

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

ERASMUS UNIVERSITY ROTTERDAM

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REPORT ON THE BACHELOR'S PROGRAMME PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, THE MASTER'S PROGRAMME PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, AND THE MASTER'S PROGRAMME INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC POLICY OF ERASMUS UNIVERSITY ROTTERDAM

This report takes the joint NVAO-EAPAA Accreditation Framework 2016 as a starting point.

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE PROGRAMMES

Bachelor's programme Public Administration

Name of the programme:	Public Administration (Bestuurskunde)
CROHO number:	56627
Level of the programme:	bachelor's
Orientation of the programme:	academic
Number of credits:	180 EC
Specialisations or tracks:	International track: Management of International Social Challenges
Location(s):	Rotterdam
Mode(s) of study:	full time
Language of instruction:	Dutch, English
Expiration of accreditation:	31/12/2018

Master's programme Public Administration

Name of the programme:	Public Administration
CROHO number:	60020
Level of the programme:	master's
Orientation of the programme:	academic
Number of credits:	60 EC
Specialisations or tracks:	Policy and Politics Governance and Management of Complex Systems Public Management Management of Human Resources and Change Management of Governance Networks Governance of Migration and Diversity Evening specialisation (mid-career professionals)
Location(s):	Rotterdam
Mode(s) of study:	full time
Language of instruction:	Dutch, English
Expiration of accreditation:	31/12/2018

Master's programme International Public Management and Public Policy

Name of the programme:	International Public Management and Public Policy
CROHO number:	60448
Level of the programme:	master's
Orientation of the programme:	academic
Number of credits:	60 EC
Specialisations or tracks:	-

Location(s):	Rotterdam
Mode(s) of study:	full time
Language of instruction:	English
Expiration of accreditation:	31/12/2018

The visit of the assessment panel Public Administration to the Faculty of Social Sciences of the Erasmus University Rotterdam took place on 27-29 November 2017.

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE INSTITUTION

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

COMPOSITION OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

The NVAO has approved the composition of the panel on 16 October 2017. The panel that assessed the bachelor's- and master's programme Public Administration and the master's programme International Public Management and Public Policy consisted of:

- Prof. dr. T. (Tony) Bovaird, professor emeritus of Public Management and Policy at the University of Birmingham (United Kingdom) [chair];
- Prof. dr. A. (Adrian) Ritz, professor for Public Management at the University of Bern (Switzerland) [vice-chair];
- Prof. E. (Esther) Versluis, professor of European Regulatory Governance at Maastricht University;
- Prof. dr. H.M.C. (Harrie) Eijkelhof, professor emeritus of Physics Education at the University of Utrecht;
- Drs. C. (Cees) Vermeer, town clerk of the city of Breda;
- S. (Sophie) van Wijngaarden, master's student Systems Engineering, Policy Analysis & Management at the Delft University of Technology [student member].

The panel was supported by Peter Hildering MSc and dr. Joke Corporaal, who acted as secretaries.

Appendix 1 contains the curricula vitae of the panel members.

WORKING METHOD OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

The assessment of the bachelor's- and master's programme Public Administration and the master's programme International Public Management and Public Policy is part of a cluster assessment. From October to December 2017, a panel assessed seven bachelor's programmes and seventeen master's programmes in Public Administration at eight universities.

The panel consists of seventeen members:

- Prof. T. (Tony) Bovaird, professor emeritus of Public Management and Policy at the University of Birmingham (United Kingdom) [chair];
- Prof. A. (Adrian) Ritz, professor for Public Management at the University of Bern (Switzerland) [vice-chair];
- Prof. M. (Marleen) Brans, professor at the Public Governance Institute of the KU Leuven (Belgium) [vice-chair];
- Prof. H.M.C. (Harrie) Eijkelhof, professor emeritus of Physics Education at Utrecht University;

- Prof. P.B. Peter Sloep, professor emeritus in Technology-Enhanced Learning, in particular Learning in Social at the Open Universiteit Nederland;
- Prof. T. (Tiina) Randma-Liiv, professor of Public Management and Policy and vice-dean for Research at Tallinn University of Technology (Estonia);
- Prof. L. (Lan) Xue, professor and dean of the School of Public Policy and Management, Tsinghua University (China);
- Prof. E. (Esther) Versluis, professor of European Regulatory Governance at Maastricht University.
- Prof. W. (William) Webster, professor of Public Policy and Management at the Stirling Management School, University of Stirling (UK);
- Prof. J.J.A. (Jacques) Thomassen, emeritus professor of Political Science at the University of Twente;
- Prof J. E. (Jenneke) Bosch-Boesjes, emeritus professor of Development and Differentiation in Academic Education at the University of Groningen;
- Drs. B. (Bertine) Steenbergen, interim director at the Ministry of Security and Justice.
- Prof. J.P. (Jan) Pronk, professor emeritus in Theory and Practice of International Development at the International Institute of Social Studies and former Minister for Development Co-operation and Minister of Environment, Spatial Planning and Housing;
- Drs. C. (Cees) Vermeer, town clerk of the city of Breda;
- Drs. H. (Henk) de Jong, director of Strategy and Policy of the Dutch National Police;
- J.C. (Jasper) Meijering BSc, master's student Engineering and Policy Analysis at Delft University of Technology [student member];
- S. (Sophie) van Wijngaarden BSc, master's student Systems Engineering, Policy Analysis & Management at the Delft University of Technology [student member].

A panel of six to eight members was appointed for each visited, based on the expertise and availability of each panel member, and taking into account possible conflicts of interest.

Peter Hildering MSc of QANU was project coordinator of the cluster assessment Public Administration. He was secretary during the visits to the University of Twente, Radboud University, Erasmus University Rotterdam and Leiden University. He also attended the final panel consultations of every visit and read and commented on draft versions of each report in order to monitor the consistency of the assessments and the resulting reports. Mark Delmartino MA, freelance worker for QANU, was secretary of the panel during the visits to Tilburg University, Maastricht University, Utrecht University, and VU University Amsterdam. Dr. Joke Corporaal, freelance worker for QANU, was second secretary during the visits to Erasmus University Rotterdam and Leiden University.

Joint NVAO-EAPAA assessment

The panel assessment was aimed at (re-)accreditation by both NVAO and EAPAA. In order to increase efficiency and reduce administrative burden, both accreditation processes were combined. NVAO and EAPAA agreed on a joint process and framework on 12 September 2016. This report is based on the joint NVAO-EAPAA framework and is aimed at double accreditation for all programmes involved.

Preparation

Before the assessment panel's site visit to the Erasmus University Rotterdam, the project coordinator received the self-evaluation reports that the programmes wrote based on the joint NVAO-EAPAA framework. He sent it to the panel after checking it for completeness of information. Upon reading the self-evaluation reports, the panel members formulated their preliminary findings. The panel also studied a selection of ten theses and the accompanying assessment forms for each programme. This selection was made by the panel's chair, in cooperation with the secretary, from a list of graduates from the past three years. The chair and secretary took care that all tracks and specialisations within the programmes were covered, and made sure that the distribution of grades in the theses selection matched the distribution of grades over all theses.

The panel chair, secretary and programme jointly composed a schedule for the site visit. Prior to the site visit, the programme selected representative partners for the various interviews. Interviews were



planned with students, teaching staff, management, alumni and professional field, the programme committee and the board of examiners. See appendix 5 for the definitive schedule.

Site visit

The panel visited the three Public Administration programmes at the Woudestein Campus on 27 and 28 November 2017. It was followed by a visit to the Erasmus University's master's programme Master of Public Information Management at PBLQ in The Hague on 29 November 2017. Afterwards, the panel visited the Public Administration programmes at Leiden University from 30 November to 1 December 2017. At the start of the week, the panel held a preparatory meeting during which it was instructed regarding the assessment framework and procedures. At the start of each site visit, the panel discussed its working method and its preliminary findings for this specific site visit, and reflected on the content and use of the programme's domain-specific framework of reference (appendix 2).

During the site visit, the panel conducted interviews with representatives of the programmes, and examined materials provided by the programmes. An overview of these materials is given in appendix 6. The panel provided students and staff with the opportunity to speak informally with the panel outside the set interviews. No use was made of this opportunity.

The panel used the final part of the visit to discuss its findings in an internal meeting. Afterwards the panel chair gave an oral presentation, in which he expressed the panel's preliminary impressions and general observations. The visit was concluded with a development conversation, in which the panel and the programmes discussed various development routes for the programmes. The result of this conversation is summarized in a separate report.

Report

After the site visit, the secretary wrote a draft report based on the assessment panel's findings. Subsequently, she sent it to the assessment panel for feedback. After processing the panel members' feedback, the coordinator sent the draft report to the university in order to have it checked for factual irregularities. The secretary discussed the ensuing comments with the panel's chair and adapted the report accordingly before its finalisation.

Decision rules

The panel used the definitions from the NVAO's Assessment framework for limited programme assessments to assess the six standards in the joint NVAO-EAPAA framework. To determine the score for the programme as a whole, the decision rules of the NVAO's Assessment framework for limited programme assessments were applied to the scores for Standard 1 to 4.

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 standard.

Excellent

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

SUMMARY JUDGEMENT

Bachelor's programme Public Administration

The bachelor's programme Public Administration at Erasmus University Rotterdam is an academic programme that distinguishes itself by its strong inclusion of the practice of public administration. Its mission is 'to train public administrators who can identify and analyse social issues, advise on policy-relevant solutions and organise the requisite processes.' The panel is of the opinion that this mission is clear, but broad. Most importantly, it does not yet take into account the recent changes to and the strong practice focus of the programme. The panel recommends the programme to rephrase the mission so that it describes the unique characteristics of the programme and the intended learning outcomes more clearly. The intended learning outcomes are in line with the level, academic orientation and requirements of the national (and international) field. However, they need to be rephrased to better match the profile, mission and course objectives.

The bachelor's programme Public Administration has a coherently structured curriculum. Four learning lines running through the programme ensure that there is sufficient attention to research methods and academic skills, as well as to neighbouring disciplines of public administration (such as political studies, management studies, et cetera). The teaching methods (PBL in year one, 'academy-atelier' in year two and three) fit the aims and objectives of the programme. However, the panel suggest considering a wider range of teaching methods in year one, and reconsidering the level of challenge at the beginning of year two. A strong point of this bachelor's programme is the practice orientation, reflected (among other things) in the internship in the second year of the 'regular' Dutch track. Experienced, senior researchers develop the bachelor's programme, and the majority of teachers have a doctorate in public administration or a related field such as sociology. The panel is enthusiastic about the feedback cycle between tutors and lecturers and between past, present and future teachers of specific courses.

The programme has an adequate assessment system in place. The new Examination Board takes an active, thorough approach. However, the panel suggests paying more attention to qualitative testing and to keep monitoring the effect the compensation procedure for core courses. The assessment procedure for theses needs to be more transparent. This can be achieved by introducing a better thesis assessment form in the bachelor's programme. Storing the thesis forms online would help further improve the process of transparency and quality control. A thesis carousel should check the quality of thesis assessment by taking random samples.

Thesis topics are highly relevant, which is in line with the strong practice focus of the programme. The panel advises the programme to pay specific attention to quality control of theses that score around the pass mark. Bachelor's students perform well in the master's programme. This is seen as proof that they have achieved the intended learning outcomes.

The response rate to course evaluations is high and these evaluations lead to continuous improvements to the programme at course level. The programme reviews of 2011 and 2013 have been taken seriously and have led to numerous changes, the most prominent change being the start of a successful international track: Management of International Social Challenges (MISOC) in 2016/2017.

The programme strives for student and staff diversity. Gender diversity, especially that among senior staff, is not as balanced as it should be. The panel agrees that this urgently needs redressing. Regarding internationalisation, the panel is content to see that the programme increasingly succeeds in attracting international students.



Master's programme Public Administration

The mission of the *master's programme Public Administration* is clear but out-dated considering the recent changes to and the strong practice focus of the programme. The panel recommends the programme to rephrase the mission so that it more clearly describes the unique characteristics of the programme, the academic master's level that is aimed for and the intended learning outcomes. The intended learning outcomes are in line with the level, academic orientation and requirements of the national (and international) field. However, they also need to be rephrased to better match the profile, mission and course objectives of this programme. In the view of the panel, when revising these intended learning outcomes, specific attention should be paid to quantitative and qualitative research methodology, managerial and decision-making skills and ambitions regarding internationalisation.

The master's programme Public Administration offers a wide range of specialisations for both Dutch and international students. With seven tracks, the programme is equally wide in its range of subjects, including recent developments such as the effect of digitalisation on labour organisation, networks and globalisation. Although the panel understands that research skills are embedded in the 'ateliers' and the substantive courses, it feels that there should be more explicit attention to research skills at master's level in the curricula so that it is clear which research methodologies are addressed. Unique to the Dutch tracks is the large internship in the second half of the programme. This is a valuable opportunity for students to experience what a job in the field of public administration entails. However, it proves to be a challenge for students to finish their internship and master's thesis at the same time. Only 25% of students manage to finish the programme within one year. The panel appreciates the measures the programme has taken to improve the pass rates, most importantly the introduction of thesis circles in 2010. Finally, the panel is content with the quality of the staff that delivers the programme. Experienced, senior researchers are involved in the programme, and the majority of teachers have a doctorate in public administration or a related field.

The programme has an adequate assessment system in place. The new Examination Board takes an active, thorough approach and the test protocol is clear and well thought through. However, the panel thinks that the assessment procedure for theses is lacking transparency. This can be improved by properly using the new assessment forms. Storing the forms online would help further improve the process of transparency and quality control. A thesis carousel should check the quality of thesis assessment by taking random samples.

The panel concludes that graduates have indeed achieved the intended learning outcomes. Thesis topics are highly relevant, which is in line with the strong practice focus of the programme. The panel advises the programme to pay specific attention to quality control of theses that score around the pass mark. The success rate of the programme is high (over 90%) and master's graduates have no difficulties in finding a job after graduation.

The response rate to course evaluations is high and these evaluations lead to continuous improvements to the programme at course level. The programme reviews of 2011 and 2013 have been taken seriously and have led to numerous changes, the most prominent change being the start of two international tracks (2015/2016 and 2016/2017) alongside the English taught IMP programme, which was already running.

The programme strives for student and staff diversity. Gender diversity, especially that among senior staff, is not as balanced as it should be. The panel agrees that this urgently needs redressing. Regarding internationalization, the panel is content to see that the programme increasingly succeeds in attracting international students.

Master of International Public Management and Public Policy

This selective, small-scale master's programme is situated at the threshold between public administration and international organisations and affairs. The mission statement of the programme is clear, but broad and does not mention managerial and decision-making skills. The panel recommends the programme to revise the mission statement of the programme so that it describes the unique characteristics, the academic level that is aimed for and the intended learning outcomes of the programme more clearly. The intended learning outcomes are in line with the level, academic orientation and requirements of the national and international field. However, they need to be rephrased to better match the profile, mission and course objectives of the programme. In the view of the panel, when revising these intended learning outcomes, specific attention should be paid to managerial and decision-making skills.

The panel concludes that the programme offers a coherent curriculum. Remarkable about this programme is the wide range of teaching formats, as well as the strong focus on professional development. Students go on multiple site visits, meet alumni and get a lot of support when designing and writing their thesis. The pass rates of the programme (35-40%) within the one year time period expected are good compared to those of the 'regular' master's programme, perhaps also due to the selective nature of the programme.

The programme has an adequate assessment system in place. The new Examination Board takes an active, thorough approach and the test protocol is clear and well thought through. However, the panel thinks that the assessment procedure for theses needs to be more transparent. This can be achieved by properly using the new assessment forms. Storing the forms online would help further improve the process of transparency and quality control. A thesis carousel should check the quality of thesis assessment by taking random samples.

The panel concludes that graduates have indeed achieved the intended learning outcomes. Thesis topics are deemed to be highly relevant, which is in line with the strong practice focus of the programme. The success rate of the programme is impressive (over 90%) and master's graduates have no difficulties in finding a job after graduation, though almost half of them find a position in the private sector.

The response rate to course evaluations is high and these evaluations lead to continuous improvements to the programme. The programme strives for student and staff diversity. Gender diversity, especially that among senior staff, is not as balanced it should be. The panel agrees that this urgently needs redressing. This international programme has a good range of international students; about half of the students that enrol come from another country within the European Union.



The panel assesses the standards from the combined NVAO-EAPAA framework 2016 in the following way:

Bachelor's programme Public Administration

Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes	satisfactory
Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment	satisfactory
Standard 3: Assessment	satisfactory
Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes	satisfactory
Standard 5: External input	satisfactory
Standard 6: Diversity	satisfactory
General conclusion	satisfactory

Master's programme Public Administration

Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes	satisfactory
Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment	satisfactory
Standard 3: Assessment	satisfactory
Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes	satisfactory
Standard 5: External input	satisfactory
Standard 6: Diversity	satisfactory
General conclusion	satisfactory

Master's programme International Public Management and Public Policy

Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes	satisfactory
Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment	satisfactory
Standard 3: Assessment	satisfactory
Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes	satisfactory
Standard 5: External input	satisfactory
Standard 6: Diversity	satisfactory
General conclusion	satisfactory

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

Date: 29 March 2018



Prof. Tony Bovaird



Dr. Joke Corporaal

DESCRIPTION OF THE STANDARDS FROM THE COMBINED NVAO-EAPAA FRAMEWORK 2016

Organisational embedding

The Public Administration programmes at Erasmus University are part of the Faculty of Social Sciences, and organised by the Department of Public Administration and Sociology. The three Public Administration programmes share a Programme Committee. The Examination Board is shared with the other programmes within the Faculty.

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. As for level and orientation (bachelor's or master's; professional or academic), the intended learning outcomes fit into the Dutch qualifications framework. In addition, they tie in with the international perspective of the requirements currently set by the professional field and the discipline with regard to the contents of the programme. Insofar as is applicable, the intended learning outcomes are in accordance with relevant legislation and regulations. The programme should clearly state its educational philosophy in reaching these outcomes and identify a clear mission.

Findings

Mission and profile

The mission of the *bachelor's and master's programme Public Administration*, is 'to train public administrators who can identify and analyse social issues, advise on policy-relevant solutions and organise the requisite processes.' The *Master of International Public Management and Public Policy* (hereafter shortened as *IMP*) has a global focus. Its mission is formulated as 'to make students aware of the increasingly multinational, international and supra-national nature of public management and policy-making, provide them with the scientific theories, concepts and tools for analysing this international multi-level 'space' and equip them with knowledge and experiences relevant to careers with international dimensions.'

The panel thinks that the overall missions of the three programmes are fitting for public administration programmes, and formulated in a clear and concise way. The missions are broad with a focus on cognitive skills (to understand and analyse rather than to act). The panel was surprised to learn that no distinction is made between the overall aim of the *bachelor's and master's programme Public Administrations*. The panel also expected managerial and decision-making skills to feature much more prominently in the *IMP programme's* profile, mission and intended learning outcomes, because the panel believes that these skills are convincing hallmarks of this programme. The panel recommends rephrasing the missions of the programmes, thereby taking into account the learning outcomes of the programme on the one hand (which should be distinctively different at bachelor's and master's level) and the course objectives on the other. This will help students to identify how different strands of the programme come together.

Characteristic for all PA programmes at Erasmus University is a strong focus on practice, reflected among other things in a three-months internship in the *master's programme*. The panel values this distinctive, practical approach, as well as the multi-level focus of the *IMP programme*. The programmes concentrate not only on political science and societal issues, but also on practical solutions. The practical approach was often mentioned as the prime reason students had opted for one of these three programmes at Erasmus University. Students and staff are aware of and seem to appreciate the distinct mission and profile of the programmes.

The contexts in which these programmes are offered have significantly changed in the last few years. Due to a merger (in 2015) of the Department of Public Administration and Sociology, there is now a closer cooperation with the Sociology department. Some courses, especially in year 1 of the bachelor



programme, are taught together. The merger has also resulted in a different (faculty-wide) didactic approach in the first year of the bachelor's programme, namely that of problem based learning. A final, recent change is the start of an international track in the bachelor's programme (Management of International Social Challenges, MISOC) in 2016, and two English taught specialisations (out of seven) in the master's programme (Management of Governance Networks in 2015 and Governance of Migration and Diversity in 2016). These changes will be discussed in more detail in section 2.6. Here the panel would like to point out that the programmes have coped well with these changes, and that the start of the international MISOC (with an intake of around sixty students in the first year) and the two international master specialisations seem successful.

Intended learning outcomes

The intended learning outcomes of all three programmes (see Appendix 1) are embedded in the Dutch domain-specific framework of Public Administration, as well as in the internationally established European Association of Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA) framework. As a result, the intended learning outcomes adequately match the level, academic orientation and requirements of the national and international field.

The panel concludes that the intended learning outcomes are satisfactory. At the same time, however, the panel notes that they are quite abstract and very similar for all three programmes. The intended learning outcomes could describe the academic level that is aimed for and the contents of each programme more precisely. The panel strongly recommends rephrasing the intended learning outcomes, for instance by grouping them along the Dublin Descriptors. The current intended learning outcomes predate the international tracks in the *bachelor's and master's programme*. As a result, the intended learning outcomes do not yet reflect the international focus of these programmes. The panel was pleased to learn that the programme management wants to sharpen the intended learning outcomes regarding internationalisation, without losing the Dutch context. The panel is also content that the Examination Board has put together a working group to study how the intended learning outcomes match the courses, and how they can be rephrased to better suit the revised programmes.

In the view of the panel, the intended learning outcomes of the *bachelor's programme Public Administration* should, for instance, specify which qualitative and quantitative research skills students acquire (ILO4 now rather broadly states that a graduate: 'is able to design, carry out and assess public administration research') and which higher levels of learning (for instance analysing and evaluating public administration issues) are taught. Given the strong practice focus of the programme, there could also be more attention in the intended learning outcomes to practical skills. These practice-oriented skills are now only described in ILO7, 'to function as a broker between values and interests... in order to resolve so-called wicked problems'.

The intended learning outcomes of the *master's programme Public Administration* need to be more challenging, more explicit and more precise to describe the master's level of the programme, the panel thinks. Again, the panel recommends specifying research methodology, in particular ILO4 ('is able to independently deploy methods and techniques in combination with theory....') and the level of challenge that is expected of students.

The *master's programme International Public Management and Public Policy* has the briefest set of (seven) intended learning outcomes. The panel believes that practical managerial and decision-making skills are unique and strong trademarks of this programme. Hence, it was surprised to see that neither the mission nor the intended learning outcomes mention these skills. In order to make clear how this unique programme stands out from the other two Public Administration programmes at Erasmus University, the panel advises the programme management to highlight these practical skills in both its mission and intended learning outcomes.

Considerations

The mission of the *bachelor's and master's programme Public Administration*, as well as that of the *Master of International Public Management and Public Policy* programme is clear, but does not yet

take into account the recent changes to and the strong practice focus of these three programmes. The panel urges the programmes to rephrase the missions of the programmes so they describe the unique characteristics of the programmes, the academic level that is aimed for and the intended learning outcomes more clearly. The overall mission of the bachelor's and master's programmes should be different.

The intended learning outcomes of the programmes are in line with the level, academic orientation and requirements of the national (and international) field. However, they need to be rephrased to better match the profile, mission and course objectives of each programme. According to the panel, when revising these intended learning outcomes, specific attention should be paid to quantitative and qualitative research methodology, the higher levels of learning (this could partly be achieved by grouping the intended learning outcomes along the Dublin Descriptors), managerial and decision-making skills and ambitions regarding internationalisation.

Conclusion

Bachelor's programme Public Administration: the panel assesses Standard 1 as 'satisfactory'.

Master's programme Public Administration: the panel assesses Standard 1 as 'satisfactory'.

Master's programme International Public Management and Public Policy: the panel assesses Standard 1 as 'satisfactory'.

Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment

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

2.1: Core components

The core curriculum provides a thorough teaching of the basic concepts, theories, methods and history (classics) of Public Administration at the level of the programme (bachelor or master).

Bachelor's programme Public Administration

At Erasmus University, the academic year is divided into four blocks. For the bachelor's programme Public Administration, these blocks have been split into two. In most blocks (five weeks each) students follow one course of 6 EC and a supportive practical of 1.5 EC, resulting in 60 EC altogether. There are eight exceptions to this '6 + 1.5 EC' rule: (1) block 4 and 5 in year two of the programme are dedicated to a nine-week internship (15 EC), (2) block 7 and 8 are reserved for a 15 EC research project, (3) blocks 1 and 2 in year three for a minor (elective courses or international exchange) and block 7 and 8 for the bachelor thesis (15 EC).

In 2016 an international track in the bachelor's programme was launched: Management of International Social Challenges (MISOC). The overall structure of this English-taught track is identical to the Dutch track and many courses are shared, with the exception of six core courses. Two of these courses replace the internship in the second year of the Dutch track.

The curriculum of the bachelor's programme Public Administration is structured along four learning lines: policy and governance, organisation and management, research methods and a skills line (including practicals on academic writing, presentation and argumentation, as well as on negotiations, professional conduct and project management).



Master's programme Public Administration

The structure of the master's curriculum Public Administration is similar for the four Dutch taught specialisations: Policy and Politics, Governance & Management of Complex Systems, Public Management, and Management of HR & Change. In the first two blocks students take three courses at a time (each 5 EC) and the last two blocks are dedicated to a half-year internship (10 EC) and the master's thesis (15 EC). The remaining 5 EC are reserved for the 'atelier' (working group) sessions that run throughout the year and that students follow with fellow-students from their chosen specialisation. In contrast, some of the core courses are shared with other specialisations.

The two English taught tracks (Management of Governance Networks and Governance of Migration and Diversity) mainly differ from the Dutch language tracks because they do not contain an internship. Otherwise, the build-up is similar: core courses account for 5 EC, practical courses for 1 or 2 EC, and the last block is reserved for students writing their master's thesis (15 EC). 'Governance of Migration and Diversity' is a programme that is jointly offered by Leiden University, Delft University of Technology and Erasmus University. Half of the programme (30 EC) consists of joint courses and the other half is specific to the programme in which students are enrolled.

The seventh specialisation within the master's programme Public Administration is an evening specialisation geared towards mid-career professionals. This programme builds upon a 60 EC 'pre-master', including a summer school (though this is not compulsory). The programme itself consists of 4 core Public Administration courses (10 EC each), a research practical (5 EC) and thesis project (15 EC). Thesis groups run throughout the year, and start as early as the first block.

Master of International Public Management and Public Policy

The curriculum of the master's programme International Public Management and Public Policy contains six core courses of 5 EC each: two generic Public Administration courses and four courses about international organisations and affairs. In addition, there are two 2.5 EC courses on 'professional development' (centred around block 3) and 5 EC on elective courses. The year concludes with 20 EC spent in block 3 and 4 on a final research project.

Having studied the curricula and the content of several core courses of the programmes (see Appendix 6), the panel concludes that each of the three programmes, in its courses and learning lines (*bachelor's programme*) and 'ateliers' (*master's programmes*), covers a wide range of subjects across the multidisciplinary field of public administration, as well as the necessary research methods and academic skills. The panel has established that there are sufficient courses linked to each intended learning outcome to make sure that these learning outcomes can be achieved. The panel also concludes that new, technological developments such as the effect of digitalisation on labour organisation, networks and globalisation are well represented in the programmes. At master's level, the panel is concerned that the amount of EC dedicated to research skills is lower than desirable. For the *master's programme Public Administration* this now ranges from 0 (no dedicated courses) to 2 EC (evening programme) and in the *IMP programme* only 2.5 EC are reserved for 'research design'. Although the panel appreciates that research skills are addressed in other parts of the master's programmes, such as the 'ateliers' and the substantive courses, it feels that it is important to have sufficient, explicit attention to research skills at master's level in the curricula. Currently, for instance, it is unclear to the panel which research methodologies students are taught at master's level. The panel was pleased to hear that in the Governance of Migration and Diversity track there will be a dedicated research method course (5 EC). It recommends that the other tracks also reconsider how much attention to research skills is appropriate.

2.2 Other components and specialisations

The programme clearly defines its objectives for additional work and the rationale for the objectives, and explains how the curriculum is designed to achieve these objectives. The statement of objectives includes any programme specialisation or concentration and the main categories of students to be served (e.g., full-time, part-time).

Bachelor's programme Public Administration

Within the bachelor's programme students can choose between the regular Dutch track with a professional practice orientation, and the English (MISOC) track focussing on international social issues. Both tracks include further elements of choice: a short (nine-week) internship (Dutch track only) and research project in the second year, as well as a minor and bachelor's thesis in the third year. The minor can be filled with elective courses offered by Erasmus University or by one of the partner universities: Leiden and Delft University. The minor period can also be used to study abroad, an option that is chosen by approximately 20% of students. The panel concludes that the specialization opportunities have clearly defined goals and objectives. It also concludes that bachelor's students have plenty of opportunity to shape their own study path within the programme. The panel is pleased that the programme now offers an English track, a recent development that is in line with the recommendation of the previous panel (see 5.2).

Master's programme Public Administration

The seven tracks of the master's programme allow students to specialise in one or more aspects of the multidisciplinary field of public administration, ranging from Dutch public policies at the intersection of society, politics and media (Policy and Politics track) to the international policy area of migration and integration (Governance of Migration and Diversity track). Within each of the seven tracks the number of elective courses differs. The evening specialisation and the Governance of Migration and Diversity specialisations contain no electives. The other tracks have 5 EC of elective courses – courses offered by one of the four Dutch tracks, by one of the two English tracks, or by the IMP programme. The panel concludes that the programme succeeds in offering an impressive amount of diversity in the specialisations, allowing students to choose a track that matches their background (for instance a mid-career option for professionals) and personal interests.

Master of International Public Management and Public Policy

The specialist IMP programme includes one elective course, which can either be the programme's own elective 'International Society and Democratic Institutions' or an elective offered elsewhere at Erasmus University. However, prior approval by the Examination Board and (if the elective course is offered outside the Faculty) the host faculty is required. The panel is aware of the fact that the Independent Student Assessment highlights the high flexibility in elective choices as a definite strength of this programme. The programme facilitates students finding an elective course that matches their profile by offering a list with pre-approved courses and by providing clear criteria. At the same time, the panel learned that students experience constraints in their choice of electives as a consequence of timetables (the courses have to be taken in the third block and cannot overlap with compulsory courses) and prerequisites. For instance, students are not allowed to take business or management electives. The panel concludes that there is limited room for students to follow elective courses, in spite of the high value placed upon this element of the programme, but understands that the programme, which is a specialisation in itself, has decided to restrict the number of electives. However, the communication and coordination between the faculties regarding the elective courses could be improved.



2.3 Multi-disciplinarity

The courses taken to fulfil the core curriculum components provide research methods, concepts and theories from the disciplines of economics, law, political science, sociology, public finances, informatisation, and public management as well as the relationship between these fields.

To assess whether the programmes make appropriate use of overlapping and adjacent disciplines, the panel studied a number of core courses from all three programmes (see Appendix 6). It concludes that all three programmes use research methods, concepts and theories from disciplines relevant to the field of public administration such as economics, law, political sciences, technology (bachelor's programme) and international relations (MISOC-track), law, organisational studies, governance, public management, economics and media studies (master's programme PA) and global governance, international relations and EU studies (IMP-programme). The educational approach, which stimulates students to solve problems by bringing relevant information from various disciplines together, also contributes to the multidisciplinary character of the programmes, as do the elective courses, which may also be taken outside the field of public administration. Finally, in the concluding thesis projects, students are encouraged to bring the various disciplinary strands together. The panel concludes that the programmes are fittingly multi-disciplinary.

2.4 Length

The programmed curriculum length is in line with the objectives of the programme and in accordance with the accreditation category that is applied for.

The length of all three programmes discussed here meets the criteria for academic bachelor's (180 EC) and master's programmes (60 EC) in the Netherlands.

2.5 Relationship to practice and internships

The programme provides adequate training of practical skills in correspondence with the mission and the programme objectives. Therefore it has adequate links to the public administration profession.

As stated above, the panel concludes that public administration programmes at Erasmus University have a strong focus on practice: through internships, group assignments, guest lecturers, master classes, site visits, meetings with alumni, et cetera, students get a clear picture of the working field of public administration. The programmes have close ties with the city of Rotterdam. In addition, the practicals (bachelor's programme) and 'ateliers' (master's programme public administration) pay attention to topics such as professional conduct and job orientation. Finally, the theses of all three programmes are clearly much influenced by professional practice; in the view of the panel, they deal with highly relevant practical topics. As mentioned before, the strong practice focus of the programmes was often the reason students gave for having chosen Erasmus University.

Internships play a prominent role in the *bachelor's and master's programme Public Administration*. However, there is no mandatory internship in the English MISOC track of the bachelor's programme, in the two English tracks and evening specialisation of the master's programme and in the master's programme *International Public Management and Public Policy*. This subject was discussed during the assessment visit. For the evening specialisation, the admission criteria guarantee that students combine their education with a job relevant to public administration, taking care of the relationship to practice. Students in the international tracks and the IMP programme explained that they would like to be able to take internships, but that, due to the structure of the programme and – especially – the language barrier, this is harder for them than it is for Dutch students. The programme management confirmed that it has been deemed practically infeasible to offer an internship to all international students. The teachers estimated that 40-50% of international master's students carry out an internship anyway. But because it is so important for international master's students to complete their programmes within one year, the teachers did not think it a good idea to make internships compulsory. The panel understands this rationale, but at the same time believes that, in all three programmes, an internship contributes to students achieving the intended learning

outcomes. The programme management told the panel that it has now been decided that students from the MISOC (bachelor's) track can take an internship during the minor period. The programme will offer support for students to organise this, but students must arrange it independently. The panel is pleased to hear that bachelor's students in the English track will be able to gain the same level of practical experience as their peers in the Dutch language track.

Most bachelor's students go on to follow a master's programme. Even so, the panel is impressed with the many activities that the bachelor's programme and the two master's programmes offer and undertake to make sure students are well prepared for the job market. Noteworthy in this respect are the site visits that the *IMP programme* organises in the 'Professional Development' course (2.5 EC) to Geneva and Brussels, where students meet with people from different career paths. The programme also arranges meetings between students and alumni.

2.6 Structure and didactics of the programme

The programme is coherent in its contents. The didactic concepts are in line with the aims and objectives of the programme. The teaching methods correspond to the didactic philosophy of the programme. The programme is 'doable' in the formal time foreseen for the programme in the respective years.

Bachelor's programme Public Administration

There are two didactic approaches underpinning the bachelor's programme: problem-based learning in the first year, and the so-called 'academy-atelier' approach in the second and third year. Active learning is the link between those two didactical approaches, or, as the self-assessment report states: '...students learn most and become best equipped for their future academic and professional career if they engage in active learning.' The report also states, however, that students find it hard to make the transition from the first to the second year of the programme due to the change in didactic approach, and that work has already been done to smooth this link.

During the assessment visit, the panel discussed the difference between the PBL and the 'academy-atelier' approach with programme management. It learned that the programme uses PBL to encourage students to find relevant concepts themselves, master the literature, and build up a body of knowledge. In contrast, the 'academy-atelier' approach typically has more variation in teaching methods, with lectures becoming more supportive, and the focus shifting to applying knowledge in real life situations. The working groups of the PBL sessions are relatively small with 11-12 students. For the atelier sessions the group size is increased to up to 20 students. The panel talked about the PBL approach in more detail. Although enthusiastic about the principle of problem based learning, the panel did not recognise the PBL approach in the course manuals, and also had some concerns about the link between the PBL approach and the way most courses in the first year are taught and assessed (see section 3 for more details on assessment). The panel believes that the programme could strengthen the PBL approach and prepare students better for the second year by offering a wider variety of teaching formats in the first year. This recommendation is in line with student feedback (see below) that now the PBL courses focus on building up a body of knowledge, and not on applying this knowledge.

The panel concludes that overall the bachelor's programme is coherent in its contents and didactic approaches. It is pleased to see that the link between the first and the second year is being improved, and that the two programme coordinators meet regularly to also ensure coherence in the programme. In the view of the panel, the course manuals in the first year are not recognizable as PBL course manuals, and those in the second and third year should also be more instructive. The panel recommends improving the course manuals, for instance by using fixed templates.

The students and alumni to whom the panel talked were overall satisfied with their teachers, the programme and the way the didactic approach is implemented in the programme. Yet, at the same time, both groups commented on the low amount of contact hours in the first year of the programme, and the low level of challenge in the first half of the programme. Some of the students and alumni



felt that the shift from acquiring to applying knowledge halfway through the second year could have come sooner. The panel concludes that the programme is feasible and can be completed in three years. This is also testified by the current success rate of the last three years. According to the programme, 87% of students meeting the requirements for the BSA complete their studies within 4 years. The dropout number after the first year has gone down from 25% to 16% (2014/2015 – more recent numbers were not provided). Still, the panel argues that the programme might want to reconsider the level of challenge in the first two years. To get a better idea of the workload in the first year, the panel recommends that course coordinators also attend some of the PBL sessions themselves (see 2.9 as well).

Master's programme Public Administration

The coherence of the master's programme is ensured in a number of ways. Every specialisation has its own coordinator and is delivered by a small number of staff. That allows for formal and more informal ways of assessing the various elements of these specialisations, as well as the coherence between these elements. To ensure coherence across the programme the coordinators normally meet twice a year with the Director of Education. Finally, coherence is increased by the fact that students from various specialisations share some core and elective courses.

With the exception of the evening specialisation, which students combine with a daytime job, the set-up of the master's programme is deliberately non-sequential. Students follow three courses at a time. This, the programme management argues, teaches students to cope with having to do several things at the same time and thus prepares them for a future career. The didactic approach of the master's programme is that of the academy-atelier, with the ateliers (practicals) being the place where academic skills are being practised and deeper insights should be gained. To improve the pass-rates, the programme has implemented 'thesis-circles' since 2010. These comprise small groups of students working on their thesis, who meet once a fortnight to discuss progress. In addition, students are now already encouraged to think about possible thesis topics in the first two blocks. As the internship is linked to the master's thesis, there is support for finding a suitable internship.

From studying the curriculum as a whole and some core courses in more detail (see Appendix 6), the panel concludes that the programme is structured in a logical and convincing manner. The working groups seem to be functioning well. The students the panel interviewed were pleased with their lecturers and with the amount of interaction they could have with them during the ateliers. At the same time the panel is of the opinion that the course manuals need to be more instructive. It suggests using fixed templates to achieve this.

The number of students finishing the programme within one year is low, on average only 25%. The panel is satisfied with the explanation the programme gives for this low number (such as students extending their internships, starting a second master's programme or accepting a job before graduation) and with the measures the programme has taken to improve the pass rates: the thesis circles and the amount of support that is available to (Dutch) students during their search for an internship. The panel suggests making this help available to international students too. As far as the evening specialisation is concerned, the panel thinks the feasibility of this track should be reconsidered. This programme (which, together with the pre-master, takes at least two years for most students) has a very high workload, especially towards the end when students are writing their thesis. The panel suggests finding ways of spreading the workload more evenly, as well as reassessing the place of certain research skills courses in the programme.

Master of International Public Management and Public Policy

This master's programme makes use of the same didactical academy-atelier approach as the other Public Administration programmes. In addition to working with small groups of students, it uses a wide number of teaching formats, such as developing, presenting and discussing a policy proposal, academic poster and strategic business plan. There is a coordination team (four core members of staff, one of whom is the programme coordinator) that meets several times a year to discuss the coherence of the programme.

The Master of International Public Management and Public Policy is a coherent and well-structured programme. The assessment panel is enthusiastic about the wide range of teaching formats employed by the programme. The panel also thinks that the programme succeeds in making the most of the international diversity of its students by mixing of Dutch, EU and non-EU students in the work groups. The course manuals, however, leave room for improvement. Again (see above) the panel thinks these should be structured according to a fixed template to show students, among other things, how modules fit the (revised) learning goals of the programme. The success rate of the programme (50-65%) after one year is considerably higher than that of the 'regular' master's programme. Similar measures have been taken to further improve the numbers: thesis circles to create peer pressure, a more intense course on research design and supervisors frequently reminding students that the programme is a one year programme. The panel thinks these are appropriate steps and does not question the feasibility of the programme within the set time.

2.7 Admission of students

Admission goals, admission policy and admission standards, including academic prerequisites, are in line with the mission and programme objectives. They are clearly and publicly stated, specifying any differences for categories of students.

The *bachelor's programme* admits students with a completed pre-university education (vwo) degree, a similar foreign diploma, or a completed first year of higher professional education (hbo). In addition, students in the MISOC track have to submit a CV and motivation letter, in which they (among other things) defend their choice of an international study environment and they must submit proof of their English language proficiency. Two preparatory activities are intended to give students a clear picture of the programme: a digital questionnaire (this is compulsory for all students) and a 'study check day'.

The *master's programme Public Administration* directly admits students to one of the five Dutch tracks (including the evening specialisation) with an academic bachelor's degree in Public Administration or a closely related bachelor's programme such as political science or urban planning. All other students must first complete a pre-master programme, and they have to do this within one year. The panel concludes that the premaster adequately prepares students for the programme. For the two English tracks, students must hold a relevant degree and submit proof of adequate command of English, as well as a CV and (for the MGN programme) written evidence of motivation.

The *Master of International Public Management and Public Policy* has the most elaborate admission procedure. Students are selected on the basis of their grades during their bachelor's degrees (for Dutch programmes, the average grade needs to be at least a seven), as well as on the relevance of prior education (Public Administration, Political Science, European Studies, International Relations or a pre-master programme in Public Administrations), their motivation, CV and English proficiency. An Admission Board, which in turn is supported by an admissions office, carries out the selection process.

The panel concludes that the admission procedures for all three programmes are clearly defined. They match the learning objectives and missions of the programmes.

2.8 Intake

The structure, contents and the didactics of the programme are in line with the qualifications of the students that enter into the programme.

There are three ways in which the *bachelor's programme* tries to ease the transition from secondary school to this academic programme. As mentioned before, the didactic approach of the first year is that of problem-based learning. Students receive a short training at the start of the programme to understand how PBL works and which learning steps are involved. Secondly, the programme uses a sequential structure. Students can focus on one course (plus supportive practical) at a time. Thirdly, the first practical familiarizes students with the electronic learning environment as well as with academic skills, including academic referencing and providing feedback.



Most students that enter one of the two master's programmes have already successfully completed an academic bachelor's or master's degree, either in the Netherlands or abroad. The *IMP programme* is able to select students on the basis of their past performance. Both programmes also organise introduction activities to make sure students understand the structure and contents of the programmes, as well as the didactic approach and the Dutch study culture. The evening specialisation is preceded by a pre-master, which starts with an introduction course ('Exploration') to get all students on the same page.

Because students in the international master's tracks come from very different academic backgrounds, the panel asked if the programmes think they succeed in levelling up all students as soon as possible. The teachers of the *master's programme Public Administration* admitted that, in the two English tracks, problems sometimes occur. For instance, it turned out to be a problem that there was no designated research methods course in the Governance of Migration and Diversity (GMD) track. As mentioned above (2.1), now a new course on designing migration policy research is offered shortly after Christmas to make sure that students have an equal understanding of research methods.

The panel concludes that the structure, contents and didactics of the programmes match the students' qualifications. It is reassured to see that problems due to students' different backgrounds are addressed when they arise. The custom in the IMP programme to mix Dutch, EU and non-EU students when working on assignments in order to get them up to speed is seen as a good practice. In the view of the panel, the introduction and preparatory activities are appropriate ways of making sure that students know what is expected of them when they enter the programmes.

2.9 Faculty qualifications

A substantive percentage of the professional faculty nucleus actively involved in the programme holds an earned doctorate or other equivalent terminal academic degree in their field. Any faculty lacking the terminal degree must have a record or sufficient professional or academic experience directly relevant to their assigned responsibilities. The field of expertise and experience of the faculty reflects the needed expertise to deliver the programme as intended. All faculty with teaching assignments have at least proven basic educational skills. The educational skills are adapted to the didactics of the programme and its components. Where practitioners teach courses, there is satisfactory evidence of the quality of their academic qualifications, professional experience and teaching ability.

The majority of teachers delivering the programmes hold a PhD degree and have a University Teaching Qualification. Those who do yet have this qualification are either in the process of acquiring it, or are exempted on the basis of several good teaching evaluations. Senior staff members coordinate the core courses in the programmes. They are internationally renowned experts in their fields with close links to the international academic community and professional field.

The working groups in year one of the bachelor's programme are run by tutors, who are master's graduates on a three year teaching contract, or PhD students. The panel had some concerns about the set-up of these courses. If the course designers (coordinators) do not attend the classes, how do they know which difficulties students encounter? The panel learned that there is a well-established feedback cycle; tutors and coordinators meet every week to discuss the assignments and to give feedback on the previous week's assignments. Moreover, even though the tutors are their first point of call, students also regularly contact the course coordinator by email.

The panel is content with the quality of the teaching staff in all three programmes. Students spoke highly of the staff delivering the programmes, and described them as 'focused' yet 'easy to contact'. Because the groups are small, tutors/lecturers know students on a first name basis. The students appreciate this. The panel concludes that the relationship between course coordinators and tutors is well developed, but nevertheless advises course coordinators to attend at least a few PBL sessions

each year in order to see how the sessions are going and to get a better insight in the workload. The programme organises meetings between past, present and future teachers of courses. The panel sees this as a commendable, good practice.

Considerations

Bachelor's programme Public Administration

The bachelor's programme Public Administration has a coherently structured curriculum. Four learning lines running through the programme ensure that there is sufficient attention for research methods and academic skills, as well as for the neighbouring disciplines of public administration (such as political studies, management studies, et cetera). The teaching methods (PBL in year one, 'academy-atelier' in year two and three) fit the aims and objectives of the programme. However, the panel suggests considering a wider range of teaching methods in year one, and reconsidering the level of challenge at the beginning of year two. A strong point of this bachelor's programme is the practice orientation, reflected (among other things) in the internship in the second year of the 'regular' Dutch track. The panel suggests making this option available to students in the MISOC-track as well, and is pleased to hear that the programme is already considering this. Experienced, senior researchers develop the bachelor's programme, and the majority of teachers have a doctorate in public administration or a related field such as sociology. The panel is enthusiastic about the feedback cycle between tutors and lecturers and between past, present and future teachers of specific courses.

Master's programme Public Administration

The master's programme Public Administration offers a wide range of specialisations for both Dutch and international students. With seven tracks, the programme itself is equally wide in its range of subjects, including recent developments such as the effect of digitalisation on labour organisation, networks and globalisation. Although the panel understands that research skills are embedded in the 'ateliers' and the substantive courses, it feels that there should be more explicit attention to research skills at master's level in the curricula so that it is clear which research methodologies are addressed. Unique to the Dutch tracks is the large internship in the second half of the programme. This is a valuable opportunity for students to experience what a job in the field of public administration entails. However, it proves to be a challenge for students to finish their internship and master's thesis at the same time. Only 25% of students manage to finish the programme within one year. The panel appreciates the measures the programme has taken to improve the pass rates, most importantly the introduction of thesis circles in 2010. Finally, the panel is content with the quality of the staff that deliver the programme. Experienced, senior researchers are involved in the programme, and the majority of teachers have a doctorate in public administration or a related field.

Master of International Public Management and Public Policy

The programme offers a coherent curriculum, weaving together two core courses on public administration with four on international organisations and affairs. Remarkable about this programme is the wide range of teaching formats, as well as the strong focus on professional development. Students go on multiple site visits, meet alumni and get a lot of support when designing and writing their thesis. The number of students completing the programme within one year (35-40%) is good compared to the pass rates of the 'regular' master's programme, perhaps also due to the selective nature of the programme. The panel was satisfied with the quality of the teachers who deliver this programme. They are highly experienced, senior researchers with a lot of teaching experience.

Conclusion

Bachelor's programme Public Administration: the panel assesses Standard 2 as 'satisfactory'.

Master's programme Public Administration: the panel assesses Standard 2 as 'satisfactory'.



Master's programme International Public Management and Public Policy: the panel assesses Standard 2 as 'satisfactory'.

Standard 3: Assessment

The programme has an adequate assessment system in place. The tests and assessments are valid, reliable and transparent to the students. The programme's examining board safeguards the quality of the interim and final tests administered.

Findings

To assess the quality, validity and transparency of assessment within the three programmes, the panel looked at the assessment policies of the programmes, the assessment of the theses and the functioning of the Examination Board responsible for all three programmes.

Examination Board

In September 2015, the Faculty of Social Sciences merged the Examination Board of the Public Administration programmes with those of Sociology, Psychology and Pedagogical & Educational Sciences. The new Examination Board consists of seven members: a chair, one academic member per discipline, a test expert and an external member. Three secretaries support the Board. As a result of the merger, all bachelor's and (pre-)master programmes share the same set of Education and Examination Regulations (EER) and the same faculty-wide Rules and Guidelines (R&G). The chair of the Examination Board meets the Educational Directors of the four programmes on a weekly basis to discuss ongoing issues and new developments.

Prior to the assessment visit, the panel was concerned about the workload and capacity of the new Examination Board. This concern was shared with the Examination Board during the site visit. According to the Board the workload has not increased as a result of the merger. Although the workload is indeed high, they feel there is a good workflow. The Board sees it as a huge advantage that they can share and exchange best practices between the programmes. They feel sufficiently supported by the Department and by a newly established testing committee (lecturers from various programme with specific assessment expertise). They have a centralised support structure, with digital contact forms for students wishing to contact the Examination Board. A senior secretary is now able to deal with many day-to-day cases herself. As a result, the Board concentrates on testing policies rather than individual cases. Finally, as a result of a newly implemented test protocol, the Board receives more e-mails from staff outlining how they are planning to assess certain courses. The Board sees this as helpful for the process of reviewing the different levels assessed.

The panel concludes that the newly established Examination Board takes a thorough and professional approach. It not only monitors the quality of exams, but also organises workshops for examiners on how to set good tests that match the learning objectives of the course. However, from interviewing the students the panel understands that one centralised Examination Board also has its downsides. Until recently, students sometimes had to wait a long time to receive a response from the Board. In order to deal with students' requests in a timelier manner the capacity of the Board has recently been increased. Students also argued that the Education and Examination Regulations are too complicated. The Examination Board agrees and is now working on this. The panel is pleased to hear that problems are identified and dealt with quickly.

Assessment policy

As from February 2016, all three programmes use a Faculty-wide protocol; the basic principles are outlined in the self-evaluation reports. The test protocol has been discussed with the educational directors of all programmes and has been sent to all examiners (members of staff setting exams). The self-evaluation report stipulates assessment as 'the shared responsibility of the dean, educational management, examination board, testing committee and examiners', and links the forms of assessment to the learning objectives of the courses. In addition, the test protocol describes how different kinds of exams should be constructed (for instance multiple choice or take home exams)

and how a test matrix works. It also provides help for analysing test results, determining marks and constructing resits. Finally, the protocol contains general rules and a checklist for setting exams.

The panel has studied the test protocol. It concludes that this document has been composed in a precise manner and that it can be very helpful for teachers setting exams. However, the panel also concludes that there seems to be an emphasis in the test protocol on the lower levels of Bloom (reproduction, understanding, application). In the Independent Student Assessment, students also reported that there is an emphasis on knowledge reproduction. More specifically, they felt that multiple-choice tests were too often used in exams during the first year. Both subjects were discussed during the visit. The Examination Board explained that a working group is currently checking if assessment forms tie in with the intended learning outcomes. Furthermore, the Board is currently looking for more senior members of staff that can address other types of assessment, especially when assessing the higher levels of Bloom (analysis, synthesis and evaluation). The panel concludes that qualitative assessment will get more attention and that this is needed. It is not convinced that multiple-choice assessment ties in well with the didactic approach of problem-based learning in the first year, and advises the programme to introduce some alternative ways of testing in the first year. In the second and third year more varied ways of assessing are used, for instance writing essays. The panel understood that, after the very structured approaches to assessment in the first year, students sometimes don't know what is expected of them when different assessment methods are used. It therefore recommends communicating test criteria in the second and third year of the bachelor's programme more clearly to the students.

During the assessment visit, the panel asked questions about the assessment policy of allowing the compensation of low grades in the first year of the *bachelor's programme*. Within the cluster of practical courses and within the cluster of theoretical (substantive) courses, students are allowed to compensate a low grade (as long as it is higher than a 4.0) with higher grades. Credits are only awarded when the average grade for the cluster is at least a 6.0 (which is a half point higher than the standard Dutch pass mark of 5.5). The Examination Board explained that the rationale behind this is that the programme has to assess whether students are fit for the programme; it is university-wide policy that students have to complete the first year within one year ('nominal is normal'). The compensation rule was introduced when the number of resits was reduced. Students are allowed one resit per course, with a maximum of two resits per cluster of eight courses. The panel understands the reasoning behind the compensation rules and is glad to hear that the measures taken are evidence-based. "The panel was initially concerned about students being allowed to compensate low marks in core research courses, but additional documentation received during the site visit shows that only in the case of a very few of students did this compensation actually take place and it had no effect on their later satisfactory progress. However, the panel advises the programme to keep monitoring the effects of the compensation rule and if necessary to exempt certain core courses from it".

Thesis assessment

A supervisor and second reader assess the theses that students write at the end of their bachelor's or master's programme. Both assessors are employed at the Erasmus University, and the second reader has not been involved in the student's supervision. After a plagiarism check, the supervisor ('primary supervisor') and second reader ('secondary supervisor') both propose a grade, but then determine the final grade together. Together they fill in the final 'thesis assessment form'. If one of the two assessors thinks the thesis is of insufficient quality (mark 5.5 or lower) or when the proposed grades differ by more than one point, a third assessor is involved.

The panel studied a number of theses and accompanying assessment forms for each programme. It observed that some assessment forms were missing, others were hardly filled in, and some contained comments that were not in line with the assessment given. The panel concludes this makes it hard for external readers (such as people involved in an external review) to judge the quality of thesis assessment. The panel also believes that consistent completion of the forms with full feedback could be helpful for internal use, as patterns might arise in the feedback, which can be useful in curriculum



reviews. This is especially important around the lower marks; in the view of the panel the pass-fail line needs to be very clear (also see Standard 4). Finally, the panel thinks the independence of the second reader could be improved by having an external party send the thesis to the second reader (instead of the first supervisor doing this) and by both parties filling in one form completely before discussing the final grade. The panel believes that the bachelor's thesis form needs to be just as elaborate as the new master's thesis form. Further, it applauds the Examination Board's plans to store thesis assessment forms online. That will make it easier for both readers to access them independently, and it will also enable members of the Examination Board to notice when forms are not filled in properly. The panel also suggests that the Examination Board continues its initiative to restart a thesis carousel, a group of teachers meeting on a regular basis to discuss a random sample of theses. The working group tasked with this should not only look at general assessment criteria, but also read individual thesis to monitor the quality of thesis assessment. All-in all the panel concludes that the assessment procedures of theses needs tidying up.

Considerations

The programmes have an adequate assessment system in place. The new Examination Board takes an active, thorough approach and the test protocol, although focussing on acquiring knowledge and understanding, is clear and well thought through. Regarding the bachelor's programme, the panel suggests paying more attention to qualitative testing and reconsidering the compensation procedure for core courses. The assessment procedure for theses needs to be more transparent in all programmes. This can be achieved by introducing a better thesis assessment form in the bachelor's programme and by properly using the new forms in the master's programme. Storing the thesis forms online as planned would help further improve the process of transparency and quality control. A thesis carousel should check the quality of thesis assessment by taking random samples.

Conclusion

Bachelor's programme Public Administration: the panel assesses Standard 3 as 'satisfactory'.

Master's programme Public Administration: the panel assesses Standard 3 as 'satisfactory'.

Master's programme International Public Management and Public Policy: the panel assesses Standard 3 as 'satisfactory'.

Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes

The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved. The level achieved is demonstrated by interim and final tests, final projects and the performance of graduates in actual practice or in post-graduate programmes.

Findings

The panel studied a sample of theses for each programme, and interviewed several alumni in order to assess whether the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

In general, the panel was satisfied with the quality of the theses and agreed with the marks given. The panel was enthusiastic about the topics, which they deemed very societally relevant and practical. However, they also noticed that the theses had a similar, standardized structure with an almost mechanical use of theory and theoretical framework. Such a standardised application of theory does not show if students have really grasped the theory they apply. There were two theses (one in the bachelor's programme and one in the master's programme Public Administration) that the panel did not consider passable and two other theses (one in each of those two programmes) that the panel was unsure about. The panel thought these theses were theoretically weak, contained very few academic sources, and fell particularly short when it came to reasoning/analysis. This raised concern about how much these particular students had learned about research methodology. The subject of research methodology in the curriculum was addressed during the site visit (see above standard 1, 2.1 and 2.6). All four theses were given a score around the pass mark (5.5), which

reaffirms the panel's recommendation to set a clear pass-fail line. Nevertheless the panel is confident that students have achieved the intended learning outcomes.

According to the data provided, graduates from the *bachelor's programme* who choose to stay at Erasmus University perform well in the master's programme Public Administration. This *master's programme* and the *Master of International Public Management and Public Policy* recently held a survey amongst their graduates (spring 2017). The results show that graduates have no difficulties in finding a job; around 10% found a permanent job straight away, and approximately 34% (master's programme PA) and 41% (IMP programme) immediately found a position with the prospect of a permanent job. The alumni to whom the panel talked felt that their programmes connected well with the job market. The subjects they dealt with during their master's studies were the same as they encountered at work. According to alumni, the programmes also tie in well with how local, national and international government now works.

Most graduates from the master's programme Public Administration end up working for the central government or for local municipalities (app. 50%), whereas the almost half of IMP-alumni end up working in the private sector. The graduates to whom the panel spoke confirm that it is hard to get into international public sector firms (one out of six graduates eventually manages to secure such a position), the competition is fierce and there are not many such jobs. Quite a few graduates are consultants to the public sector.

The panel concludes that the programmes are successful in adequately preparing students for a master's programme and for the professional field. This is seen as proof that the intended learning outcomes have indeed been achieved.

Considerations

The panel concludes that students of all three programmes have achieved the intended learning outcomes. Thesis topics are highly relevant, which is in line with the strong practice focus of the programmes. Nevertheless, the panel advises the bachelor's and master's programme Public Administration to pay specific attention to quality control of theses that score around the pass mark. To make sure that there is a realistic match between intended and achieved learning outcomes, the panel again stresses the need for all three programmes to formulate the intended learning outcomes in a more ambitious way. The success rate of the master's programmes is high (over 90%) and master's graduates have no difficulties in finding a job after graduation.

Conclusion

Bachelor's programme Public Administration: the panel assesses Standard 4 as 'satisfactory'.

Master's programme Public Administration: the panel assesses Standard 4 as 'satisfactory'.

Master's programme International Public Management and Public Policy: the panel assesses Standard 4 as 'satisfactory'.



Standard 5: External input

The content of a curriculum and the means of communication and teaching change over time. Flexibility, and the ability to innovate on the basis of adequate information on governance and teaching skills are important features of any educational programme, in order to meet the need of the students and the teaching staff. The programme provides evidence of an adequate process of curriculum development in which all relevant stakeholders are involved.

Findings**5.1 Curriculum development**

The programme innovates itself, and uses measures of quality in this process, such as summaries of course evaluations, exit interviews, graduate surveys and related information.

In the past six years, all three programmes have seen several changes (see Standard 1). These changes are most prominent in the bachelor's programme and the master's programme Public Administration. As described in more detail above (2.1) the *bachelor's programme* adopted a new didactic approach in the first year, introduced several learning lines (including an academic skills line), and introduced an English taught track in 2015/2016. The *master's programme Public Administration* now offers two English taught tracks. This allows the programme to attract international students and enables Dutch students to take electives within the English tracks. These changes were sparked by three developments: wider societal changes, recommendations made by the previous panel (2011) and the Midterm Review committee (2013), and the merger with the department of Sociology (2015). To improve the success rates and the time-to-degree, the master's programmes have initiated thesis circles.

All three programmes share one Programme Committee, which includes student representatives from each year of the bachelor's programme as well as representatives from both master's programmes and specialisations. The Programme Committee meets monthly. One of its tasks is to collect and discuss student evaluations, which can give valuable insights for curriculum development. The response rate of student evaluations is exceptionally high at 100%. This is because course evaluations are cleverly linked to online registration for exams. Another task of the Committee is to give advice on exam regulations. The Programme Committee thought these were too complex and wants to see if they can be simplified (see also 3.1). The Committee also wants to investigate whether the obligatory questionnaire for course evaluations can be shortened. Finally, the Committee deals with one-off cases, such as two exams that were scheduled for the same day in one of the programmes. One of the exams was subsequently moved.

The panel concludes that the Programme Committee is functioning adequately. It summarizes the results from course evaluations and provides teachers with useful feedback. The teachers then respond to the feedback online. Student requests brought forward by the Programme Committee are taken seriously. However, the panel also learned that students are not always aware of the role of the Programme Committee. Instead of contacting the Programme Committee when they encounter problems, they more often directly approach teachers. This is in line with the programmes' comment that the communication from the Programme Committee to the staff could be improved. The Programme Committee seems least well known amongst bachelor's students. The panel points out that it is in the programmes' interests that students understand what the Programme Committee is for and what role it has in improving the curriculum for future students. In this respect the panel also thinks it important to inform students about changes that are brought about as a result of their course evaluations - students mentioned to the panel that they do not know what happens with their feedback. The panel concludes that the communication regarding the Programme Committee can be improved.

When preparing for this assessment visit, the master's programmes conducted surveys amongst their graduates. Although the response rates were rather low (11% in the master's programme Public Administration and 15% in the IMP programme) these surveys can provide useful insights for

curriculum development. In addition, the IMP programme also holds annual meetings with a small number of alumni. The panel commends making the most of these contacts with alumni contacts, as well as with employers offering internships and hiring graduates. Unlike students, these 'outsiders' are able to have an oversight of the curriculum as a whole and judge how well it connects to their current professional field.

During the site visit, the panel asked in what way representatives from the professional field, such as internship companies and employers, are involved in reviewing and fine-tuning the curriculum. The programme management explained that there is an Advisory Board with representatives from the most important organisations where students work in both the public and private sector. This Board is regularly asked for feedback. Practitioners also give active input, for instance through master classes. The panel concludes that there are good links with the professional field. However, when it comes to curriculum review, the panel thinks that alumni and employers could be consulted in a more structured way. The employers to whom the panel talked were more than happy to cooperate in this way.

5.2 External reviews

The programme provides evidence that the recommendations received during previous reviews (by NVAO, EAPAA or any other (inter)national review body) have led to changes in the content or the organisation of the programme.

As mentioned above, the programme was reviewed twice in the past six years. Comments from the previous panel have been adopted, as well as those from the midterm review committee that visited the programmes in 2013. The panel praises the initiative of undertaking a midterm review. The changes that were made are outlined above (5.1). The self-evaluation reports also mention that the midterm review advised the programmes to strengthen their profile and to challenge the students more regarding their presenting and debating skills. This panel again concludes that the programmes' profiles could be stronger and that the level of challenge (at least in the bachelor's programme) could be increased.

Considerations

All three programmes have an adequate system of quality assurance in place. The response rate to course evaluations is high and these evaluations lead to continuous improvements to the programmes at course level. The programme reviews of 2011 and 2013 have been taken seriously and have led to numerous changes, the most prominent change being the start of three successful international tracks alongside the English IMP programme which was already being taught. The panel recommends asking alumni and employers for curriculum feedback. These external stakeholders can provide useful insights into strengths and weaknesses of the programmes.

Conclusion

Bachelor's programme Public Administration: the panel assesses Standard 5 as 'satisfactory'.

Master's programme Public Administration: the panel assesses Standard 5 as 'satisfactory'.

Master's programme International Public Management and Public Policy: the panel assesses Standard 5 as 'satisfactory'.

Standard 6: Diversity

Diversity among staff and students is one of the aims of the programme.

Findings

The panel has looked at the diversity of staff and students in terms of gender and nationality/ethnic background. The gender mix at student level is more or less balanced in all three programmes. At staff level, however, the number of female staff is low, especially beyond the level of UD (Universitair



Docent – Assistant Professor). There is only one female associate professor and one female full professor. During the site visit the programme management confirmed that they believe the gender balance is not how it should be. A new policy has been adopted that when new staff are being recruited, the selection committee has at least one female member. The programme management also pointed out that there is a large group of female PhD students, but that unfortunately they more often leave the programme compared to male PhD students. The programme management is investigating why this is and they are looking into ways of being an attractive employer for both male and female scholars.

All three programmes have a number of international students. In the IMP programme, approximately half of students come from abroad. The other two programmes have seen an increase in international students since the start of the English taught 'Management of Governance Networks' track in the master's programme in 2015/2016, the MISOC-track in the bachelor's programme (2016/2017) and the master's track 'Governance of Migration and Diversity' in that same year. In 2015/2016 no international students enrolled in the bachelor's programme, and 14 international students (out of a total of 191) enrolled in the master's programme Public Administration. The numbers in the self-evaluations are based on VSNU data. At the time of compiling the self-evaluation report, more recent data for 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 had not yet been provided. From talking to various groups of students, the panel concludes that since 2015/2016 the numbers of international students have gone up considerably. In the MISOC-track (about 60 students in year one, 47 students in year two) most of the students come from abroad, and the same is true for the two smaller English taught master's tracks (about 8% and 4% of enrolled master's students). Most international students come from other countries within the European Union. The international students to whom the panel talked said they felt sufficiently included, although they also noted that the student association is very much geared towards Dutch students. For that reason, international representatives are now trying to organise special events for international students. The panel also learned that the master's programme has recently appointed a student life officer for students from abroad. These developments are seen as signs that inclusion of international students matters.

Most of the teaching staff have a Dutch background. Again, the IMP programme is the exception. Here, the majority of teachers come from abroad. The panel concludes that this is in line with the international character and the intended learning outcomes of this programme. In all programmes, international teachers are best represented at the lower levels and least above UD-level. There is only one non-Dutch full professor in the bachelor's and master's programme Public Administration.

Considerations

All programmes strive for student and staff diversity. The panel agrees with the programme management that the gender imbalance, especially that among senior staff, urgently needs redressing. Apart from the policies the programme is already adopting (such as actively seeking to recruit female staff), the panel thinks strong commitment is needed to reach a better balance. Regarding internationalization, the panel is content to see that the programmes increasingly succeed in attracting international students. However, the number of non-EU students remains low. The panel believes that a higher number of students from outside the EU could further improve the quality of the programmes, as these students can bring in new ways of looking at national and international public administration topics.

Conclusion

Bachelor's programme Public Administration: the panel assesses Standard 6 as 'satisfactory'.

Master's programme Public Administration: the panel assesses Standard 6 as 'satisfactory'.

Master's programme International Public Management and Public Policy: the panel assesses Standard 6 as 'satisfactory'.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Conclusion

The panel assesses the *bachelor's programme Public Administration* as 'satisfactory'.

The panel assesses the *master's programme Public Administration* as 'satisfactory'.

The panel assesses the *master's programme International Public Management and Public Policy* as 'satisfactory'.

APPENDICES

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

Prof. dr. Tony Bovaird (chair) is emeritus professor of the University of Birmingham (United Kingdom). He has previously worked at Aston Business School and Bristol Business School. From 2012 he has held a visiting chair in Meiji University (Japan) and has been visiting professor at various universities and business schools in the UK and abroad, such as Copenhagen Business School, the University of Ghent, ESADE Barcelona and the University of St. Gallen. His research covers strategic management of public services, performance measurement in public agencies, evaluation of public management and governance reforms, and user and community co-production of public services. He has carried out research and has been involved in projects for, amongst others, the European Commission, several UK government departments and the Welsh Government. He is on the Governing Council of Local Areas Research and Intelligence Association (LARIA) and has been a member of the Strategy Board of the UK Research Councils' Local Government Initiative (LARCI) and the Local Government Reference Panel of the National Audit Office. He has given keynote speeches for several (inter)national annual conferences. Professor Bovaird is a member of the Editorial Board of the *International Public Management Journal* and co-author of *Public Management and Governance*. Professor Bovaird is a member of the Scientific Advisory Board of the German Institute for Public Administration Research and a non-executive director of Governance International.

Prof. dr. Harrie Eijkelhof studied experimental physics at Leiden University. He taught physics, agricultural science and general science at secondary schools in Amsterdam, Senanga (Zambia) and Leiden and has been in charge of six national curriculum projects in physics and science education. At the international level he participated in science education projects in Portugal (Ciencia Viva), Israel, Tanzania and Ghana, and in the projects Science Across the World and PRIMAS. At Utrecht University he has been head of the Science and Mathematics Teacher Training Department, in charge of bachelor's and master's programmes in Physics and Astronomy and vice-dean of the Faculty of Science. Between 1997 and 2011 he was professor of Physics Education and after his retirement between 2011 and 2014 director of the Freudenthal Institute for Science and Mathematics Education. Currently he is involved in various curriculum, professional development and quality assurance programmes. His research publications focus a.o. on concepts of ionizing radiation, curriculum development and PISA results.

Prof. dr. Adrian Ritz is professor for Public Management at the interdisciplinary centre for public management at the University of Bern in Switzerland where he teaches at the Faculty of Social Sciences and at the Faculty of Law. He is the delegate of the University Board of Directors for further education and the president of the university commission for further education. Furthermore, Ritz is the managing director of the Executive Master of Public Administration (MPA) and the Certificate of Advanced Studies in Public Management and Policy (CeMap) at the University of Bern. Adrian Ritz worked as research scholar at the University of Georgia, School of Public and International Affairs, Department of Public Administration and Policy, in Athens GA USA, and at Indiana University, School for Public and Environmental Affairs, in Bloomington IN USA. He is a member of the Accreditation Committee of the European Association for Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA). Currently, Ritz serves as President of the Scientific Commission for Public, Non-profit, and Health Management (WK ÖBWL) of the German Academic Association for Business Research (VHB). Ritz is editorial board member of the *International Review of Administrative Sciences (IRAS)* and his research has been published in all major Public Administration journals. His activities in consulting and applied research for public institutions take place at all federal levels of Switzerland.

Drs. Cees Vermeer studied Law and Public Administration at Leiden University and has a special interest in connecting tasks, people and results and combining system reality with life reality; all to the benefit of the development of organisations. He is and has been active in several different organisations in the public domain: he has worked as corporate director of the city of Leiden (2007-2010), director of The Netherlands Court of Audit (2000-2006); has been a member of the managing



board of Rijkswaterstaat (part of the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, 1995-2000); and has been director of personnel management at the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (1993-1995). Since 2015 he works as the town clerk for the city of Breda, and previously fulfilled this role at the city of Zaanstad (2010-2015).

Prof. dr. Esther Versluis is professor of European Regulatory Governance at Maastricht University. She obtained her PhD in 2003 from Utrecht University and was awarded the Van Poelje prize for best PhD dissertation in the field of public administration for her dissertation on 'Enforcement Matters. Enforcement and Compliance of European Directives in Four Member States'. Since 2001 she is involved with education at Maastricht University, first as lecturer, as assistant professor and since 2015 as professor. She was member and chair of the Faculty Council and chair of the Graduate Program Committee Arts & Culture. Until 2014 she was director of Studies master programme European Public Affairs and is currently director of Studies of the bachelor's programme European Studies. In 2015 she was awarded the Best PhD supervisor of the year-award by the Netherlands Institute of Government. Professor Versluis' research concentrates on problems and complexities related to European regulatory governance. She is an active member of the Netherlands Institute of Government (NIG), the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR), the European Union Studies Association (EUSA) and the University Association for Contemporary European Studies (UACES).

Sophie van Wijngaarden is master student of the programme SEPAM (MSc Systems Engineering, Policy Analysis and Management) at the Delft University of Technology. She obtained her BSc Technische Bestuurskunde also at the Delft University of Technology. Her research focuses on transport and logistics. From 2015 to 2017 she was an active member and treasurer for the Study association S.V.T.B. Curius, and vice-president of the 1-2-STARTUP Weekend Committee 2016 for the organisation YES!Delft Students in Delft.

APPENDIX 2: DOMAIN-SPECIFIC FRAMEWORK OF REFERENCE

Domain-specific requirements Public Administration, Public Governance, and Governance and Organisation (PAGO) Programmes, 2010

Introduction

The study of public administration has developed and expanded into a broad interdisciplinary body of knowledge, which tackles a variety of themes and practices on public administration, governance and organisation (PAGO). The academic community in the Netherlands acknowledges that throughout the years this field has widened and now includes not only public administration but also governance and organisation. This entails a diversity of approaches on the one hand, but on the other, the conviction that these approaches are connected and interrelated and worthwhile to keep together. Programmes may share basic components, but also may differ to express their specialisation in this broadened field. This parallels developments in the profession. Alumni are increasingly challenged in a wide variety of fields that put varying demands regarding professional knowledge, skills and attitudes. In this frame of reference we will address this field as the PAGO-field: including public administration, public governance, and governance and organisation.

In this domain-specific frame of reference we start with a brief summary regarding the development of the PAGO-field and argue that the broadening of the field is due to various exogenous and endogenous changes. Accordingly we will outline the programme principles of PAGO-studies as well as related learning outcomes.

Developments

The societal impact of processes like globalisation, individualization and ICT has altered the nature of public problems. Issues like risk and security, environment and ecology, economics and welfare, and nationality and culture are high on the societal and political agenda. The impact of such problems has consequences for the abilities of (national) governments. It challenges them to reach beyond traditional approaches. This has led to manifold changes in political and administrative landscapes. New expectations and demands are expressed towards politics and administration, including moral standards. New criteria for performance have emerged that aim at 'value for money', new businesslike concepts of management, and reformed public service delivery. There have been new interpretations of democracy and accountability, and of relations between state, civil society and the market.

Government and public administration not only changed its own practices, it also changed its relationship with society. Public administration thus moved towards governance, i.e. dealing with public problems through dispersed networks of organisations and actors, including social institutions, non-governmental organisations (NGO's), and private companies. Government and public policy are still relevant, but new outlooks and mechanisms are designed and used to make things work.

These developments have also changed the field of study of PA. Scholars started to use new concepts to understand developments, broadening categories such as 'government-governance', and crossing boundaries between the public and private world. These concepts include focused attention to issues like interdependence, ambiguity, networks, contextuality, governance, and the role of institutions, trust and integrity. These developments invited researchers to cross disciplinary borders and take aboard theories, concepts, methods and ideas, from organisation studies (structure, culture, management, strategy, networks, et cetera) as well as other bodies of knowledge (new fields within economics, political science and sociology, communication theory, ethics and philosophy, geography, international relations and law, et cetera).

Another issue that needs to be highlighted is that the study of Public Administration in the Netherlands includes several fields that elsewhere are situated in political science. The PAGO-studies not only focus on classical PA issues, but also on public organisation and management issues, as well as on subfields like 'public policy', 'policy making', 'public governance', 'public culture and ethics'.



Scholars of these issues are part of the broad 'PA' community, in research as well as in educational programmes.

Resulting Fields of Study

This PAGO-community consists of three fields of study. The first embodies the classical features of the discipline, concentrating on politics, administration and the public sector. Public administration often started within the context of (departments of) politics and/or law, with an emphasis on the study of government and bureaucracy as well as public policy-making and implementation.

The second emerged through the fact that public interests and public problems are increasingly tackled by a multitude of public and private actors. It broadened the scope of study to include nongovernmental actors, as part of the often complex public-private, multi-actor networks that deal with collective and public interests.

The third field focuses on questions of governance and organisation that surpass the traditional public-private boundaries. It includes the study of private actors in social contexts. This orientation links the worlds of business administration and public administration and pays attention to what we know about management, strategy and behaviour in corporations. This approach can be labelled as 'governance and organisation'.

PAGO today is a broad multi- and interdisciplinary field of science. The classical core disciplines of political science, law, sociology and economics are important, and there is an increasing involvement of disciplines that focus on organisation, culture, and communication. Also, challenging new interchanges with bodies of knowledge in (for example) social and organisational psychology, planning studies and geography, philosophy and ethics and history have demonstrated added value.

The PAGO-community acknowledges that there are different views regarding object and focus of the field of study. For instance: is PAGO about knowledge by description, explanation and prediction, or is evaluation and improvement the prime goal? Or, how do we relate to and communicate with practitioners in public (and private) administration, governance and organisation? Rather than excluding certain views, the PAGO-community welcomes a variety in approaches, ideas and outlook. This variety is also visible in the PAGO-programmes.

Defining programme principles

PAGO-programmes are academic programmes aiming at the development of academic knowledge, skills and attitude in students that are relevant for understanding public administration, governance and organisation. They pay particular attention to social and political contexts and developments, relevant (interdisciplinary) bodies of knowledge, aim at developing research capacities, and contribute to working professionally in public and private domains. In this frame of reference we have listed elements that are to be seen as building blocks for academic programmes. As far as knowledge is concerned, contemporary programmes encompass various disciplinary views supporting the PAGO-domain, and various sorts of domain-specific knowledge. As far as skills are concerned, they encompass skills for applying and reflecting on scientific methods and approaches, integrating knowledge and skills for working in public domains/organisations. As far as attitude is concerned, it encompasses critical stances and moral stature. Each of these subfields is briefly elaborated in order to circumscribe specific learning outcomes at Bachelor and Master levels (see next paragraph).

Knowledge

Knowledge of society and changing contexts

Activities in public domains influence, are influenced by, and interact with social systems and developments. On the one hand, they constrain public sectors, as they reproduce values, traditions and culture(s). On the other hand, they call for public action; (new) facts, events and problems, fuelled by new technologies, pose new challenges. PAGO-programmes enhance understandings of

social structures and behaviours, societal trends and changes. This calls for an awareness of political, sociological, cultural, historical, philosophical, ethical, economic and judicial contexts.

Knowledge of political and administrative systems

The organisation, processes and activities in public domains are shaped by and within political systems. PAGO-programmes should devote attention to the institutions, structure, organisation and activities of such political systems, at different levels (local, regional, national, transnational). PAGO-programmes encompass political and social theories, including those regarding legitimacy and the democratic design and functioning of organisations in public domains. They also pay attention to the application of these theories in everyday practice.

Knowledge of (public) policy, decision making and implementation

Governance for societal problems includes many insights derived from various bodies of knowledge, ranging from high-level decision-making to everyday service delivery. PAGO-programmes address both classic and contemporary theories, methods and techniques of policy-making, management, decision-making, and their implementation in everyday practice.

Knowledge of organisations and organising principles

Public domains entail a variety of organisations, some organised as classical government bodies, some as between the public and private sectors, while others have been influenced by and/or have taken on the characteristics of private organisations. There is a growing awareness that policies and service delivery must be organised and require well-trained and motivated professionals. This leads to a more explicit emphasis on organisational studies. PAGO programmes entail knowledge of organisational concepts/perspectives on organising, domains of managerial activities, insights in organisational change and management tools.

Knowledge of governance and networks

The powers and authorities to intervene have become less governmental and more distributed. Due to organisational fragmentation, the rise of network relations, and the spread of (normative) governance models – e.g., 'joined up government', 'public-private partnerships', and 'corporate social responsibility' (CSR) – multiple parties have become active in dealing with public problems and representing public interests. PAGO-programmes pay attention to new relations and new governance regimes, having both theoretical and empirical consequences.

Skills

Research skills

The role of knowledge in (public) policies and organisations is crucial for its effectiveness, especially for understanding the complexity of contexts, structures, outcomes and behaviours. PAGO-programmes include methods of quantitative and qualitative social-scientific research to analyse and also emphasise a clear understanding of contextual aspects.

Integrative skills

Public domains can be analysed from different angles; theories are grounded in various disciplines. The quality of research and capacities of civil servants and other functionaries in public domains depend on integrative skills, i.e. abilities to combine, integrate and apply different bodies of knowledge. PAGO-programmes devote attention to and provide opportunities to practice integrative skills.

Cooperation and communication skills

The functioning of the public domain largely depends on the skills of actors to exchange ideas, to negotiate when necessary, and to cooperate in constructive ways. Civil servants and other functionaries use a repertoire of skills and attitudes to communicate ideas to audiences of experts as well as laymen. Cooperation is at the heart of PAGO and includes a sense of responsibility and leadership. PAGO-programmes devote attention to and provide opportunities to practice cooperative and communicative skills.



Attitude

Critical stances

PAGO programmes are academic programmes that not only facilitate cognitive learning and skill development, they also develop critical powers. Students are taught how to critically analyze arguments used by others, how to relate 'fashionable' statements, e.g. by politicians, to more traditional as well as to scientific insights, and how to reflect upon political and normative implications of policy choices and organisational design. PAGO-programmes devote attention to the development of a constructive, critical attitude.

Moral stature and professionalism

The eloquence and credibility of PAGO has two features. First is its ability to approach societal problems in effective ways, but second is the degree to which government and governance principles serves as a moral compass. PAGO-programmes train students in this respect for occupying positions in governance regimes (public and private), they also train students in developing appropriate or 'professional' conduct. This is a matter of guarding values, such as accountability and integrity, and of practicing values, such as entrepreneurship and innovation.

Academic learning outcomes for PAGO studies

The broad fields identified and circumscribed in the above are to be seen as programme criteria and, thus, as the building blocks of a programme. Each programme will emphasize a specific selection of these building blocks to impose specific learning outcomes on students. In the table below we list such learning outcomes. This is a generic list, both applicable for bachelor and master programmes.

The difference between both studies is in the degree of complexity; in the level of analysis; and in the independence of the student. Here we follow the distinctions made in the so-called Dublin descriptors. In this system a distinction is made between first cycle learning for bachelors and second cycle learning for masters. First cycle learning involves an introduction to the field of study. It aims at the acquisition and understanding of knowledge, ideas, methods and theories, elementary research activities, and basic skills regarding communication and learning competences. At second cycle learning we find a deeper understanding of knowledge; problem solving skills are developed for new and unexpected environments and broader contexts. Here students can apply knowledge in various environments. At the master level we also expect a well-developed level of autonomy regarding the direction and choices in a study.

In generic bachelor PAGO-programmes most of the learning outcomes will apply that are listed below. Master programmes, however, usually have a much stronger thematic focus and may especially focus on a particular set of these learning outcomes that are best suited for that specialisation, but not covering all the learning outcomes listed below. We propose that the learning outcomes for the bachelor level, apply for the master level in the sense that students demonstrate that they are capable of:

- dealing with increased situational, theoretical and methodological complexity;
- demonstrating increased levels of autonomy and self-management;
- applying ideas, methods, theories in research and problem solving;
- mastering the complexity that is inherent to the field of specialisation.

In the table below we have organised the learning outcomes according to the Dublin descriptors. We present the main components of the Dublin descriptors in italics, and accordingly the proposed learning outcomes.

Knowledge and understanding

1 (Bachelor) [Is] supported by advanced text books [with] some aspects informed by knowledge at the forefront of their field of study

2 (Master) provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing or applying ideas often in a research context

- (Basic) knowledge of (changing) societal contexts
- (Basic) knowledge and understanding of the distinctive nature of organisation, policy making, management, service delivery and governance in PAGO domains
- (Basic) awareness of political traditions and politics
- (Basic) knowledge and understanding of the discipline, PAGO-paradigms, intellectual tradition, theories and approaches
- (Basic) knowledge and understanding of multi-actor and multi-level concepts
- A general (basic) understanding regarding the dynamics and processes of actors in public domains, how these processes influence society and vice versa

Applying knowledge and understanding

1 (Bachelor) [through] devising and sustaining arguments

2 (Master) [through] problem solving abilities [applied] in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts

- (Basic) capacity to work at different levels of abstraction
- (Basic) skills in problem definition and problem solving in the PAGO domain
- (Basic) ability to distinguish normative preferences and empirical evidence
- (Basic) skills in combining, integrating and applying knowledge
- (Basic) insight into the scientific practice
- (Basic) capacity to select a suitable theoretical framework for a given empirical problem
- (Basic) skills in combining normative and empirical aspects
- (Basic) capacity to build arguments and reflect upon the arguments of others
- (Basic) awareness of relevant social, ethical, academic and practical issues

Making judgments

1 (Bachelor) [involves] gathering and interpreting relevant data

2 (Master) [demonstrates] the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements with incomplete data

- (Basic) ability to formulate research questions on problems in the PAGO-domain
- (Basic) knowledge regarding research on social-scientific positions and thinking
- (Basic) training in and application of quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods social science research
- (Basic) abilities to collect data and to derive judgments thereof

Communication

1 (Bachelor) [of] information, ideas, problems and solutions

2 (Master) [of] their conclusions and the underpinning knowledge and rationale (restricted scope) to specialist and non specialist audiences (monologue)

- (Basic) capacity to use argumentative skills effectively
- (Basic) capacity to function in multi- and interdisciplinary teams in several roles
- (Basic) capacity to function effectively in governance, organisation, management, policy and advocacy settings
- (Basic) capacity to use communicative skills effectively in oral and written presentation



Learning skills

1 (Bachelor) have developed those skills needed to study further with a high level of autonomy

2 (Master) study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous

- Learning attitude
- (Basic) capacity to reflect upon one's own conceptual and professional capacities and conduct

APPENDIX 3: INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Bachelor programme Public Administration

A graduate with a Bachelor degree in Public Administration

1. has demonstrable knowledge of and insights into public administration concepts and theories;
2. has demonstrable knowledge of and insights into adjacent fields of studies such as sociology, political science, economics and law;
3. has demonstrable insights into the nature, causes and consequences of societal phenomena;
4. is able to design, carry out and assess public administration research;
5. is able to apply various public administration concepts and theories with a view to understanding social phenomena;
6. is able to apply acquired public administration knowledge and insights to practical situations;
7. is able to collect data in order to form a judgement and provide advice in which relevant professional, ethical and academic interests are integrated;
8. is able to recognise and reflect on normative dilemmas;
9. is able to distinguish between empirical analysis and normative statements;
10. is able to function as a broker between values and interests such as those existing in heterogeneous teams;
11. is able to use academic standards to report on public administration problems and research results to a variety of target groups;
12. is able to reflect on individual learning strategies and acquired skills;
13. has developed learning skills to make a substantiated choice for continued professionalisation, such as in selecting a continued programme at Master level.

Master programme Public Administration

A Master graduate in public administration:

1. Has profound insights into the dynamic processes at play in society and government and the ways in which these processes influence one another.
2. Has profound knowledge and insight into sub-areas or aspects of public administration and corresponding paradigms and theories.
3. Is able to select, identify and analyse theoretical frameworks in approaching complex public administration issues.
4. Is able to independently deploy methods and techniques in combination with theory in order to analyse, assess and report on public administration problems with a view to contributing to possible solutions.
5. Has insight into normative aspects of policy and management issues in the public domain, in particular the ethics of public governance.
6. Is able to independently advise on organisational, management and policy issues;
7. is able to function as a broker between values and interests such as those existing in heterogeneous environments in order to resolve so-called wicked problems.
8. Is able to apply acquired theories and concepts in practice to one or several relevant areas of public administration, such as management, organisation and policy.
9. Has argumentative and communicative skills for reporting independently and critically on complex issues in the public domain.
10. Has developed learning skills that enable him or her to commence a new programme of study in an independent and autonomous manner or to operate at an academic level in the public sector or its immediate surroundings.

Master programme International Public Management and Public Policy

After completing the programme, the student:

1. Has profound knowledge and understanding of international public management and policy and the corresponding disciplines and theories.
2. Has a profound understanding of the causes and consequences of the process of internationalisation of public management and policy.
3. Has the capacity to identify and apply relevant concepts and theories to describe, explain,



evaluate and remedy new problems of international public management and policy.

4. Is able to apply social science research methods to reliably and validly describe and explain international public management and policy problems.

5. Is able to make evidence-based recommendations about problems of international public management and policy in a self-directed way.

6. Has the ability to distinguish normative preferences and empirical analysis and can formulate reasoned assessment about their mutual relationship.

7. Possesses elaborate argumentative, communication and reporting skills to report clearly, independently and critically about problems of international public management and policy.

APPENDIX 4: OVERVIEW OF THE CURRICULUM

Bachelor programme Public Administration

EUR bachelor programme Public Administration (Dutch track) as started 2015/2016 with B1

	Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4	Block 5	Block 6	Block 7	Block 8
B1	Public administration: societal problems and administrative solutions 6	Introduction Sociology for public Administration 6	Design of social science research 6	Quantitative methods 6	Public Policy 6	Organisation and Management 6	Economics: wealth and distribution 6	Law and regulation 6
	Academic skills (practical) 1,5	Academic reading and writing (practical) 1,5	Research design (practical) 1,5	SPSS (practical) 1,5	Writing (practical) 1,5	Interviewing (practical) 1,5	Presentation (practical) 1,5	Project management (practical) 1,5
B2	Political Science 6	Network Governance 6	HRM, leadership and Performance 6	Internship 15		Qualitative methods 6	Research project 15	
	Writing and argumentation (practical) 1,5	Negotiation (practical) 1,5	Professional conduct (practical) 1,5			Qualitative data analysis (practical) 1,5		
B3	Minor 15		Technology, Policy & Society 7,5	Global & European Governance 7,5	Political philosophy and democracy 7,5	Management Consultancy and Policy Advice 7,5	Bachelor thesis 15	

MISOC curriculum (introduced in 2016 for B1)

	Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4	Block 5	Block 6	Block 7	Block 8
B1	Globalisation and Society I 6	Globalisation and Society II 6	Design of social science research 6	Quantitative methods 6	Public Policy 6	Organisation and Management 6	Economics: wealth and distribution 6	Law and regulation 6
	Academic skills (practical) 1,5	Academic reading and writing (practical) 1,5	Research design (practical) 1,5	SPSS (practical) 1,5	Writing (practical) 1,5	Interviewing (practical) 1,5	Presentation (practical) 1,5	Project management (practical) 1,5
B2	Political Science 6	Network Governance 6	International Migration 6	Global and European Governance 7,5	Political philosophy and democracy 7,5	Qualitative methods 6	Qualitative and quantitative research project 15	
	Writing and argumentation (practical) 1,5	Negotiation (practical) 1,5	Professional conduct (practical) 1,5			Qualitative data analysis (practical) 1,5		
B3	Minor 15		Technology, Policy & Society 7,5	Public Leadership 7,5	Institutionalism and the public sector 7,5	Management Consultancy and Policy Advice 7,5	Bachelor thesis 15	



Master programme Public Administration

	Policy & Politics (BP)	Governance & Management of Complex Systems (GMCS)	Public Management (PM)	Management of HR & Change (MHRV)
Block 1	Policy Innovation in Complex Systems*			
	Policy Dynamics and Issue Management		Strategic Public Management	Strategic HRM
	Designing and Evaluating Policy	Dynamic in Complex Systems	Financial Management	Change Management
	Atelier BP	Atelier GMCS	Atelier PM	Atelier MHRV
Block 2	Public management and leadership			
	Media, governance and politics **	Managing interactive governance**	Professional Consultancy	HRM in the Public Sector
	ELECTIVE			
	Atelier BP	Atelier GMCS	Atelier PM	Atelier MHRV
Block 3	Internship/Thesis **			
	M&T seminar			
	Internship/Thesis**			
Block 4	Atelier BP	Atelier GMCS	Atelier PM	Atelier MHRV

* Courses count for 5 ECTS. Atelier 5 ECTS in total
 ** English language, shared with MGN
 *** Students embark on an internship (10 ECTS) and work in parallel on the thesis (15 ECTS)

Specialisation Management of Governance Networks

	Courses	ECTS
Block 1	Dilemmas of modern Governance	5
	Policy Innovation in complex systems	5
	Designing effective governance institutions	5
	Governance Lab (continues in block 2 and 3)	1
Block 2	Managing interactive governance *	5
	Media, governance and politics **	5
	International Public Management***	5
Block 3	Elective****	5
	Project Analysing a governance process)	2
	Research design	2
	Master thesis	5
Block 4	Master thesis	15

* Shared with GMCS, ** Shared with BP, *** Shared with IMP, **** Electives shared with the IMP programme,

Evening specialisation (mid-career professionals)

Year 1

	Courses	ECTS
Year 1	Exploration	6
	Policy	8
	Organisation and Behaviour in the Public Domain	8
	Research Practical	6
	Public Law	6
	Economics, Policy and Management Control	8
	Government and Information Society	6
	Administration and Democracy	6
	European Governance and International Comparison	6
	International Summer school	Optional

Year 2

	Courses	ECTS	Thesis trajectory:	ECTS
Year 2			<i>Research Practical</i>	5
			<i>Seminars</i> <i>Thesis groups</i>	
	Steering in the Public Sector	10		
			<i>Seminars</i> <i>Thesis groups</i>	
	Public Management and Organisational Change	10		
			<i>Seminars</i> <i>Thesis groups</i>	
	Society and Policy	10		
			<i>Thesis groups</i>	
	The Public Administration Professional	10		
			<i>Thesis</i>	15

Specialisation Governance of Migration and Diversity

Block	Joint courses			Public Administration courses
Block 1	Governance of Migration and Diversity (EUR, 5 ECTS)	History of Migration and Diversity (Leiden, 5 ECTS)	Sociology of Migration and Diversity (EUR, 5 ECTS)	Comparative Public Policy (EUR, 5 ECTS)
Block 2			Politics of Migration and Diversity (EUR, 5 ECTS)	Media, Governance and Politics (EUR, 5 ECTS)
Block 3	Migration & Development (ISS-EUR, 5 ECTS)	Social Inequality in the City, Diversity and Design (Delft, 5 ECTS)		The Governance of Social Risks (EUR, 5 ECTS)
Block 4				Thesis (EUR, 15 ECTS)

Master programme International Public Management and Public Policy

Period	Course Name	ECTS
Block 1	Global Governance	5
	Comparative Public Policy	5
	EU Policy-Making	5
Block 2	International Organisations and Development	5
	International Public Management	5
	Europe in the World	5
Block 3	Professional Development I: Research Design	2.5
	Professional Development II: Preparation Labour Market	2.5
	Elective	5
	Final Research Project	5
Block 4	Final Research Project	15

APPENDIX 5: PROGRAMME OF THE SITE VISIT

B Public Administration (BSK)

M Public Administration (PA)

M International Public Management and Public Policy (IMP)

Sun 26 nov

16.30 - 19.00 Starting session panel

Mon 27 nov

08.45 - 09.00 Arrival, welcome
09.00 - 09.45 Panel consultation
09.45 - 10.45 **Programme management**
10.45 - 11.00 Break
11.00 - 11.45 **Students BSK**
11.45 - 12.00 Break
12.00 - 12.30 **Teachers BSK**
12.30 - 13.15 Internal consultation (incl. lunch)
13.15 - 14.00 **Students PA (incl alumni BSK)**
14.00 - 14.15 Break
14.15 - 14.45 **Teachers PA**
14.45 - 15.00 Break
15.00 - 15.30 **Teachers IMP**
15.30 - 15.45 Break
15.45 - 16.30 **Students IMP**
16.30 - 16.45 Break
16.45 - 17.30 **Alumni and employers PA + IMP**
17.30 - 18.00 Internal consultation

Tue 28 nov

08.30 - 09.00 Arrival, internal consultation
09.00 - 09.45 **Board of Examiners**
09.45 - 10.30 Internal consultation
10.30 - 11.30 **Concluding session programme management**
11.30 - 13.30 Internal assessment panel (incl. lunch)
13.30 - 13.45 Oral presentation
13.45 - 14.00 Break
14.00 - 15.00 **Development conversation**



APPENDIX 6: THESES AND DOCUMENTS STUDIED BY THE PANEL

Prior to the site visit, the panel studied 10 theses of the bachelor's programme Public Administration, 15 theses of the master's programme Public Administration and 10 theses of the master's programme International Public Management and Public Policy. The associated student numbers are available through QANU upon request.

During the site visit, the panel studied, among other things, the following documents:

- Electronic environment with course information on all courses in each of the three programmes
- Literature, assignments (incl. feedback) and student evaluations of a selection of three courses per programme
- Assessment protocol Public Administration and Sociology
- Annual report Educational Committee
- Annual report Board of Examiners
- Overview BSA (Bindend Studie Advies) for the period '11-'12 to '16-'17
- Report of a work group on master assessment in the department of Public Administration and Sociology
- Overview of compensated courses in the first bachelor year of the public administration track and MISOC track
- Information on the block meetings