

**M GLOBAL CRIMINOLOGY**

FACULTY OF LAW, ECONOMICS AND GOVERNANCE

**UTRECHT UNIVERSITY**

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This report was finalized on 16 April 2019.



# REPORT ON THE MASTER'S PROGRAMME GLOBAL CRIMINOLOGY OF UTRECHT UNIVERSITY

This report takes the NVAO's Assessment Framework for Limited Programme Assessments as a starting point (September 2016).

## ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE PROGRAMME

### Master's programme Global Criminology

Name of the programme:	M Criminologie
CROHO number:	66469
Level of the programme:	master's
Orientation of the programme:	academic
Number of credits:	60 EC
Specializations or tracks:	Global Crime Crime, Punishment and Security
Location(s):	Utrecht
Mode(s) of study:	full time
Language of instruction:	English
Expiration of accreditation:	01/01/2020

The visit of the assessment panel Criminology to the Faculty of Law, Economics and Governance of Utrecht University took place on 28 and 29 January 2019.

## ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE INSTITUTION

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

## COMPOSITION OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

The NVAO approved the composition of the panel on 10 December 2018. The panel that assessed the master's programme Global Criminology consisted of:

- Prof. L. (Letizia) Paoli, professor in Criminology at the Faculty of Law of the Catholic University of Leuven (chair);
- Prof. dr. A.C.M. (Toine) Spapens, professor in Criminology at Tilburg Law School of Tilburg University;
- Prof. dr. M. (Marc) Cools, professor in Criminology at Ghent University;
- Dr. M. (Martina) Althoff, associate professor in Criminology, at the department of Criminal Law and Criminology of the Faculty of Law, University of Groningen;
- A. (Aster) Kroon, master's student Criminology at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (student member).

The panel was supported by A.P. (Anke) Van Wier, MA, who acted as secretary.

## WORKING METHOD OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

The site visit to the master's programme Global Criminology at the Faculty of Law, Economics and Governance of Utrecht University was part of the cluster assessment Criminology. In January 2019 the panel assessed nine programmes at four of universities. The following universities participated in this cluster assessment: Leiden University, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Utrecht University and Erasmus University Rotterdam.

On behalf of the participating universities, quality assurance agency QANU was responsible for logistical support, panel guidance and the production of the reports. Fiona Schouten was project coordinator for QANU. Fiona Schouten and Anke van Wier acted as secretaries in the cluster assessment. They are certified NVAO secretaries.

### *Panel members*

The panel consisted of the following members:

- Prof. L. (Letizia) Paoli, professor in Criminology at the Faculty of Law of the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium (chair);
- Prof. dr. A.C.M. (Toine) Spapens, professor in Criminology at Tilburg Law School of Tilburg University;
- Prof. mr. dr. S. (Suzan) van der Aa, professor in Criminal Law & Criminology at Maastricht University;
- Prof. dr. T. (Tom) Vander Beken, professor at the Department of Criminology, Penal Law and Social Law at Ghent University (Belgium);
- Prof. I. (Ineke) Haen Marshall, professor at the Department of Sociology and the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice of Northeastern University (USA);
- Dr. A.G. (Andrea) Donker, lector Knowledge Analysis Societal Security at the Research Centre for Societal Innovation of the Utrecht University of Applied Sciences;
- Prof. dr. M. (Marc) Cools, professor in Criminology Ghent University (Belgium);
- Dr. M. (Martina) Althoff, associate professor in Criminology at the department of Criminal Law and Criminology of the Faculty of Law, University of Groningen;
- A. (Annika) Both, master's student Criminology at Erasmus University Rotterdam (student member);
- A. (Aster) Kroon, master's student Criminology at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (student member);
- I. (Iris) Willems, master's student Criminology at Erasmus University Rotterdam (student member);

### *Preparation*

On 10 September 2018, the panel chair was briefed by QANU on her role, the assessment framework, the working method, and the planning of site visits and reports. A preparatory panel meeting was organised on 7 December 2018. During this meeting, the panel members received instruction on the use of the assessment framework. The panel also discussed their working method and the planning of the site visits and reports.

The project coordinator composed a schedule for the site visit in consultation with the Faculty. Prior to the site visit, the Faculty selected representative partners for the various interviews. See Appendix 4 for the final schedule.

Before the site visit to Utrecht University, QANU received the self-evaluation reports of the programmes and sent these to the panel. A thesis selection was made by the panel's chair and the project coordinator. The selection consisted of fifteen theses and their assessment forms for the programmes, based on a provided list of graduates between 2017-2018. A variety of topics and tracks and a diversity of examiners were included in the selection. The project coordinator and panel chair assured that the distribution of grades in the selection matched the distribution of grades of all available theses.

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

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

#### *Site visit*

The site visit to Utrecht University took place on 28 and 29 January 2019. Before and during the site visit, the panel studied the additional documents provided by the programmes. An overview of these materials can be found in Appendix 5. The panel conducted interviews with representatives of the programmes: students and staff members, the programme's management, alumni and representatives of the Board of Examiners.

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

#### *Consistency and calibration*

In order to assure the consistency of assessment within the cluster, various measures were taken:

1. The panel composition ensured regular attendance of (key) panel members, including the chair;
2. The coordinator was present at the start of all site visits as well as the panel discussion leading to the preliminary findings at all site visits.

#### *Report*

After the site visit, the secretary wrote a draft report based on the panel's findings and submitted it to the project coordinator for peer assessment. Subsequently, the secretary sent the report to the panel. After processing the panel members' feedback, the project coordinator sent the draft reports to the Faculty in order to have these checked for factual irregularities. The project coordinator discussed the ensuing comments with the panel's chair and changes were implemented accordingly. The report was then finalised and sent to the Faculty and University Board.

#### *Definition of judgements standards*

In accordance with the NVAO's Assessment framework for limited programme assessments, the panel used the following definitions for the assessment of both the standards and the programme as a whole.

#### **Generic quality**

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

#### **Unsatisfactory**

The programme does not meet the generic quality standard and shows shortcomings with respect to multiple aspects of the standard.

#### **Satisfactory**

The programme meets the generic quality standard across its entire spectrum.

#### **Good**

The programme systematically surpasses the generic quality standard.

#### **Excellent**

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

## SUMMARY JUDGEMENT

### *Intended learning outcomes*

According to the panel, the master's programme Global Criminology of Utrecht University has a unique profile. Its four pillars of global, critical, cultural and qualitative criminology are well-chosen, and the panel praises the programme for adopting this specific profile. The programme is attuned to both the developments in the academic field and those in the professional field.

The panel considers the programme's intended learning outcomes to be a clear and fitting translation of its profile. They adequately reflect the programme's profile and have the appropriate level and orientation for an academic master's programme. If the programme continues to develop its interest in new and innovative methodologies in the field, the panel advises the programme to ultimately add this dimension to the intended learning outcomes as well.

### *Teaching-learning environment*

The panel is impressed with the curriculum of the master's programme in Global Criminology. Its content is a clear reflection of the programme's specific profile. The programme's four founding pillars of global, critical, cultural and qualitative criminology are operationalised in a very clear and convincing manner. Its two tracks are well-designed, and the rationale behind them is clear. The panel concludes that the programme's components have been demonstrably matched to its main aims and to the intended learning outcomes.

The panel ascertained that the programme benefits greatly from a diverse but close community of both staff and students. The teaching staff is very committed and approachable. The panel confirmed that their numbers and quality are sufficient to ensure a high standard of education. The programme's didactic approach is clear and convincing to the panel. The panel is very impressed by the programme's commitment to developing and exploring innovative educational formats and encourages it to continue these activities.

The panel praises the programme for the revisions it recently carried out regarding the Research and thesis trajectory and the newly developed second track. It is pleased to see that with these changes, the programme enables students to achieve the final qualifications in a timely manner, notwithstanding its challenging and ambitious nature. As the research questions in some of the theses the panel read were relatively broad, it advises the programme to devote extra attention to this element in the RTT. It is convinced that the extensive efforts the programme takes to guide students during their fieldwork or internships helps them stay safe and produce solid empirical pieces of research.

Its international focus is one of the programme's strong elements. The panel therefore greatly appreciates the international exchanges the programme organises and advises it to look for opportunities to fund students' expenses during these valuable education activities.

### *Student assessment*

The panel confirmed that the master's programme in Global Criminology has a good assessment system that fits with the educational philosophy of both the programme and the School of Law as a whole. The assessment cycle is well-designed, properly implemented and contributes to the validity, reliability and transparency of assessment in the programme.

A variety of forms of assessment is used in every course in the programme, with two different types per course being the minimum. The panel is appreciative of the often innovative forms of assessment and concluded that the programme's assessment forms are an excellent fit to its intended learning outcomes and overarching profile. Students are trained in and assessed on relevant skills, and they receive valuable feedback from their tutors.



The Board of Examiners impressed the panel with its professionalism and, together with its auxiliary Test Quality Committee, its hard work to guarantee the quality of assessment in the programme. The Board has a clear view of its tasks and responsibilities and carries out its tasks in a proactive manner.

*Achieved learning outcomes*

The panel concluded that graduates of the Global Criminology programme realise the intended learning outcomes. The quality of their final projects is very high, and the panel is impressed with the original, creative, theoretically informed and empirical work they conducted. It established that graduates of the programme find their way to relevant professional positions that match their degree level. Many of the programme's alumni continue in PhD positions, reflecting the quality of the programme. The alumni are positive about how the programme prepared them for the professional field.

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

*Master's programme Global Criminology*

Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes	good
Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment	good
Standard 3: Student assessment	good
Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes	good
General conclusion	good

The chair of the panel, Prof. L. Paoli, and the secretary of the panel, A.P. van Wier, hereby declare that all panel members have studied this report and that they agree with the judgements laid down in the report. They confirm that the assessment has been conducted in accordance with the demands relating to independence.

Date: 16 April 2019

## PANEL ADVICE CONCERNING RENAMING THE PROGRAMME

### **Findings**

The master's programme Global Criminology is currently offered under the name 'Criminologie'. It is provided entirely in English and attracts a lot of international students. It would like to be able to offer them an international diploma, on which the programme's name is in English. The programme's contents would justify such a choice, as it focuses on crime and criminality in a global setting, and thereby goes beyond the traditional scope of Dutch criminology programmes. Therefore, the programme wants to also add the English translation of the name of the programme, Criminology, in the CROHO (Central Registry for Programmes in Higher Education). Its contents will remain the same.

### **Considerations**

The panel agrees with the programme's reasoning that a completely English-language programme with a global focus should also have an English name. It therefore endorses the proposed addition of Criminology in the CROHO.

### **Conclusion**

The panel agrees with the proposed addition of the English name Criminology.

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

## **Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes**

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

## **Findings**

### *Profile*

The master's programme Criminologie (henceforth: Global Criminology) of Utrecht University aspires to train a select and diverse group of students to study global crime through a multidisciplinary perspective. It aims to deliver internationally oriented, culturally sensitive, critical and socially engaged criminologists. It is embedded in the Faculty of Law, Economics and Governance of Utrecht University, and the School of Law. Education in the field of criminology has an academic basis in the Faculty's research programmes at the Willem Pompe Institute for Criminology and Criminal Law.

The programme offers 'Utrecht-style criminology'. It does so by focussing on four main pillars: it has a global scope, it encourages critical thinking, it adopts a cultural approach, and it works with qualitative methods. Its main operative assumption is that crime and reactions to crime are embedded within particular cultural contexts and should be studied as such. The programme offers two different tracks: one on Global Crime and the other on Crime, Punishment and Security. The first track studies the phenomenology of global crime itself, while the second one studies the reactions to the phenomenon of global crime. The second track was launched in its current form in the 2017-2018 academic year, in response to developments within the professional and academic field and to ensure a better fit to Utrecht University's profile. Students interviewed by the panel indicated that they chose the programme for its global and multidisciplinary approach.

The panel is impressed by the programme's clear and focussed profile. It found that the four distinct pillars help shape the programme in a coherent manner and that the programme makes clear choices. The programme's profile is innovative and unique within the Dutch field of criminology. The panel appreciates that the programme is truly global in its approach. The programme manages excellently to combine its academic focus with the demands of the professional field, for example by the attention it pays to new methodologies.

### *Intended learning outcomes*

The programme's final qualifications can be found in appendix 2. The panel confirmed that the intended learning outcomes adhere to the domain-specific framework of reference (see appendix 1) for Dutch criminology programmes. They are explicitly linked to the Dublin descriptors. The panel is very pleased with their level and orientation, and considers them appropriate for an academic master's programme. They are concrete, coherent and clearly formulated. The panel observed clear links to the programme's four main pillars in them. The programme's unique profile is therefore clearly visible in these intended learning outcomes. If the programme continues to develop its interest in cutting-edge methodologies and teaching formats, as explained under standard 2, the panel advises adapting the intended learning outcomes accordingly.

## **Considerations**

According to the panel, the master's programme Global Criminology of Utrecht University has a unique profile. Its four pillars of global, critical, cultural and qualitative criminology are well-chosen, and the panel praises the programme for adopting this specific profile. The programme is attuned to both the developments in the academic field and those in the professional field.

The panel considers the programme's intended learning outcomes to be a clear and fitting translation of its profile. They adequately reflect the programme's profile and have the appropriate level and orientation for an academic master's programme. If the programme continues to develop its interest



in new and innovative methodologies in the field, the panel advises the programme to ultimately add this dimension to the intended learning outcomes as well.

## Conclusion

*Master's programme Global Criminology:* the panel assesses Standard 1 as 'good'.

### **Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment**

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

## Findings

Global Criminology is a one-year master's programme with an annual intake of 50 students. There is no preparatory bachelor's programme. The incoming students hail from a wide range of disciplines. All prospective students are interviewed and questioned about their motivation to apply for the programme, their experience with the field of criminology and their methodological training. Though the programme is focussed on qualitative methodology, applicants are required to be familiar with both qualitative and quantitative methods. The programme generally attracts around half of its students from outside of the Netherlands, with the 2018-2019 cohort being composed of students of 19 different nationalities. The panel confirmed that the programme's students are also diverse in terms of their previous education, having spoken to students with a disciplinary background ranging from anthropology to law, criminology, political science and sociology.

### *Curriculum contents and design*

The structure of the Global Criminology programme follows the general model of Utrecht University: it consists of two semesters with two blocks of ten weeks each. A schematic overview of the curriculum can be found in appendix 3 of this report. The programme is composed of two tracks: Global Crime and Crime, Punishment and Security. In the first two blocks, students follow five courses: Critical Reflection and Advanced Methodology in block 1 (15 EC), and Cultural Criminology and two track-related courses in block 3 (15 EC). After that, the two tracks diverge, and both groups of students take two courses, together worth 10 EC. The entire second semester is devoted to the final thesis as many students carry out fieldwork or complete an internship. The thesis counts for a total of 30 EC. The Research and thesis trajectory (RTT) starts in the first period, and runs throughout the entire year.

The panel studied the curriculum presented in the critical reflection and the online learning environment. It looked at the study guide for the entire programme, and in more detail at materials provided for certain courses (see appendix 5). It also discussed the curriculum with the programme management, teaching staff, students and alumni. In general, it is very impressed by the programme's curriculum. It considers the curriculum to be very coherent and clearly related to the intended learning outcomes. The three common courses ensure that students of both tracks are well-versed in advanced qualitative methodology, critical criminology and cultural criminology.

The panel is glad to see that the profile and the four founding pillars of the programme are clearly visible at the course level. The global scope of the programme is present throughout, in its student and staff bodies, in the foreign exchanges that take place within various courses and in the subject matter discussed in the courses. The panel confirmed that the second pillar is prominently present as well. In the course on cultural criminology, but also in other courses, students are taught to study crime within its cultural context. Students of the first track then explore the phenomenon of crime further in specific cultural contexts, such as states and nations in the Global South or Eastern Europe. Students of the second track dive into the different reactions to crime that arise in various cultural contexts. The third pillar of critical (legal) thinking is implemented by teaching students to be fundamentally critical towards sources and data, and to be self-critical researchers. It is also present in the curriculum through association with the theoretical school of critical criminology. Critical criminology does not accept crime as fixed or given, but sees it as a social construct created in

relations between agents. It investigates the power relations between those agents and questions processes of criminalisation. The final pillar of qualitative methods is covered principally in the course on Advanced Methodology, but also in the methods components of the various courses. Methods are covered from both a practical and a theoretical perspective. Emphasis is placed on interviewing and on observational research, but the programme incorporates other methods as well, as will be elaborated below.

The programme's two tracks are appropriately chosen and correspond to the needs of the academic and professional fields. The panel is very positive about the newly developed second track on Crime, Punishment and Security, which replaces the old specialisation on Penology & Forensic Criminology. The focus of the new track on the reactions to crime in various cultural contexts makes it a good addition to the programme's critical profile. The panel is appreciative of the track's current perspective, with its focus on security, securitisation, surveillance and cybercrime.

Thesis writing takes up most of the second semester. The panel states that the research and thesis trajectory is extensive, but that this is appropriate given the nature of the research carried out in the fields of critical, cultural and global criminology. Students are encouraged to start thinking about their research topic already in the first block, and submit a provisional research proposal in October. By February they should have a definitive version of their research proposal, and most start their data collection by mid-March. The panel is very impressed by the extensive focus on research in the programme. Offering students the option to do fieldwork or a research internship is a positive element of the final project. This allows them to gain skills in data gathering and analysis, as well as valuable work experience. In its talks with students, the panel confirmed that they receive extensive feedback throughout the trajectory, both from their supervisors and from their fellow students in peer-groups. As some of the theses the panel read would have benefited from a clearer formulation of the research question (see standard 4), it advises the programme to consider intensifying the guidance on that particular dimension of the research process.

The panel appreciates how the Common Sessions with other critical criminology programmes, the opportunity to do internships, and the annual job fair all prepare students for life after their studies. It advises the programme to move the job fair from the beginning of the first semester to the end of that term, right before students leave for their fieldwork. Students indicated that they were not thinking about future employment when just beginning their master's, and that this became more relevant for them later on in the programme. The panel understands this reasoning and thinks the fair would have greater value if it took place later in the academic year.

#### *Didactic approach*

Teaching within the programme of Global Criminology adheres to five main principles: it should be intensive and varied; students should be independent and able to shape their own learning process; it takes place within a small-scale community; it is geared towards the student's professional orientation; and it is academic in its outlook. The panel confirmed that teaching in the programme reflects these standards.

Regarding the first principle, the panel confirmed that a variety of teaching methods is employed in the programme. Students participate in seminars with a maximum of 25 participants, in which workshops are organised, debates and presentations held, or papers discussed. They also follow lectures and guest lectures and work on individual or group assignments. Students are overall happy with the teaching in the programme. The panel is very impressed by the work the programme has done to develop innovative teaching methods. Examples are the use of a 'film forum' for the course Cultural criminology and a project on 'visualising change' together with the Gender Studies and Media Studies programmes at Utrecht University. The panel also appreciates the attention paid to transferable skills by the programme.

The panel established that the programme enables students to shape their own learning process. Students indicated that they appreciate the balance the programme strikes between guidance and



allowing them their independence. They can follow their own interests to a great extent in the various courses that they take. Since all examination is done through papers, presentations, blogs, vlogs and reviews, students have a lot of freedom to follow their own interests, as this allows them to choose their own topics for these assignments. Still, more options to tailor the programme to their own interests would be welcome. Some students the panel spoke to would like to combine the course on Crimes of the powerful and green criminology from the first track with the course on Security, crime and cyber technology from the second track. The programme could look into the possibility of offering a 'free profile', where students can select individual courses.

The programme places great emphasis on the creation of a strong student community. To foster this sense of community, attendance at all lectures and seminars is obligatory. Students and staff indicated that this helps create an active exchange between students. The panel also observed that the programme excellently mobilises the diversity in its student and staff body. This diversity involves national and disciplinary backgrounds. Practical examples the panel heard about were discussions on the concept of crimes of the powerful from the perspective of Korean or Chinese students, or contributions on organised crime by students from the south of Italy.

Finally, the panel confirmed that the programme adequately addresses students' professional as well as academic development. The programme organises a job fair at the beginning of the academic year. The option to do a research internship for the final project also helps students develop professionally. Various guest lectures are offered by practitioners from the field. The academic orientation is guaranteed by the strong interlinking of research and teaching at the faculty. The teaching staff regularly lectures on their own ongoing research, and students are invited to join staff members' research projects. Together with the extensive thesis trajectory, these are strong elements in the programme, according to the panel.

#### *Teaching staff*

The quality of the staff of the master's programme in Global Criminology is high. The panel was pleased to note that the lecturers are very internationally oriented, in terms of both their national backgrounds and their research interests and activities. The teaching staff are all experts in fields relevant to the master's programme, and they actively engage in ethnographic research themselves. The team consists of a good mix of early-career and more senior researchers. Students the panel spoke to, appreciated their lecturers' drive and enthusiasm. The programme draws on a rather small staff team. Consequently, lines of communication are short, but workload is quite high. The panel was happy to hear that funding will become available to attract more teaching staff to alleviate this pressure in the near future. All teaching staff possess either a Basic Teaching Qualification or a Senior Teaching Qualification, or are in the process of acquiring these qualifications.

#### *Study guidance and feasibility*

Utrecht University provides students with adequate guidance during the programme. They receive a lot of guidance throughout the programme, mostly from their thesis supervisor, who is appointed early in the academic year. While the panel was initially worried about student safety during their fieldwork, having read theses that dealt with foreign criminal organisations, these concerns were alleviated. The programme invests a lot of time in preparing the students for their fieldwork. Students have to make sure they have a support network in place before they leave to collect their data, and they are required to regularly keep in touch with their supervisor and peer group via Skype and WhatsApp. When a supervisor has doubts about a student's plans and safety, s/he is not allowed to start the project. The panel is very impressed by how the programme's staff employ their own networks to help students with their fieldwork.

The panel noted that the programme responds very adequately to feedback it receives from students. During the site visit, it found that issues which recent graduates indicated as points for improvement had already been taken up and changed for the current students. It also appreciates that the programme's staff organise monthly coordination meetings, where they align deadlines in order to make the students' work pressure more manageable.

Recent changes in the programme have increased the number of students who graduate within a year. While previously students often took longer to finish their fieldwork or internships, the programme has taken steps to reduce the amount of delay in the years 2015-2018. Some of these changes concerned the Research and thesis trajectory, which now starts in the first period of the academic year (as of 2015). The RTT has become a 'best practice' in the Faculty of Law, Economics and Governance following these changes. The programme modified the thesis trajectory even further in the 2017-2018 academic year, dedicating blocks three and four completely to the thesis. These two changes have tripled the number of students who manage to graduate within a year. Students the panel spoke to indicated that these changes have made the first semester very intense, but still feasible and enjoyable. They indicated that the small scale and strong community helped them succeed in the programme.

#### *Programme-specific services*

The programme offers students multiple opportunities to go abroad and gain international experience during their studies. These international exchanges are regarded by the panel as a strong point of the programme. Examples are the Common Study Programme in Critical Criminology, a network of 13 master's programmes in criminology from 10 different countries, which organises a biannual 'common session', a three-day thematic conference where students and staff present their work. The programme participated in the last five sessions in Copenhagen, Corinth, New York, Canterbury and Ghent. The programme also organises an annual study trip, usually to a location outside of Europe. Previous trips visited Colombia, Russia, Israel and Hungary. These trips are usually not attended by all students of the programme, as they are not funded by the university, and the students are asked pay for their own expenses. The panel encourages the programme to look into opportunities to arrange funding for these trips, as it fears that the strong student community that is so central to the programme may suffer from the fact that not all students can join these trips.

#### **Considerations**

The panel is impressed with the curriculum of the master's programme in Global Criminology. Its content is a clear reflection of the programme's specific profile. The programme's four founding pillars of global, critical, cultural and qualitative criminology are operationalised in a very clear and convincing manner. Its two tracks are well-designed, and the rationale behind them is clear. The panel concludes that the programme's components have been demonstrably matched to its main aims and to the intended learning outcomes.

The panel ascertained that the programme benefits greatly from a diverse but close community of both staff and students. The teaching staff is very committed and approachable. The panel confirmed that their numbers and quality are sufficient to ensure a high standard of education. The programme's didactic approach is clear and convincing to the panel. The panel is very impressed by the programme's commitment to developing and exploring innovative educational formats and encourages it to continue these activities.

The panel praises the programme for the revisions it recently carried out regarding the Research and thesis trajectory and the newly developed second track. It is pleased to see that with these changes, the programme enables students to achieve the final qualifications in a timely manner, notwithstanding its challenging and ambitious nature. As the research questions in some of the theses the panel read were relatively broad, it advises the programme to devote extra attention to this element in the RTT. It is convinced that the extensive efforts the programme takes to guide students during their fieldwork or internships helps them stay safe and produce solid empirical pieces of research.

Its international focus is one of the programme's strong elements. The panel therefore greatly appreciates the international exchanges the programme organises and advises it to look for opportunities to fund students' expenses during these valuable education activities.





## Conclusion

*Master's programme Global Criminology*: the panel assesses Standard 2 as 'good'.

### **Standard 3: Student assessment**

The programme has an adequate system of student assessment in place.

## Findings

Assessment in the master's programme Global Criminology follows Utrecht University's School of Law assessment policy as specified in the programme's assessment plan. The assessment plan was extensively revised in 2017-2018, and the panel confirmed that it ensures the constructive alignment of the programme.

Utrecht University's assessment policy is based on the fundamental assumption that education requires commitment on behalf of the students. It therefore stipulates that resits for courses can be taken only under specific circumstances. Resits are referred to as 'repair opportunities'. The Education and Examination Regulations for the master's programmes of the School of Law specify that passing grades can never be repaired, as well as any marks below 4. Students have to fulfil a course's attendance requirements in order to qualify for a repair opportunity. If a student scores less than 4 for part of a course, that course has to be retaken in the next academic year. Repair opportunities are only meant to get the grade to a passing level, meaning that grades obtained using a repair opportunity will never be higher than 7. These repair opportunities are meant to allow students who were close to a passing grade the chance to continue their studies without delay. Only when a student is unable to take the first attempt due to circumstances beyond their control are they allowed to undertake a new attempt, without a cap on the level of the grade. The panel understands the reasoning behind this policy and confirms that the programme adheres to the UU-wide regulations.

The assessment cycle at Utrecht University's School of Law consists of five steps. In step one, at the course level, course coordinators need to compile an assessment dossier before the start of each course. This dossier specifies course descriptions, the evaluation of the test in previous years, and the course coordinator's reaction to the evaluation. Staff members are trained in compiling these dossiers during the BTQ trajectory. The test committee regularly checks the assessment dossiers for the individual courses, and the programme director checks whether the proposed form of assessment adequately relates to the programme's overall intended learning outcomes. The second step is the construction of the test itself and the related answer key, using a test matrix. The peer-review principle is always applied during this step, either by constructing the test with the entire course team or, when a single course coordinator is involved, by asking a colleague for feedback on a test. The next step is administering the test. Students are always informed about the weighting and types of test taken through the course catalogue. Step four is the grading of tests. Students are informed about the way in which a test is graded, and they are entitled to receive feedback on their performance from inspection and review meetings. The board of examiners appoints all examiners on an individual basis. The assessment cycle is completed by an analysis of the results, pass rates, and course evaluation and by formulating the course coordinator's response to the evaluation.

The panel is impressed with the thorough attention paid to assessment quality in the Global Criminology programme and at Utrecht University as a whole. At the programme level the emphasis on educational and assessment quality is clearly visible. Based on its evaluation of the documentation and the information acquired during the site visit, the panel therefore concludes that assessment in the Global Criminology programme works well. The validity, reliability and transparency of assessment are safeguarded in all steps of the assessment cycle.

### *Assessment methods*

In line with the School of Law's assessment policy, all courses in the master's programme Global Criminology use two or more forms of assessment. The programme has chosen not to employ



classical written exams, but instead uses a variety of other methods. The panel observed that the programme employs some very innovative assessment methods. Students are asked to write a blog, make a documentary, host a workshop, organise and participate in a debate, present either alone or with a group, or act in a roleplaying simulation. When students work together in groups, this can account for a maximum of 30% of the grade, the other 70% being individual assignments. The panel is impressed by this variety of assessment methods. It appreciates the emphasis the programme places on developing students' skills and the way in which the assessment methods stimulate their active participation in the courses they take.

Students the panel interviewed indicated that they appreciate the feedback they receive throughout the programme. They were very positive about the fact that for papers or presentations, the feedback is not only focussed on the content, but also on their delivery. This helps students develop their transferrable skills. The panel studied the assessment of the students' final theses and concluded that it is transparent and fair. It agreed with all of the grades given to the theses in the sample it studied. The programme has clear assessment and feedback forms, which provide students with adequate information about how their grade was derived. All final projects are evaluated by two staff members, and the programme has solid procedures in place to solve the rare cases when they disagree.

#### *Board of Examiners*

Utrecht University's School of Law has a Board of Examiners for all master's programmes. The Board dealing with the School's master's programmes consists of five members, including an external member who is an expert on assessment, and a secretary. The Board has set up a subsidiary Test Quality (Sub-)Committee, to which it has delegated some tasks regarding supervision of the quality of individual tests. This body also takes an annual sampling of final projects for all programmes in the School of Law, including Global Criminology, and tests whether the assessment of these theses is up to standard. The Committee's findings are shared with the programme director and the relevant course coordinators. Both the five members of the Board of Examiners and the eight members of the Test Quality Committee have received training in their tasks and responsibilities.

The panel interviewed members of the Board of Examiners. It concluded that they have a clear view of their tasks and responsibilities and that the Board works hard to guarantee the quality of assessment for all master's programmes in the School of Law. The Board comprehensively analyses every programme under their auspice once per accreditation cycle, every six years. The Global Criminology programme was last comprehensively checked by the Board of Examiners in 2015. However, the Global Criminology programme was most recently analysed for the Institutional Quality Assurance Assessment in 2017, during which both the programme and the work of the School of Law's Master's Board of Examiners were highlighted as best practice for Utrecht University. The panel is very impressed by the work of the Board of Examiners and concluded that they do great work in assuring the quality of assessment in the programme.

#### **Considerations**

The panel confirmed that the master's programme in Global Criminology has a good assessment system that fits with the educational philosophy of both the programme and the School of Law as a whole. The assessment cycle is well-designed, properly implemented and contributes to the validity, reliability and transparency of assessment in the programme.

A variety of forms of assessment is used in every course in the programme, with two different types per course being the minimum. The panel is appreciative of the often innovative forms of assessment and concluded that the programme's assessment forms are an excellent fit to its intended learning outcomes and overarching profile. Students are trained in and assessed on relevant skills, and they receive valuable feedback from their tutors.

The Board of Examiners impressed the panel with its professionalism and, together with its auxiliary Test Quality Committee, its hard work to guarantee the quality of assessment in the programme.



The Board has a clear view of its tasks and responsibilities and carries out its tasks in a proactive manner.

### **Conclusion**

*Master's programme Global Criminology:* the panel assesses Standard 3 as 'good'.

### **Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes**

The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

### **Findings**

#### *Theses*

Prior to the site visit, the panel studied a selection of 15 theses and their accompanying assessment forms. It confirmed that all of them met the required quality standards, with some theses displaying a very high level of achievement. The theses from the sample proved that students achieve the programme's intended learning outcomes. The panel was generally impressed with the original, creative and theoretically inspired work in the theses it read. The fact that all theses from the sample were based on original empirical work is very impressive according to the panel. In some theses it observed that the research questions were phrased in a relatively broad manner. Based on the high quality of theses it read, it understands why theses from this programme often win prizes from the Dutch Criminology Association.

#### *Graduate performance*

The panel confirmed that graduates of the programme do well in the competitive labour market in this field. A relatively large proportion (around 10%) go on to pursue a PhD in the field. The extensive research focus of the programme and the possibility to participate in the ongoing research of staff members help to motivate and prepare students for this career path. In their conversations with the panel, alumni who decided not to pursue a career in academia indicated that the programme's extensive research focus also helped them prepare for other careers. Many alumni find employment in research and analysis positions in the public sector, the police, local government, or prisons, or in the private sector in finance, media, consultancy or tech companies. Other alumni are employed at NGOs or other international organisations. The recent graduates the panel spoke to indicated that they appreciated the programme's focus on green crime, cybercrime and corporate crime, and that they benefited from the emphasis placed on acquiring skills.

The Faculty of Law, Economics and Governance is currently working on a new system to map its alumni network. When this is complete, the programme will start using this system to complement its current networking activities using social media such as LinkedIn and Facebook and the resources of the Dutch Criminological Network. According to the panel, this would further enhance the newest alumni's professional perspective.

### **Considerations**

The panel concluded that graduates of the Global Criminology programme realise the intended learning outcomes. The quality of their final projects is very high, and the panel is impressed with the original, creative, theoretically informed and empirical work they conducted. It established that graduates of the programme find their way to relevant professional positions that match their degree level. Many of the programme's alumni continue in PhD positions, reflecting the quality of the programme. The alumni are positive about how the programme prepared them for the professional field.

### **Conclusion**

*Master's programme Global Criminology:* the panel assesses Standard 4 as 'good'.

## GENERAL CONCLUSION

The panel assessed all standards as 'good'. Based on the NVAO decision rules regarding limited programme assessments, the panel therefore assesses the programme as 'good'.

### **Conclusion**

The panel assesses the *master's programme Global Criminology* as 'good'.



## APPENDICES



# APPENDIX 1: DOMAIN-SPECIFIC FRAMEWORK OF REFERENCE

## ***Master's programme Global Criminology***

### *Inleiding*

Op het gebied van criminaliteit en deviant gedrag, maatschappelijke reacties daarop, de aanpak van criminaliteit en het denken over veiligheid hebben zich de afgelopen decennia ingrijpende ontwikkelingen voorgedaan. Nieuwe, complexere vormen van criminaliteit; de effecten van de toegenomen invloed van (sociale) media op (reacties op) criminaliteit; ontwikkelingen in digitale technologie; toename van internationale dimensies van criminaliteit, rechtshandhaving en veiligheidsdenken; de veranderingen in formele en informele vormen van sociale controle en de effecten van de Europese eenwording alsmede processen van mondialisering, zijn voorbeelden van gebieden waarop de vraag naar kennisontwikkeling groot is en naar verwachting groot blijft. Gefragmenteerde, monodisciplinaire kennis volstaat niet meer om huidige en toekomstige onderzoeksvraagstukken te kunnen aanpakken. Bovengenoemde ontwikkelingen vragen, naast multidisciplinariteit, om een goed begrip van internationale dimensies en de vaardigheid kritisch en onafhankelijk te kunnen reflecteren op heersende academische, politieke, media- en maatschappelijke percepties op criminaliteit, deviant gedrag, aanpak van criminaliteit, en veiligheid.

### *Basisvoorwaarden*

In criminologische masteropleidingen wordt voortgebouwd op de kennis, het inzicht en de vaardigheden die in een academische bacheloropleiding zijn opgedaan. De masteropleidingen kunnen zich profileren op specifieke criminologische vraagstukken of thema's, op een nationale dan wel internationale focus, op kwalitatieve dan wel kwantitatieve methoden en op positivistische dan wel kritische tradities binnen de criminologie. In hun toelatingseisen geven zij aan welke vooropleidingen zij geschikt achten om de leerresultaten van de masteropleidingen het behalen. Aan deze eisen zal in de regel een bacheloropleiding Criminologie aan een Nederlandse universiteit beantwoorden.

De masteropleidingen leiden studenten op tot zelfstandig denkende en zelfstandig werkende criminologen. Er vindt een verdieping en verbreding van kennis plaats en de onderzoeksvaardigheden worden uitgebreid. Hiermee zijn afgestudeerden in staat om aan de bestudering en/of aanpak van de complexere vormen van criminaliteit in de hierboven geschetste actuele context mee te werken. Zij leren zelfstandig data te verzamelen, te analyseren en te interpreteren. Dit proces moet leiden tot kritische reflectie op (de aanpak van) criminaliteit waarbij de beperkingen en onbedoelde effecten van oplossingen beargumenteerd kunnen worden. Daarnaast wordt kennis en inzicht in de opsporing, vervolging en berechting van criminaliteit en (de totstandkoming van) criminaliteitsbeleid, het fundamenteel reflecteren op daaraan onderliggende principes, en de evaluatie daarvan vergroot en waar relevant in internationaal (vergelijkend) perspectief geplaatst. De nadruk ligt op het analyseren van concrete criminaliteitsvraagstukken en de aanpak daarvan, en het kritisch analyseren van beleid op basis van de verkregen criminologische kennis en inzichten. Daarbij worden verschillende kwalitatieve en/of kwantitatieve methoden van onderzoek toegepast.

Studenten worden getraind om de complexiteit van criminologische bevindingen op een heldere wijze met vakgenoten en niet-specialisten te communiceren, ook in een internationale setting. Een afgestudeerde master moet in staat zijn een soeverein, beargumenteerd standpunt in te nemen en kritisch te kunnen reflecteren op (mondiale) maatschappelijke ontwikkelingen binnen het studieveld van de criminologie. De masteropleiding stelt de afgestudeerde in staat op zelfstandige wijze in het werkveld te functioneren of op zelfstandige wijze een vervolgstudie (postacademisch dan wel promotietraject) te doen.

In het afstudeerproject tonen studenten aan in het complexe maatschappelijke veld zelfstandig literatuuronderzoek en/of empirisch onderzoek te kunnen uitvoeren door het presenteren van actuele theoretische kennis, het formuleren van een probleemstelling, het verzamelen van data, het analyseren en beoordelen van gegevens, het formuleren en beargumenteren van oplossingen, en het bekritisieren van bestaande handelwijzen. Studenten passen hierbij de verworven theoretische en methodische kennis en inzichten op een ethisch verantwoorde wijze toe. De afgestudeerde master



moet in staat zijn zelfstandig onderzoek op te zetten en uit te voeren en is geschikt voor functies in de wetenschap, de beleidssector en de uitvoerende sfeer. De leerresultaten van masteropleidingen Criminologie sluiten aan bij de wensen van (een deel van) het beroepenveld. Daartoe vindt afstemming met het beroepenveld plaats.

#### *Doelstelling en uitgangspunten*

Masteropleidingen Criminologie beogen een breed gevormde, kritisch reflecterende academicus op te leiden die een discipline overstijgende kennis heeft van criminaliteit en criminaliteitsbeheersing, die vaardigheden bezit om onderzoek te doen in dit veld en in verschillende functies de vertaalslag kan maken tussen het normatieve kader waarin de jurist werkt en de empirische kennis vergaard door de sociale wetenschapper. Deze doelstelling is vertaald in de volgende uitgangspunten:

- Het bieden van een verdieping van zowel de theoretische als de methodische vakken van de bacheloropleiding Criminologie, respectievelijk de vooropleiding zoals in de toegangsvoorwaarden van de Onderwijs- en Examenregeling is opgenomen. De eerder opgedane kennis en vaardigheden worden op geïntegreerde wijze toegepast op specifieke problemen op het terrein van veiligheid, criminaliteit en deviant gedrag, de maatschappelijke reactie daarop, het toezicht erop en de aanpak ervan (opsporing, vervolging en berechting van criminaliteit en criminaliteitsbeleid in nationaal en/of mondiaal perspectief);
- Het bieden van een wetenschappelijke oriëntatie op het vakgebied van de criminologie;
- Het vormen van een kritisch maatschappelijk reflecterende professional op het vakgebied van de criminologie;
- Het vormen van een zelfstandige, interdisciplinaire onderzoeker, die in beginsel toegang heeft tot een promotietraject.

In de leerresultaten van masteropleidingen Criminologie zijn deze uitgangspunten, die voldoen aan de Dublin-descriptoren (of vergelijkbare normen), te herkennen, ongeacht de specifieke focus van de opleiding.



## APPENDIX 2: INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

### ***Master's programme Global Criminology***

The graduate

1. has a good understanding of the causes and consequences of crime and the social and political processes that lead to penalisation of certain conduct;
2. has thorough knowledge of the prevailing theories in criminology;
3. has developed a critical attitude towards the problem of public safety, understands the exposé surrounding that issue, and can assess the value of the measures taken in society and in particular by the government;
4. has read several classic criminology texts and can critically analyse the value of those texts within the context of actual criminological problems;
5. has acquired knowledge of cultural aspects of crime phenomena, of society's response to those phenomena and of the cultures of institutions that play a role in criminal justice;
6. has closely studied the field of criminology known as critical criminology and can participate in academic debates concerning this issue;
7. has knowledge of the international literature in the field of criminology and of recent publications in leading magazines;
8. can compare crime issues on an international level and knows what the specific crime problems are in developing countries;
9. can conduct independent criminological research using qualitative and ethnographic research methods and can connect the findings of those methods to criminological theories;
10. is able, based on research, to adopt a position in the ongoing public and academic debates;
11. can clearly and unambiguously communicate the findings of his/her research and analyses, as well as the knowledge, motives and considerations underlying them, to a public of both specialists and non-specialists;
12. has an internationally-oriented attitude;
13. has the right ethical attitude (with regard to the privacy of respondents, knowledge of confidentiality, etc.);
14. is aware of the societal context in which criminological research is conducted and of his/her responsibility to society.

# APPENDIX 3: OVERVIEW OF THE CURRICULUM

## Master's programme Global Criminology

Global Criminology		Semester 1		Semester 2	
		Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4
15 EC		5 EC	30 EC		
Critical Reflection on Criminology	Cultural Criminology		Research and Thesis Global Criminology (including fieldwork/internship)		
Advanced Methodology					
Track 1: Global Crime	10 EC				
	Cross-Border Crime				
	Crimes of the Powerful and Green Criminology				
Track 2: Crime, Punishment and Security	10 EC				
	Global Reactions to Crime and Disorder				
	Security, Crime and Cyber Technology				
Research and Thesis Trajectory					

## APPENDIX 4: PROGRAMME OF THE SITE VISIT

### *Monday 28th of January 2019*

- 10.30 - 11.00 Welcome
- 11.00 - 12.00 Preparation panel and consulting documentation
- 12.00 - 13.00 Lunch
- 13.00 - 14.00 Preparation panel and consulting documentation
- 14.00 - 15.00 Interview people responsible with regard to the content of the programme  
(including representative in Degree Programme Advisory Committee (DPAC))
- 15.00 - 15.30 Deliberation panel
- 15.30 - 16.00 Live student presentations in the course Cultural Criminology (room 0.19)
- 16.00 - 16.15 Short break
- 16.15 - 17.00 Interview teachers
- 17.00 - 17.30 Film testimonials of alumni and employers and deliberation panel
- 17.30 - 18.15 Interview alumni and students (including representative in Degree Programme  
Advisory Committee (DPAC))

### *Tuesday 29th of January 2019*

- 09.00 - 10.00 Preparation panel and consulting documentation
- 10.00 - 10.30 Guided tour education building Janskerkhof 3
- 10.30 - 11.00 Interview Board of Examiners of the School of Law
- 11.00 - 11.30 Deliberation panel
- 11.30 - 12.30 Final conversation management
- 12.30 - 13.00 Lunch
- 13.00 - 14.30 Preparation of preliminary assessment
- 14.30 - 14.45 Preparation of oral report
- 14.45 - 15.15 Oral report of preliminary assessment (room 1.10)
- 15.15 Final drinks (room 1.11)

## APPENDIX 5: THESES AND DOCUMENTS STUDIED BY THE PANEL

Prior to the site visit, the panel studied fifteen theses of the master's programme Global Criminology. Information on the selected theses is available from QANU upon request. During the site visit, the panel studied, among other things, the following documents (partly as hard copies, partly via the institute's electronic learning environment) and had access to the following information:

### *On the reading table:*

- Assessment plan 2018 - 2019
- Information on the course Advanced Methodology including 2 books used in the course
- Information on the course Cultural Criminology including the book used in the course
- Information on the course Security, Crime and Cyber Technology including the book used in the course
- Additional documents, including:
  - Example of written feedback to support the oral feedback in the course Critical Reflection on Criminology
  - Minutes of staff meeting about theses evaluation
  - Programme study trip St. Petersburg 2017

### *On Blackboard:*

- Access to the active learning environment for students in the courses Advanced Methodology, Cultural Criminology and Security, Crime and Cyber Technology
- Additional information on the courses Advanced Methodology, Cultural Criminology and Security, Crime and Cyber Technology including examples of papers and presentations by students
- Information on assessment and tools, including guidelines on the quality of tests (Dutch and English), Testing policy law (Dutch and English), Kookboek Toetskwaliteit
- Information of the Board of Examiners of the School of Law including annual reports (jaarverslagen) and the assessment by test quality committee of the course Critical Reflections on Criminology
- Information of the Degree Programme Advisory Committee (DPAC) Masters:
  - Course evaluations 16/17 and 17/18 relevant for Global Criminology
  - Other relevant items of DPAC-meetings related to Global Criminology
  - Minutes DPAC Masters 2015/2016, 2016/2017, 2017/2018
- Film testimonials of alumni and employers
- Information about the staff
- Information on the staff-evaluation of theses including minutes of staff meeting 19012019
- Student achievements:
  - Publications of the best criminological master theses at Utrecht University
  - Student prizes
- Study(trip) activities:
  - Programme study trip to Colombia
  - Programme study trip to Budapest 2015
  - Programme study trip St Petersburg 2017-2018
  - Programme Common Sessions 2018
  - Excursions Master's Programme in Global Criminology

### *On site:*

- The panel participated in part of the final 'congress' with student presentations in the course Cultural Criminology