesian methods

AM8 Geostatistics

- 8-1 Spatial sampling for statistical analysis
- 8-2 Principles of semi-variogram construction
- 8-3 Semi-variogram modeling
- 8-4 Principles of kriging
- 8-5 Kriging variants

AM9 Spatial regression and econometrics

- 9-1 Principles of spatial econometrics
- 9-2 Spatial autoregressive models
- 9-3 Spatial filtering
- 9-4 Spatial expansion and Geographically Weighted Regression (GWR)

AM10 Data Mining

- 10-1 Problems of large spatial databases
- 10-2 Data mining approaches
- 10-3 Knowledge discovery
- 10-4 Pattern recognition and matching

AM11 Network analysis

- 11-1 Networks defined
- 11-2 Graph theoretic (descriptive) measures
- 11-3 Least-cost (shortest) path
- 11-4 Flow modeling
- 11-5 The Classic Transportation Problem
- 11-6 Other classic network problems
- 11-7 Accessibility Modeling

AM12 Optimization and location-allocation modeling

- 12-1 Operations research modeling and location modeling principles
- 12-2 Linear programming
- 12-3 Integer programming
- 12-4 Location-allocation modeling and p-median problems

Conceptual Foundations

CF1 Philosophical foundations

- 1-1 Metaphysics and ontology
- 1-2 Epistemology
- 1-3 Philosophical perspectives

CF2 Cognitive and social foundations

- 2-1 Perception and cognition of geographic phenomena
- 2-2 From concepts to data
- 2-3 Geography as a foundation for GIS
- 2-4 Place and landscape
- 2-5 Common-sense geographies
- 2-6 Cultural influences
- 2-7 Political influences

CF3 Domains of geographic information

- 3-1 Space
- 3-2 Time
- 3-3 Relationships between space and time
- 3-4 Properties

CF4 Elements of geographic information

- 4-1 Discrete entities
- 4-2 Events and processes
- 4-3 Fields in space and time
- 4-4 Integrated models

CF5 Relationships

- 5-1 Categories
- 5-2 Merology: structural relationships
- 5-3 Genealogical relationships: lineage, inheritance
- 5-4 Topological relationships
- 5-5 Metrical relationships: distance and direction
- 5-6 Spatial distribution
- 5-7 Region
- 5-8 Spatial integration

CF6 Imperfections in geographic information

- 6-1 Vagueness
- 6-2 Mathematical models of vagueness: Fuzzy sets and rough sets
- 6-3 Error-based uncertainty
- 6-4 Mathematical models of uncertainty: Probability and statistics

Cartography and Visualization

CV1 History and trends

- 1-1 History of cartography
- 1-2 Technological transformations

CV2 Data considerations

- 2-1 Source materials for mapping
- 2-2 Data abstraction: classification, selection, and generalization
- 2-3 Projections as a map design issue

CV3 Principles of map design

- 3-1 Map design fundamentals
- 3-2 Basic concepts of symbolization
- 3-3 Color for cartography and visualization
- 3-4 Typography for cartography and visualization

CV4 Graphic representation techniques

- 4-1 Basic thematic mapping methods
- 4-2 Multivariate displays
- 4-3 Dynamic and interactive displays
- 4-4 Representing terrain
- 4-5 Web mapping and visualizations
- 4-6 Virtual and immersive environments
- 4-7 Spatialization
- 4-8 Visualization of temporal geographic data
- 4-9 Visualization of uncertainty

CV5 Map production

- 5-1 Computational issues
- 5-2 Map production
- 5-3 Map reproduction

CV6 Map use and evaluation

- 6-1 The power of maps
- 6-2 Map reading
- 6-3 Map interpretation
- 6-4 Map analysis
- 6-5 Evaluation and testing
- 6-6 Impact of uncertainty

Design Aspects

DA1 The scope of GIS&T system design

- 1-1 Using models to represent information and processes
- 1-2 Components of models: data, structures, procedures
- 1-3 The scope of GIS&T applications
- 1-4 The scope of GIS&T design
- 1-5 The process of GIS&T design

DA2 Project definition

- 2-1 Problem definition
- 2-2 Planning for design
- 2-3 Application/user assessment
- 2-4 Requirements analysis
- 2-5 Social, political, and cultural issues

DA3 Resource planning

- 3-1 Feasibility analysis
- 3-2 Software systems
- 3-3 Data costs
- 3-4 Labor and management
- 3-5 Capital: facilities and equipment
- 3-6 Funding

DA4 Database design

- 4-1 Modeling tools
- 4-2 Conceptual models
- 4-3 Logical models
- 4-4 Physical models

DA5 Analysis design

- 5-1 Recognizing analytical components
- 5-2 Identifying and designing analytical procedures
- 5-3 Coupling scientific models with GIS
- 5-4 Formalizing a procedure design

DA6 Application design

- 6-1 Workflow analysis and design
- 6-2 User interfaces
- 6-3 Development environments for geospatial applications
- 6-4 Computer-Aided Software Engineering (CASE) tools

DA7 System implementation

- 7-1 Implementation planning
- 7-2 Implementation tasks
- 7-3 System testing
- 7-4 System deployment

Data Modeling

DM1 Basic storage and retrieval structures

- 1-1 Basic data structures
- 1-2 Data retrieval strategies

DM2 Database management systems

- 2-1 Evolution of DBMS and GIS
- 2-2 Relational DBMS
- 2-3 Object-oriented DBMS
- 2-4 Extensions of the relational model

DM3 Tessellation data models

- 3-1 Grid representations
- 3-2 The raster model
- 3-3 Grid compression methods
- 3-4 The hexagonal model
- 3-5 The Triangulated Irregular Network (TIN) model
- 3-6 Resolution
- 3-7 Hierarchical data models

DM4 Vector and object data models

- 4-1 Geometric primitives
- 4-2 The spaghetti model
- 4-3 The topological model
- 4-4 Classic vector data models
- 4-5 The network model
- 4-6 Linear referencing
- 4-7 Object-based spatial databases

DM5 Modeling 3D, uncertain, and temporal phenomena

- 5-1 Spatio-temporal GIS
- 5-2 Modeling uncertainty
- 5-3 Modeling three-dimensional entities

Appendix 3: Intended learning outcomes

Master's programme Development Studies

Intended learning outcomes and qualifications.

The graduate possesses competences to:

1. Identify and understand the nature, history, theory and methodology of Development Studies and are able to apply this knowledge;
2. Identify and understand the socio-spatial diversity, complexity and dynamics of societal structures, processes and behaviours;
3. Identify and understand possible interventions that are based on the outcomes of research in Development Studies, and of the need and methods of critical assessment of such interventions.
4. Design an original research proposal or plan for a complex societal issue, in an independent way. In this they integrate knowledge and skills learnt in the bachelor and master phases relating to theory, methodology, research methods and techniques, and interpretation;
5. Conduct a research project with a minimum of supervision, also in unfamiliar contexts; they are able to integrate theoretical knowledge, to apply social research methodology and appropriate research methods and techniques, to interpret data in a valid way and to formulate appropriate conclusions;
6. Develop solutions for complex (spatial) societal problems, both individually and in a team of professionals with different expertise.
7. Apply a series of advanced research techniques (data collection, processing, analysis and interpretation) and generic skills (oral, written, visual and mixed presentation; design of relevant policy recommendations; knowledge and use of ICT; working in a team). The techniques and skills are relevant to the respective discipline or specialization;
8. Apply these in the analysis of contemporary societal questions;
9. Analyse and evaluate the effects of complex spatial developments and interventions;
10. Critically reflect on their academic behavior;
11. Consider the societal consequences and the ethical implications of academic research. They are able and feel the responsibility to participate in public debates and to formulate policy recommendations.
12. Communicate in written and spoken manner with the groups in society for which their research has implications or is relevant in another way. They are able to participate in academic debates on the basis of arguments and communicate their analysis convincingly;
13. Listen to, use, integrate, and reproduce complex and unfamiliar arguments given by others;
14. Integrate the communicative actions by different stakeholders in a complex societal issue, and play a role in linking these to each other. They are able to play a mediating role between actors with competing goals by stimulating the exchange of ideas.
15. Keep up with developments in their respective disciplines in an independent manner;
16. Recognise and analyse developments in society in an independent manner, and to anticipate on these in the public debate;
17. Continue experiential learning processes in an independent manner;
18. Work in an (interdisciplinary) team, and to recognise and communicate the contribution and added value of their own discipline or specialisation in the team;
19. Identify and understand working cultures in other disciplines or sectors;
20. Qualify for a third cycle (PhD) project.

Qualifications

To be able to reach the above qualifications students may expect from the Master programme that it:

1. Has a strong focus on academic research, both theoretical and applied;
2. Teaches students the state of the art in Development Studies and its historical development at an advanced level;
3. Teaches students to recognize and critically discuss the theoretical and methodological foundations of Development Studies at an advanced level;
4. Require students to complete their Master programme with a research project through which they individually demonstrate their ability to design and execute an advanced and relevant research project, and to present the results, usually in the form of a written thesis;
5. Offers students an effective, stimulating and challenging learning environment, with possibilities to participate in empirical data collection in the field, also in an unfamiliar spatial context; and to participate in excursions and visits to institutions or commercial agencies that may be relevant to the students' later careers. Teaching materials and equipment are state-of-the-art and challenging, also in the field of ICT. Teachers play a stimulating, active and coaching role;
6. Offers students sufficient and relevant opportunities for specialization within the discipline;
7. Offers students a clear view of the opportunities and chances to continue their educational or professional careers after graduation;
8. Offers students an adequate academic advisory system;
9. Has a well/functioning system of internal educational quality control;
10. Guarantees close connection between education and research;
11. Has an adequate system of staff management, including professionalization and an equal position of teaching and research in the career perspectives of academic staff;
12. Monitors and controls the disciplinary and generic competences of students entering the Master programme;
13. Takes into account the diverse background of students entering the Master.

Master's programme Geographical Sciences

Domain-specific learning outcomes

The graduate possesses competences to:

1. Identify and understand geo-information concepts, methods and techniques;
2. Use appropriate concepts, methods and techniques for the management and application of geo-information;
3. Analyse the quality and usability of geo-information processes;
4. Evaluate solutions for societal problems by applying knowledge and geo-information;
5. Design and implement proof-of-concept geo-information-based solutions for societal problems.

Scientific learning outcomes

The graduate possesses competences to:

6. Independently formulate and execute research in accordance with academic standards within the field;
7. Communicate clearly (both orally and in writing) with specialists and non-specialists to present and discuss the outcomes of research and design projects;
8. Show awareness of the need to keep in touch with relevant developments within the discipline and is able to recognise, understand and apply new concepts and approaches as they emerge;

9. Demonstrate understanding of the moral and ethical dimensions of scientific research and its applications, and the importance of intellectual integrity.

General learning outcomes

The graduate possesses competences to:

10. Effectively organise, structure and plan phases in multidisciplinary team work;
11. Critically reflect on one's own performance and results, as well as on those of colleagues;
12. Design and plan a path to study geo-information science in a manner that is largely self-directed or autonomous.

Master's programme Human Geography

Dublin descriptor Knowledge and Understanding

1. **SOCIO-SPATIAL ISSUES** Have advanced knowledge and understanding of complexity, variation, dynamics and interdependence of socio-spatial structures, processes, practices and representations in society
2. **CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES** Have advanced knowledge and understanding of the conditions for, the mechanisms underlying, and the effects of dynamic and interdependent spatial structures, processes, practices and representations
3. **MASTER SPECIALIZATION** Have advanced knowledge and understanding of the theory, nature, history, and methodology in the master specialization and are able to apply this knowledge and understanding
4. **POLICY INTERVENTIONS** Have advanced knowledge and understanding of the interdependency between academic research and (policy) interventions related to the master specialization and of the methods to critically assess research outcomes and (policy) interventions.

Dublin descriptor Applying knowledge and understanding

1. **DEVELOP RESEARCH/DESIGN PROJECT** Are able to independently and individually develop an original research or design proposal about a current complex societal or scientific problem related to the master specialization, based on solid theoretical, practical, and societal arguments
2. **LITERATURE ANALYSIS** Have the skills to apply and integrate theoretical, academic and societal insights in a literature analysis on the research problem chosen, in a multidisciplinary perspective
3. **EMPIRICAL RESEARCH** Have the skills to both independently and in a team, organize and conduct an empirical research or design project based on primary and secondary data collection, applying appropriate social and spatial research methodology, (design) methods and techniques
4. **CONCLUSIONS** Are able to validly interpret both data and research outcomes and to formulate conclusions
5. **RECOMMENDATIONS** Are able to formulate solutions to the research problem studied and make relevant research and policy recommendations
6. **APPLICATION** Are able to academically contribute to applied research or design in a professional organization dealing with geographical issues related to the master specialization

Dublin descriptor Making judgements

1. **SELECTING TECHNIQUES/SKILLS** Have the overview to select and use the appropriate methodology, methods, techniques and working & communication skills for research and design projects related to master specialization
2. **USE TECHNIQUES/SKILLS** Are able to use advanced research and design skills in the analysis of contemporary socio-spatial problems, questions or debates
3. **MASTER SPECIALIZATION CONTEXT** Are able to identify, analyze and evaluate the socio-spatial effects of complex societal developments and interventions
4. **SOCIETAL IMPLICATIONS** Can indicate the societal and ethical implications of academic research and feel the need and responsibility to translate academic research in policy recommendations and to participate in public debates
5. **ACADEMIC ATTITUDE** Take on a critical academic stance and attitude in reflecting on both general and their peers' and own academic behavior

Dublin descriptor Communication

1. **PRESENTATION AND COMMUNICATION** Are able to clearly communicate the results of academic research or the analysis of both academic literature and empirical research in written and spoken manner to relevant societal actors, stakeholders or in a design project for a wider audience (citizens)
2. **TARGET AUDIENCE** Are able to appropriately address the audiences in presenting academic research findings or design, taking into account the interests and backgrounds of the audience members
3. **ARGUMENTATION AND DISCUSSION** Are able to critically discuss (preliminary) research findings or design of others (peers) and formulate positive peer-feedback (forward) based on sound arguments
4. **PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION** Are able to clearly communicate and convincingly defend both proposal, actions and results of research or design, with peers and with different stakeholders in a professional setting related to the master specialization

Dublin descriptor Learning skills

1. **UPDATE KNOWLEDGE** Are capable of independently recognizing and following both current societal and scientific developments related to the master specialization
2. **PUBLICLY ACTIVE** Take responsibility to actively participate in public forums or policy debates related to current societal developments related to the master specialization
3. **INDEPENDENT AND CRITICAL** Are able to independently plan, organize and conduct academic research and iteratively critically reflect on the choices made, the research process, progress and outcomes and makes changes accordingly
4. **DISCIPLINARY VALUE** Can work in both small and larger teams of (interdisciplinary) students/scholars, and recognize and communicate the contribution of (interdisciplinary) knowledge and skills in the issue studied
5. **DISCIPLINARY CULTURE** Know about academic research cultures in other disciplines and can relate them to the academic culture in the master specialization
6. **INDEPENDENT ADVANCED RESEARCH** Are able to qualify for a PhD project.

Master's programme Spatial Planning

1. Students have obtained knowledge in recent theoretical approaches towards planning issues and they are able to use these insights in research and professional debates on planning issues.

2. Students are able to analyze spatial processes as well as planning processes. They can explain spatial developments and spatial processes from different theoretical perspectives. In the analyses the differing spatial scales (including their complex relations) and dependencies (as well as fields of tension) between relevant actors are taken into account.
3. Students are able to formulate a design for empirical research in which scientific theory as well as methods and techniques are well positioned. The results of the research are well interpreted both professionally and from a scientific point of view.
4. Students are able to contribute to the solution of planning issues within the framework of their societal context, both in terms of the spatial consequences (long term and short term) as well as in terms of a governance model. In order to come to such a contribution, students are able to recognize and use theoretical insights from different scientific disciplines.
5. Students are able to formulate clear arguments in order to underline their analysis and conclusions. In such an argument students must have an eye for the achievements and shortcomings of the argument in a theoretical sense as well as a methodological and empirical sense.
6. Students are able to communicate the findings of scientific research to a scientific as well as a professional audience.
7. Students are able to gain knowledge about new planning issues themselves and are highly self-confident about the way they do that.

Appendix 4: Overview of the curricula

Master's programme Development Studies

Period 1 (Sept – Nov)	Period 2 (Nov – Jan)	Period 3 (Feb – April)	Period 4 (May – August)
Development Themes (7.5 EC)	Development Practices (5 EC)	Research Internship/MSc Thesis (30 EC)	
Development Theories (7.5 EC)	Advanced Methods & Techniques for Development Studies (5 EC)		
	Research Preparation (5 EC)		

Master's programme Geographical Sciences

Enschede	Utrecht	Wageningen	Delft	full time	part time
1. methods & techniques	2. basic applications	3. management in organisations		year 1	year 1
4. project management	5. advanced methods & techniques	6. advanced applications		year 1	year 2
7. internship				year 2	year 3
8. thesis				year 2	year 4

Master's programme Human Geography

Structure of the programme

Semester 1		Semester 2	
Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4
Lectured course	Lectured course	Master Thesis Master Internship	Master Thesis Master Internship
Lectured course/ Advanced M&T	Lectured course/ Advanced M&T	Master Thesis Master Internship	Master Thesis Master Internship

Courses specialisation Economic Geography

Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4
Entrepreneurship in the Region (OidR)	Spatial Economic Policy (REB)	Master Thesis Master Internship	
Multinational Organizations (MNO)	Advanced Methods & Techniques		

Courses specialisation Geo-Communication

Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4
Representation: Geography & Society (B:G&S)	Landscape as Arena (LaA)	Master Thesis Master internship	
Design studio for geographical information (AEO)	Work field orientation (PO)/Advanced Methods & Techniques		

Courses specialisation Urban Geography

Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4
Advanced Urban Geography (AUG)	2 Tracks: Urban Daily Life/Living in the city	Master Thesis Master Internship	
Advanced Methods and Techniques	Urban reflections in practice: field trip		

Master's programme Spatial Planning

Period 1 (Sept – Nov)	Period 2 (Dec – Jan)	Period 3 (Feb – April)	Period 4 (May – July)
Beyond National Planning (7.5 ECTS)	Governance, Policy Analysis and Spatial Process Management (7.5 ECTS)	Internship/Master thesis (7.5 ECTS)	Internship/Master thesis (7.5 ECTS)
Advanced Methods and Techniques (7.5 ECTS)	Internship/Master thesis (Research design) (7.5 ECTS)	Internship/Master thesis (7.5 ECTS)	Literature study (7.5 ECTS)

Appendix 5: Quantitative data regarding the programmes

Data on intake, transfers and graduates

Master's programme Development Studies

Student intake, male/female ratio and education background

	Intake in numbers	Male in %	Female in %	From Geo UU in numbers	From rest of UU in numbers	From NL univ. in numbers	From HBO in numbers	From abroad in numbers	After pre-master (mainly HBO) in numbers
total	274	31.0	69.0	72	68	51	39	44	72
2005	9	66.7	33.3	3	2	1	3	0	5
2006	62	30.6	69.4	22	21	8	8	3	16
2007	43	20.9	79.1	12	10	7	8	6	21
2008	36	36.1	63.9	10	12	4	0	10	3
2009	36	36.1	63.9	8	5	8	4	11	1
2010	56	25.0	75.0	9	12	15	7	13	12
2011	32	34.4	65.6	8	6	8	9	1	14

Graduates per year and number of students graduated with cum laude distinction

Cohort	Intake in numbers	Graduates in numbers	Graduates in %	Length of study with diploma in month (mean)	Length of study with diploma in month (median)	Students that graduate within nominal program length + 1 year in %	No. of students that spend more than the nominal length + 1 yr	Graduate with cum laude	Graduate with cum laude (% of total)
IDS total	274	238	86.9	17	14	81.0	16	28	11.8
2005	9	7	77.8	28	24	55.6	2	0	0
2006	62	59	95.2	19	15	85.5	6	3	5.1
2007	43	39	90.7	18	14	81.4	4	7	17.9
2008	36	31	86.1	17	15	75.0	4	4	12.9
2009	36	31	86.1	15	15	86.1	0	5	16.1
2010	56	49	87.5	15	12	87.5	0	6	12.2
2011	32	22	68.8	12	12	68.8	0	3	13.6

Master's programme Geographical Sciences

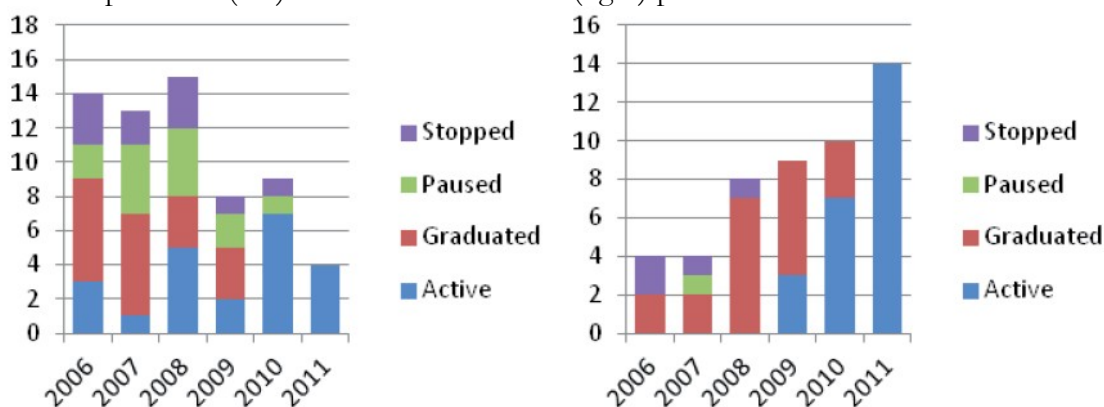
Intake, gender, mode of study and former education (cohort 2006 – 2012)

Cohort	Intake	Gender		Mode of study		Former education				
		M (%)	F (%)	PT (%)	FT (%)	WO-UU-GEO	WO-UU	WO-NL	HBO	Abroad
2006	18	67	33	78	22	1	1	2	5	9
2007	17	76	24	76	24	2	3	3	3	6
2008	23	91	9	65	35	1	4	5	10	3
2009	17	76	24	47	53	5	0	4	3	5
2010	19	58	42	47	53	6	1	1	5	6
2011	18	78	22	22	78	7	1	6	3	1
Total	112	-	-	-	-	22	10	21	29	30

Full-time and part-time graduates and duration of study till graduation (months) per cohort

Cohort	PT			FT		
	abs.	%	months	abs.	%	months
2006	6	42.9	45	2	50	40
2007	6	46.2	43	2	50	28
2008	3	20	44	7	87.5	33
2009	4	50	30	7	77.8	34
2010	0	0	0	3	30	24
	19	30.1	41	39	42.9	37

Status of part-time (left) and full-time students (right) per cohort



Master's programme Human Geography

Intake and types of inflow, male/female ratios, to year and master specialisation

	Intake in numbers	Male in %	Female in %	From Geo UU in numbers	From rest of UU in numbers	From NL univ. in numbers	From HBO in numbers	From abroad in numbers	Share of total intake with a pre-master in %
Master Human Geography	607	57.8	42.2	352	46	78	115	16	36.5
2004	12	41.7	58.3	3	1	1	6	1	0.0
2005	73	53.4	46.6	27	4	12	28	2	50.0
2006	82	61.0	39.0	49	8	9	15	1	51.5
2007	100	57.0	43.0	66	6	13	15	0	38.2
2008	89	62.9	37.1	41	11	14	18	5	33.3
2009	77	49.4	50.6	49	8	8	11	1	21.4
2010	71	62.0	38.0	48	2	11	8	2	30.4
2011	103	60.2	39.8	69	6	10	14	4	32.4
Economic Geography	191	78.0	22.0	131	17	16	26	1	38.3
Geo-Communication	168	45.8	54.2	104	20	15	28	1	29.7
Urban Geography	248	50.4	49.6	117	9	47	61	14	38.9

Intake and graduates, length of study, to year and master specialisation

	Intake in numbers	Male in %	Female in %	From Geo UU in numbers	From rest of UU in numbers	From NL univ. in numbers	From HBO in numbers	From abroad in numbers	Share of total intake with a pre-master in %
Master Human Geography	607	57.8	42.2	352	46	78	115	16	36.5
2004	12	41.7	58.3	3	1	1	6	1	0.0
2005	73	53.4	46.6	27	4	12	28	2	50.0
2006	82	61.0	39.0	49	8	9	15	1	51.5
2007	100	57.0	43.0	66	6	13	15	0	38.2
2008	89	62.9	37.1	41	11	14	18	5	33.3
2009	77	49.4	50.6	49	8	8	11	1	21.4
2010	71	62.0	38.0	48	2	11	8	2	30.4
2011	103	60.2	39.8	69	6	10	14	4	32.4
Economic Geography	191	78.0	22.0	131	17	16	26	1	38.3
Geo-Communication	168	45.8	54.2	104	20	15	28	1	29.7
Urban Geography	248	50.4	49.6	117	9	47	61	14	38.9

Master's programme Spatial Planning

Intake and male/female ratio

Cohort	Intake in numbers	Male in %	Female in %	From Geo UU in numbers	From rest of UU in numbers	From NL university in numbers	From HBO in numbers	From abroad in numbers	After pre-master (mainly HBO) in numbers
total	240	70,8	29,2	186	5	17	31	1	30
2005	3 ^a	66,7	33,3	3	0	0	0	0	
2006	46	87,0	13,0	33	1	1	11	0	11
2007	27	70,4	29,6	20	0	5	1	1	1
2008	42	64,3	35,7	34	1	3	4	0	5
2009	39	71,8	28,2	30	1	4	4	0	3
2010	52	69,2	30,8	43	2	2	5	0	5
2011	31	58,1	41,9	23	0	2	6	0	5

Summaries of the number of intakes, graduates per year, and length of study

Cohort	Intake in numbers	Graduates in numbers	Graduates in %	Length of study with diploma in month (average)	Length of study with diploma in month (median)	Length of study without diploma in months (median)	Students that graduate within nominal program length + 1 year in %	'Lang-studeerder' (study length +1 year)
total	240	178	74,2	20	18	5	61,3	31
2005	3 ^a	2	66,7	22	22	60	66,7	0
2006	46	40	87,0	19	16	5	69,6	8
2007	27	21	77,8	22	21	5	55,6	6
2008	42	38	90,5	19	15	7	73,8	7
2009	39	34	87,2	24	23	8	61,5	10
2010	52	40	76,9	20	20	5	76,9	0
total without cohort 2011	209	175	83,7	21			68,9	62
2011	31	3	9,7	12	12	5	9,7	0

Teacher-student ratio achieved

Staff-student ratio in the department of Human Geography and Spatial Planning

Year	Number of bachelor students (...)= according to KUO (pt=part time) *)	Number of master students (**)	Number of doctoral students (to 31-08-2007)	Number of pre-master students	Total number of students	Teaching staff in fte (***)	Staff-student ratio
03/04	387 (383 + 1 pt)	9	488		884	33.7	1:26.3
04/05	525 (554 + 9 pt)	74	356	34	989	30.9	1:32.0
05/06	658 (729 + 15 pt)	174	228	74	1134	29.1	1:39.0
06/07	719 (788 + 16 pt)	296	96	71	1182	29.6	1:40.0
07/08	734 (784 + 18 pt)	359	0	52	1145	32.0	1:35.8
08/09	744 (785 + 18 pt)	387	0	46	1177	28.8	1:40.9
09/10	782 (823 + 13 pt)	389	0	46	1217	28.4	1:42.8
10/11	807 (806 + 16 pt)	421	0	41	1228	29.8	1:42.5
11/12	711 (744 + 12 pt)	390	0	38	1139	26.5	1:43.0
12/13	693 (unknown)	331	0	39	1063	27.1	1:39.2

*) Registered bachelor students according to our own administration (full-time students only). Between brackets the figures according to KUO, which are generally higher, presumably as a result of including pre-master students. Part-time students are recorded in the KUO figures separately. The total number of master students complies with the KUO figures. The calculation of the staff-student ratio is based on our own administration of (bachelor) students.

**) Including research master + GIMA; figures for GIMA are divided by four as the teachers are involved in approximately one quarter of all teaching.

***) Teaching load in fte per contract. Until 2011-2012 teaching load of (some) PhD students is included (max 0.1 fte) – in 2012 the Department Board decided not to give teaching tasks to PhD students (unless taken up voluntarily and only with supervisor's consent).

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

Master's programme Development Studies

Course	Total study load	Total contact hours (sum of all teaching methods)	Lectures	Tutorials/practicals	Computer practical	Fieldwork course	Presentations	Tests and exams
Development Themes	210	62	44	5	-	-	10	3
Development Theories	210	49	24	22				3
Advanced Methods & Techniques for Development Studies	140	48	22	11	11	-	4	-
Research Preparation	140	22	-	17	-	-	4	1
Development Practices	140	38	20	16	-	-	2	-
Master's thesis/ Internship	840	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	1680	219	110	71	11	-	20	7

Master's programme Geographical Sciences

Module	EC	Contact hours					Total contact hours	Self-study hours	Total study load
		Lectures/guest lectures	Practicals	Presentations by students	Tests/exams	Other contacts*			
1	10	26	-	-	2	12	40	240	280
2	10	8	8	16	-	8	40	240	280
3	10	38	-	5	2	5	50	230	280
4	10	22	-	6	4	4	36	244	280
5	10	18	-	16	2	6	42	238	280
6	10	9	4	1	8	8	30	250	280
7	30	0	-	2	2	16	20	820	840
8	30	4	4	1	1	20	30	810	840
Total	120	125	16	47	21	79	288	3072	3360
% contact hours	-	43.4	5.6	16.3	7.3	27	100.0	-	-
% study load	-	3.7	0.5	1.4	0.6	2.4	8.6	91.4	100.0

Master's programme Human Geography

Master specialization		Total study load	Contact hours	Lectures	Tutorials/practicals	Computer practical	Fieldwork course	Presentations	Tests and exams
TOTAL	Economic Geography	1680	211	59	68	15	40	19	10
TOTAL	Geo-Communication	1680	216	31	79	5	65	20	16
TOTAL	Urban Geography	1680	221	49	76	15	48	20	13
Average	Master's program Human Geography	1680	216	46	76	12	51	20	13

Master's programme Spatial Planning

Course	Total study load	Contact hours (= total)	Lectures	Tutorials/practical	Computer practical	Presentations	Tests and exams
Beyond National Planning	210	72	54	5	-	10	3
Governance, Policy Analysis and Spatial Process Management	210	55	28	22	-	2	3
Advanced M&T	210	48	22	11	11	4	-
Master thesis/internship	840	25	-	22	-	3	-
Literature study	210	2	-	-	-	-	2
Total	1680	202	104	60	11	20	8

Appendix 6: Programme of the site visit

8 October 2013			
18.00	20.00	Preparatory meeting (self-assessment + theses)	
9 October 2013			
9:00	10.00	Reading additional documentation	
10.00	11.00	Management	<p>Programme Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leo Paul • Veronique Schutjens • Fred Toppen • Erika van Middelkoop <p>Dean/vice-dean:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ronald van Kempen • Piet Hoekstra <p>Management Human Geography & Spatial Planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin Dijst
11.00	11.15	Break and internal meeting	
11.15	12.00	Students bachelor's programme <i>Sociale Geografie en Planologie</i>	<p>Student management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hester Hellinga • Martijn Hendriks <p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thomas Lier • Esmee Ruland • Myrthe Mulder • Jurre Kieboom
12.00	12.45	Teachers bachelor's programme <i>Sociale Geografie en Planologie</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fred Toppen • Gery Nijenhuis • Alphons de Vocht • Ilse van Liempt • Vera Berkens • Ben de Pater
12:45	13:30	Lunch and internal meeting	
13.30	14.15	Students master's programme Human Geography	<p>Students Economic Geography:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maarten Kruger • Karin Blankers <p>Students Geo-Communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anne van Wijk-Wouters • Joanne Annot <p>Students Urban Geography:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geert de Leeuw • Jasmijn Koelega
14.15	15.00	Teachers master's programme Human Geography	<p>Economic Geography:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veronique Schutjens • Leo van Grunsven <p>Geo-Communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tine Béneker • Bouke van Gorp <p>Urban Geography:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bas Spierings • Brian Doucet

15.00	15.15	Break and internal meeting	
15.15	16.00	Students master's programme Spatial Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remko Boer • Fleur Elfrink • Lucas van der Linde • Mellanie van Dolleweerd
16.00	16.45	Teachers master's programme Spatial Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tejo Spit • Stan Geertman • Thomas Hartmann
16.45	17.00	Intern overleg	
10 October 2013			
9.00	9:30	Internal meeting	
9.30	10.15	Students master's programme Development Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Murtah Read • Maarten Heetderks • Iara Beekma Reis • Ruud Bosch
10.15	11.00	Teachers master's programme Development Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maggi Leung • Annelies Zoomers • Gery Nijenhuis • Guus van Westen
11.00	11.15	Break and internal meeting	
11.15	12.00	Students master's programme Geographical Sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joey Figiel • Roeland Steur • Sanne van der Neut • Sanne Douma
12.00	12.45	Teachers master's programme Geographical Sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connie Blok (UT/ITC) • Arnold Bregt (WU) • Stan Geertman (UU) • Bastiaan van Loenen (TUD)
12.45	13.30	Lunch and internal meeting	
13.30	14.30	Programme Committee bachelor's programme <i>Sociale Geografie en Planologie</i> , and study advisor	<p>Teachers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gideon Bolt • Nelleke de Jong • Ilse van Liempt <p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ingeborg van de Giessen • Madeleen Graafland • Puck Jeekel (VUGS management)
14.30	15.30	Programme Committees master's programmes and study advisors	<p><i>Human Geography, Development Studies & Spatial Planning</i></p> <p>Teachers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leo van Grunsven (chair) • Stan Geertman <p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lorraine Spruijt (Development Studies) • Robbert Kramer (Geo-Communication) <p><i>Geographical Sciences</i></p> <p>Teachers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bastiaan van Loenen (chair)

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ellen-Wien Augustijn Students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joey Figiel • Sanne van der Neut
15.30	15.45	Break and internal meeting	
15.45	16.45	Alumni	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monique Roso (Economic Geography) • Herman Kievit (Urban Geography) • Anne de Klerk (Geo-Communication) • Sander van Lent (Spatial Planning) • Bart Baas (Geographical Sciences & Development Studies)
16.45	17.00	Internal meeting	
11 October 2013			
9.00	9:30	Internal meeting	
9.30	10.30	Examination Committee + study advisor	Examination Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oedzge Atzema • Dick Ettema • Alphons de Vocht • Erika van Middelkoop Chair of the Faculty Examination Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peter Driessen Chair of the Faculty Assessment Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floortje Alkemade Studyadvisor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jos Bierbooms
10.30	11.30	Consultation hour + internal meeting	
11.30	12.00	Break	
12.00	13.00	Final interview with the management (including the dean)	Programme Mangament: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leo Paul • Veronique Schutjens • Fred Toppen • Erika van Middelkoop Dean/vice-dean: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ronald van Kempen • Piet Hoekstra Management Human Geography & Spatial Planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin Dijst
13.00	14.00	Lunch + internal meeting	
14.00	14.15	Presentation of preliminary findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department • Faculty Management • Rector Magnificus (Bert van der Zwaan)

Appendix 7: Theses and documents studied by the assessment committee

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

Master's programme Development Studies

3143872	3639010	3115569
3198294	3137031	3681424
3612414	3179850	3687929
3417360	3115321	3691144
3482553	0366218	

Master's programme Geographical Sciences

0404934	0119032	3432807
3399362	3017885	3436527
3135756	3042758	3371786
0506192	3399400	3143880
3305333	3620883	

Master's programme Human Geography

0305863	3343707	3311724
3186539	3219135	3233448
3103900	3017761	3671844
3505545	3357023	0508322
0445290	3688038	

Master's programme Spatial Planning

3061868	3037304	3017559
0490369	3168905	0408980
3031896	3485528	3062031
0267422	3455815	3134555
0421065	3115976	

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

- Domain-specific framework of reference and the learning outcomes of the programme;
- Overview of the curriculum;
- Outline description of the curriculum components;
- Teaching and examination regulations;
- Overview of allocated staff;
- Overview of the contacts maintained with the professional field;
- Report on the institutional quality assurance assessment;
- Reports on consultations in relevant committees/bodies;
- Test questions with corresponding assessment criteria and requirements;
- Selection of final projects with corresponding assessment criteria and requirements;
- Reference books and other learning materials;
- Summary and analysis of recent evaluation results and relevant management information;

- Documentation regarding teacher and student satisfaction.

Appendix 8: Declarations of independence



ONAFHANKELIJKHEIDS- EN GEHEIMHOUDINGSVERKLARING

INDIENEN VOORAFGAAND AAN DE OPLEIDINGSBEOORDELING

ONDERGETEKENDE

NAAM:

H.F.L. Ottens

PRIVÉ ADRES:

Waldeck Pyrmontkade 9

3503 TW Utrecht

IS ALS DESKUNDIGE / SECRETARIS GEVRAAGD VOOR HET BEOORDELEN VAN DE OPLEIDING:

Sociale Geografie en Planologie

AANGEVRAAGD DOOR DE INSTELLING:

zie bijlage

VERKLAART HIERBIJ GEEN (FAMILIE)RELATIES OF BANDEN MET BOVENGENOEMDE INSTELLING TE ONDERHOUDEN, ALS PRIVÉPERSOON, ONDERZOEKER / DOCENT, BEROEPSBEOEFENAAR OF ALS ADVISEUR, DIE EEN VOLSTREKT ONAFHANKELIJKE OORDEELSVORMING OVER DE KWALITEIT VAN DE OPLEIDING TEN POSITIEVE OF TEN NEGATIEVE Zouden KUNNEN BEÏNVLOEDEN;



VERKLAART HIERBIJ ZODANIGE RELATIES OF BANDEN MET DE INSTELLING DE
AFGELOPEN VIJF JAAR NIET GEHAD TE HEBBEN;

VERKLAART STRIKTE GEHEIMHOUDING TE BETRACHTEN VAN AL HETGEEN IN
VERBAND MET DE BEOORDELING AAN HEM/HAAR BEKEND IS GEWORDEN EN
WORDT, VOOR ZOVER DE OPLEIDING, DE INSTELLING OF DE NVAO HIER
REDELIJKERWIJS AANSPRAAK OP KUNNEN MAKEN.

VERKLAART HIERBIJ OP DE HOOGTE TE ZIJN VAN DE NVAO GEDRAGSCODE.

PLAATS:

Utrecht

DATUM:

22 april 2013

HANDTEKENING:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping, slanted strokes, positioned above a long, thin horizontal line that spans across the width of the signature area.

ONAFHANKELIJKHEIDS- EN GEHEIMHOUDINGSVERKLARING

INDIENEN VOORAFGAAND AAN DE OPLEIDINGSBEOORDELING

ONDERGETEKENDE

NAAM:

H. van der Wouwen

PRIVÉ ADRES:

J.M. Molenaerplein 6
2102 CE Heerhooft

IS ALS DESKUNDIGE / SECRETARIS GEVRAAGD VOOR HET BEOORDELEN VAN DE OPLEIDING:

Sociale Geografie en Planologie

AANGEVRAAGD DOOR DE INSTELLING:

Zie bijlage

VERKLAART HIERBIJ GEEN (FAMILIE)RELATIES OF BANDEN MET BOVENGENOEMDE INSTELLING TE ONDERHOUDEN, ALS PRIVÉPERSOON, ONDERZOEKER / DOCENT, BEROEPSBEOEFENAAR OF ALS ADVISEUR, DIE EEN VOLSTREKT ONAFHANKELIJKE OORDEELSVORMING OVER DE KWALITEIT VAN DE OPLEIDING TEN POSITIEVE OF TEN NEGATIEVE Zouden kunnen BEÏNVLOEDEN;



VERKLAART HIERBIJ ZODANIGE RELATIES OF BANDEN MET DE INSTELLING DE
AFGELOPEN VIJF JAAR NIET GEHAD TE HEBBEN;

VERKLAART STRIKTE GEHEIMHOUDING TE BETRACHTEN VAN AL HETGEEN IN
VERBAND MET DE BEOORDELING AAN HEM/HAAR BEKEND IS GEWORDEN EN
WORDT, VOOR ZOVER DE OPLEIDING, DE INSTELLING OF DE NVAO HIER
REDELIJKERWIJS AANSPRAAK OP KUNNEN MAKEN.

VERKLAART HIERBIJ OP DE HOOGTE TE ZIJN VAN DE NVAO GEDRAGSCODE.

PLAATS:

Heemstede

DATUM:

20.4.2013

HANDTEKENING:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. van der...' with a long horizontal stroke underneath.



ONAFHANKELIJKHEIDS- EN GEHEIMHOUDINGSVERKLARING

INDIENEN VOORAFGAAND AAN DE OPLEIDINGSBEOORDELING

ONDERGETEKENDE

NAAM:

H. van den Bosch

PRIVÉ ADRES:

Walem 35

6342 PA Walem

IS ALS DESKUNDIGE / SECRETARIS GEVRAAGD VOOR HET BEOORDELEN VAN DE OPLEIDING:

Sociale Geografie en Planologie

AANGEVRAAGD DOOR DE INSTELLING:

Zie bijlage

VERKLAART HIERBIJ GEEN (FAMILIE)RELATIES OF BANDEN MET BOVENGENOEMDE INSTELLING TE ONDERHOUDEN, ALS PRIVÉPERSOON, ONDERZOEKER / DOCENT, BEROEPSBEOEFENAAR OF ALS ADVISEUR, DIE EEN VOLSTREKT ONAFHANKELIJKE OORDEELSVORMING OVER DE KWALITEIT VAN DE OPLEIDING TEN POSITIEVE OF TEN NEGATIEVE Zouden kunnen beïnvloeden;



VERKLAART HIERBIJ ZODANIGE RELATIES OF BANDEN MET DE INSTELLING DE
AFGELOPEN VIJF JAAR NIET GEHAD TE HEBBEN;

VERKLAART STRIKTE GEHEIMHOUDING TE BETRACHTEN VAN AL HETGEEN IN
VERBAND MET DE BEOORDELING AAN HEM/HAAR BEKEND IS GEWORDEN EN
WORDT, VOOR ZOVER DE OPLEIDING, DE INSTELLING OF DE NVAO HIER
REDELIJKERWIJS AANSPRAAK OP KUNNEN MAKEN.

VERKLAART HIERBIJ OP DE HOOGTE TE ZIJN VAN DE NVAO GEDRAGSCODE.

PLAATS:

Walem

DATUM:

19 april 2013

HANDTEKENING:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Maand', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

ONAFHANKELIJKHEIDS- EN GEHEIMHOUDINGSVERKLARING

INDIENEN VOORAFGAAND AAN DE OPLEIDINGSBEOORDELING

ONDERGETEKENDE

NAAM:

Wil Zonnweld

PRIVÉ ADRES:

Bankstelendijk 224
1034 ZG Amsterdam

IS ALS DESKUNDIGE / SECRETARIS GEVRAAGD VOOR HET BEOORDELEN VAN DE OPLEIDING:

Sociale geografie en planologie

AANGEVRAAGD DOOR DE INSTELLING:

zie bijlage

VERKLAART HIERBIJ GEEN (FAMILIE)RELATIES OF BANDEN MET BOVENGENOEMDE INSTELLING TE ONDERHOUDEN, ALS PRIVÉPERSOON, ONDERZOEKER / DOCENT, BEROEPSBEOEFENAAR OF ALS ADVISEUR, DIE EEN VOLSTREKT ONAFHANKELIJKE OORDEELSVORMING OVER DE KWALITEIT VAN DE OPLEIDING TEN POSITIEVE OF TEN NEGATIEVE Zouden KUNNEN BEÏNVLOEDEN;



VERKLAART HIERBIJ ZODANIGE RELATIES OF BANDEN MET DE INSTELLING DE
AFGELOPEN VIJF JAAR NIET GEHAD TE HEBBEN;

VERKLAART STRIKTE GEHEIMHOUDING TE BETRACHTEN VAN AL HETGEEN IN
VERBAND MET DE BEOORDELING AAN HEM/HAAR BEKEND IS GEWORDEN EN
WORDT, VOOR ZOVER DE OPLEIDING, DE INSTELLING OF DE NVAO HIER
REDELIJKERWIJS AANSPRAAK OP KUNNEN MAKEN.

VERKLAART HIERBIJ OP DE HOOGTE TE ZIJN VAN DE NVAO GEDRAGSCODE.

PLAATS: *Utrecht*

DATUM: *22 april 2013*

HANDTEKENING:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. van der...' or similar, written over a horizontal line.

ONAFHANKELIJKHEIDS- EN GEHEIMHOUDINGSVERKLARING

INDIENEN VOORAFGAAND AAN DE OPLEIDINGSBEOORDELING

ONDERGETEKENDE

NAAM:

Robert Hassink

PRIVÉ ADRES:

Klinkerwisch 60
D-24107 Kiel
Duitsland

IS ALS DESKUNDIGE / SECRETARIS GEVRAAGD VOOR HET BEOORDELEN VAN DE OPLEIDING:

Sociale Geografie en Planologie

AANGEVRAAGD DOOR DE INSTELLING:

QANU

Utrecht, Nijmegen
Groningen,
Uv Amsterdam

VERKLAART HIERBIJ GEEN (FAMILIE)RELATIES OF BANDEN MET BOVENGENOEMDE INSTELLING TE ONDERHOUDEN, ALS PRIVÉPERSOON, ONDERZOEKER / DOCENT, BEROEPSBEOEFENAAR OF ALS ADVISEUR, DIE EEN VOLSTREKT ONAFHANKELIJKE OORDEELSVORMING OVER DE KWALITEIT VAN DE OPLEIDING TEN POSITIEVE OF TEN NEGATIEVE Zouden KUNNEN BEÏNVLOEDEN;



VERKLAART HIERBIJ ZODANIGE RELATIES OF BANDEN MET DE INSTELLING DE
AFGELOPEN VIJF JAAR NIET GEHAD TE HEBBEN;

VERKLAART STRIKTE GEHEIMHOUDING TE BETRACHTEN VAN AL HETGEEN IN
VERBAND MET DE BEOORDELING AAN HEM/HAAR BEKEND IS GEWORDEN EN
WORDT, VOOR ZOVER DE OPLEIDING, DE INSTELLING OF DE NVAO HIER
REDELIJKERWIJS AANSPRAAK OP KUNNEN MAKEN.

VERKLAART HIERBIJ OP DE HOOGTE TE ZIJN VAN DE NVAO GEDRAGSCODE.

PLAATS: Utrecht

DATUM: 22-4-13

HANDTEKENING:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive script that appears to be 'J.P.' or similar initials.

ONAFHANKELIJKHEIDS- EN GEHEIMHOUDINGSVERKLARING

INDIENEN VOORAFGAAND AAN DE OPLEIDINGSBEOORDELING

ONDERGETEKENDE

NAAM:

Ton Dietz

PRIVÉ ADRES:

Kennemerpark 1 2051 KP Overveen

IS ALS DESKUNDIGE / ~~SECRETARIS~~ GEVRAAGD VOOR HET BEOORDELEN VAN DE OPLEIDING:

SOCIALE GEOGRAFIE EN PLANOLOGIE

AANGEVRAAGD DOOR DE INSTELLING:

Radboud universiteit Nijmegen

UNIVERSITEIT UTRECHT

VERKLAART HIERBIJ GEEN (FAMILIE)RELATIES OF BANDEN MET BOVENGENOEMDE INSTELLING TE ONDERHOUDEN, ALS PRIVÉPERSOON, ONDERZOEKER / DOCENT, BEROEPSBEOEFENAAR OF ALS ADVISEUR, DIE EEN VOLSTREKT ONAFHANKELIJKE OORDEELSVORMING OVER DE KWALITEIT VAN DE OPLEIDING TEN POSITIEVE OF TEN NEGATIEVE Zouden KUNNEN BEÏNVLOEDEN;



VERKLAART HIERBIJ ZODANIGE RELATIES OF BANDEN MET DE INSTELLING DE
AFGELOPEN VIJF JAAR NIET GEHAD TE HEBBEN;

VERKLAART STRIKTE GEHEIMHOUDING TE BETRACHTEN VAN AL HETGEEN IN
VERBAND MET DE BEOORDELING AAN HEM/HAAR BEKEND IS GEWORDEN EN
WORDT, VOOR ZOVER DE OPLEIDING, DE INSTELLING OF DE NVAO HIER
REDELIJKERWIJS AANSPRAAK OP KUNNEN MAKEN.

VERKLAART HIERBIJ OP DE HOOGTE TE ZIJN VAN DE NVAO GEDRAGSCODE.

PLAATS:

OVERVEEN

DATUM:

21/4/2013

HANDTEKENING:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.



ONAFHANKELIJKHEIDS- EN GEHEIMHOUDINGSVERKLARING

INDIENEN VOORAFGAAND AAN DE OPLEIDINGSBEOORDELING

ONDERGETEKENDE

NAAM: Madelon k.m. Post

PRIVÉ ADRES: Roerstraat 62h
1070 LC Amsterdam

IS ALS DESKUNDIGE / SECRETARIS GEVRAAGD VOOR HET BEOORDELEN VAN DE OPLEIDING:

Sociale geografie en Planologie

AANGEVRAAGD DOOR DE INSTELLING:

Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, Universiteit Utrecht

VERKLAART HIERBIJ GEEN (FAMILIE)RELATIES OF BANDEN MET BOVENGENOEMDE INSTELLING TE ONDERHOUDEN, ALS PRIVÉPERSOON, ONDERZOEKER / DOCENT, BEROEPSBEOEFENAAR OF ALS ADVISEUR, DIE EEN VOLSTREKT ONAFHANKELIJKE OORDEELSVORMING OVER DE KWALITEIT VAN DE OPLEIDING TEN POSITIEVE OF TEN NEGATIEVE Zouden KUNNEN BEÏNVLOEDEN;



VERKLAART HIERBIJ ZODANIGE RELATIES OF BANDEN MET DE INSTELLING DE AFGELOPEN VIJF JAAR NIET GEHAD TE HEBBEN;

VERKLAART STRIKTE GEHEIMHOUDING TE BETRACHTEN VAN AL HETGEEN IN VERBAND MET DE BEOORDELING AAN HEM/HAAR BEKEND IS GEWORDEN EN WORDT, VOOR ZOVER DE OPLEIDING, DE INSTELLING OF DE NVAO HIER REDELIJKERWIJS AANSPRAAK OP KUNNEN MAKEN.

VERKLAART HIERBIJ OP DE HOOGTE TE ZIJN VAN DE NVAO GEDRAGSCODE.

PLAATS: Amsterdam

DATUM: 21-04-2013

HANDTEKENING:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. G. J. B.', written over a circular stamp or mark.



ONAFHANKELIJKHEIDS- EN GEHEIMHOUDINGSVERKLARING

INDIENEN VOORAFGAAND AAN DE OPLEIDINGSBEOORDELING

ONDERGETEKENDE

NAAM:

Chantal Gorrissen

PRIVÉ ADRES:

Dr. Nolenslaan 70-2

6136 GS Sittard

IS ALS ~~DEKUNDE~~ / SECRETARIS GEVRAAGD VOOR HET BEOORDELEN VAN DE OPLEIDING:

Cluster Sociale Geografie & Planologie

AANGEVRAAGD DOOR DE INSTELLING:

Universiteit van Amsterdam, Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen

Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, Universiteit Utrecht

VERKLAART HIERBIJ GEEN (FAMILIE)RELATIES OF BANDEN MET BOVENGENOEMDE INSTELLING TE ONDERHOUDEN, ALS PRIVÉPERSOON, ONDERZOEKER / DOCENT, BEROEPSBEOEFENAAR OF ALS ADVISEUR, DIE EEN VOLSTREKT ONAFHANKELIJKE OORDEELSVORMING OVER DE KWALITEIT VAN DE OPLEIDING TEN POSITIEVE OF TEN NEGATIEVE Zouden KUNNEN BEÏNVLOEDEN;



VERKLAART HIERBIJ ZODANIGE RELATIES OF BANDEN MET DE INSTELLING DE
AFGELOPEN VIJF JAAR NIET GEHAD TE HEBBEN;

VERKLAART STRIKTE GEHEIMHOUDING TE BETRACHTEN VAN AL HETGEEN IN
VERBAND MET DE BEOORDELING AAN HEM/HAAR BEKEND IS GEWORDEN EN
WORDT, VOOR ZOVER DE OPLEIDING, DE INSTELLING OF DE NVAO HIER
REDELIJKERWIJS AANSPRAAK OP KUNNEN MAKEN.

VERKLAART HIERBIJ OP DE HOOGTE TE ZIJN VAN DE NVAO GEDRAGSCODE.

PLAATS: *Utrecht*

DATUM: *11-2-2013*

HANDTEKENING:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. J. J. J.', is written over a faint, illegible stamp or background.



DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENTIALITY

TO BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

THE UNDERSIGNED

NAME:

Jasne Krooneman

HOME ADDRESS:

Kazernestraat 8N
Amsterdam

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

Development Studies, Geographical Sciences,
Human Geography, Spatial Planning, Sociale Geografie
en Planologie.

APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTION:

Utrecht University

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



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

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

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

PLACE: Utrecht

DATE: 09-10-2013

SIGNATURE: J. Krooneman