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Summary

BSc Management, Society and Technology (MST)

This evaluation concerns a three-year full-time programme of 180 EC taught in English. The programme stands out in the Dutch higher education landscape of public administration as it is offered by a social sciences faculty at a university of technology. MST educates students to contribute - from the perspective of public administration - to finding solutions to the grand societal challenges through the integration of knowledge and technology in the fields of public policy, public management, and public governance. The profile, mission and objectives of the programme align with the domain-specific reference framework PAGO. The intended learning outcomes are built around relevant pillars and their formulation does justice to the content, level and orientation of the programme.

Located at the border with Germany, there is extensive co-operation with the University of Münster. After their first year of Political Science, students from Münster can join the second-year of MST and graduate with a joint degree from both universities. According to the panel, there is a well-motivated rationale for offering the MST programme in English.

The teaching-learning environment is strong. The curriculum is coherent and feasible. The module contents have been strengthened since the previous accreditation. They align with the mission and profile of the programme and allow students to acquire the intended learning outcomes. Students play a central role in the programmes and are supported in academic, practical and personal terms. The work of the study adviser is to be commended. The teaching staff combine substantive, methodological and research expertise with educational and linguistic qualifications. Their enthusiasm, commitment and availability make the student-centred educational philosophy a reality.

The programme has a robust assessment system, which is embedded in the provisions and policies of the faculty and the university. The programme assessment plan connects the programme learning outcomes and the module learning goals, and demonstrates that the course assessments test all learning goals and programme learning outcomes. Since the previous accreditation, the thesis assessment procedures were enhanced. A sample review showed that the final scores reflect the quality of the respective theses and that assessors complete each evaluation form in an insightful way. The provisions for assessment quality assurance are comprehensive: the MST programme is in competent hands with the Examination Board.

Students who eventually graduate the MST programme have achieved all learning outcomes. Based on its sample review, the panel thinks that - compared to the previous visit - the thesis scores are now much more adequate; in fact, they aligned in all cases with the appreciation of the panel. The acquired competencies allow MST graduates to pursue master programmes at the University of Twente , elsewhere in the Netherlands, and abroad.

Diversity is on the radar of the programme, the faculty and the university. The university policy focussing on diversity, equity and inclusion provides a useful framework for concrete grassroot initiatives from all staff and students. The MST programme shows proper diversity in gender and nationality of students and staff.

The panel's overall assessment of the MST programme is positive. Nonetheless, it identified a few areas where there is room for improvement. The programme may want to:
- enhance its communication on the programme profile emphasising that MST is essentially about public administration in society and technology;

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- articulate its distinguishing features in the curriculum making (even) more use of the technological opportunities on campus;
- market its intrinsically international profile and orientation to international students beyond Münster – national authorities permitting;
- revitalize the previously existing professional field committee;
- build an alumni network and involve alumni more systematically.

MSc Public Administration (PA)

This evaluation concerns a one-year full-time programme of 60 EC taught in English. The programme stands out in the Dutch higher education landscape of public administration as it is offered by a social sciences faculty at a university of technology. PA students learn to analyse and evaluate the current societal and technological challenges - and to design relevant solutions for these challenges - from a public administration perspective. The profile, mission and objectives of the programme align with the domain-specific reference framework PAGO. The intended learning outcomes are built around relevant pillars and their formulation does justice to the content, level and orientation of the programme.

In addition to acquiring an advanced disciplinary core in public administration, students specialise in a domain profile that reflects the research strengths of the university. Topics are inherently multidisciplinary and international. Located at the border with Germany, the programme attracts a significant number of German and other international students. According to the panel, there is a well-motivated rationale for offering the PA programme in English.

The teaching-learning environment is strong. The curriculum is coherent and feasible. The course contents have been strengthened since the previous accreditation. They align with the mission and profile of the programme and allow students to acquire the intended learning outcomes. Students play a central role in the programmes and are supported in academic, practical and personal terms. The work of the study adviser is to be commended. The teaching staff combine substantive, methodological and research expertise with educational and linguistic qualifications. Their enthusiasm, commitment and availability make the student-centred educational philosophy a reality.

The programme has a robust assessment system, which is embedded in the provisions and policies of the faculty and the university. The programme assessment plan connects the programme learning outcomes and the course learning goals, and demonstrates that the course assessments test all learning goals and programme learning outcomes. Since the previous accreditation, the thesis assessment procedures were enhanced. A sample review showed that the final scores reflect the quality of the respective theses and that assessors complete each evaluation form in an insightful way. The provisions for assessment quality assurance are comprehensive: the PA programme is in competent hands with the Examination Board.

Students who eventually graduate the PA programme have achieved all learning outcomes. Based on its sample review, the panel thinks that - compared to the previous visit - the thesis scores are now much more adequate; in fact, they aligned in all cases with the appreciation of the panel. The PA programme constitutes an important lever for the career of its graduates who invariably find a job that is commensurate with their level and specialization.

Diversity is on the radar of the programme, the faculty and the university. The university policy focussing on diversity, equity and inclusion provides a useful framework for concrete grassroot initiatives from all staff and students. The PA programme shows proper diversity in gender and nationality of students and staff.

The panel's overall assessment of the PA programme is positive. Nonetheless, it identified a few areas where there is room for improvement. The programme may want to:

- enhance its communication on the programme profile emphasising that PA students can opt for a wealth of relevant and unique domain profiles;
- adjust the contents of the pre-master programme;
- market its intrinsically international profile and orientation to international students beyond Münster – national authorities permitting;
- revitalize the previously existing professional field committee;
- build an alumni network and involve alumni more systematically.

MSc European Studies (ES)

This evaluation concerns a one-year full-time programme of 60 EC taught in English. The programme stands out in the Dutch higher education landscape of public administration as it is offered by a social sciences faculty at a university of technology. Students learn to analyse and evaluate the current societal and technological challenges - and to design relevant solutions for these challenges - from a European Studies perspective looking at European and global solutions. The profile, mission and objectives of the programme align with the domain-specific reference framework PAGO. The intended learning outcomes are built around relevant pillars and their formulation does justice to the content, level and orientation of the programme.

Located at the border with Germany, there is extensive co-operation with the University of Münster. After a first semester in Twente, students can opt to pursue a two-year dual degree that includes a study period in Münster. ES course topics are inherently multidisciplinary and international and reflect the research strengths of the university. According to the panel, there is a well-motivated rationale for offering the ES programme in English.

The teaching-learning environment is strong. The curriculum is coherent and feasible. The course contents have been strengthened since the previous accreditation. They align with the mission and profile of the programme and allow students to acquire the intended learning outcomes. Students play a central role in the programmes and are supported in academic, practical and personal terms. The work of the study adviser is to be commended. The teaching staff combine substantive, methodological and research expertise with educational and linguistic qualifications. Their enthusiasm, commitment and availability make the student-centred educational philosophy a reality.

The programme has a robust assessment system, which is embedded in the provisions and policies of the faculty and the university. The programme assessment plan connects the programme learning outcomes and the module learning goals, and demonstrates that the course assessments test all learning goals and programme learning outcomes. Since the previous accreditation, the thesis assessment procedures were enhanced. A sample review showed that the final scores reflect the quality of the respective theses and that assessors complete each evaluation form in an insightful way. The provisions for assessment quality assurance are comprehensive: the ES programme is in competent hands with the Examination Board.

Students who eventually graduate the ES programme have achieved all learning outcomes. Based on its sample review, the panel thinks that - compared to the previous visit - the thesis scores are now much more adequate; in fact, they aligned in all cases with the appreciation of the panel. The master programme constitutes an important lever for the career of its graduates who invariably find a job that is commensurate with their level and specialization.

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Diversity is on the radar of the programme, the faculty and the university. The university policy focussing on diversity, equity and inclusion provides a useful framework for concrete grassroot initiatives from all staff and students. The ES programme shows proper diversity in gender and nationality of students and staff.

The panel's overall assessment of the ES programme is positive. Nonetheless, it identified a few areas where there is room for improvement. The programme may want to:

- enhance its communication on the programme profile emphasising that ES is 'not your average foundational European Studies degree';
- articulate the distinguishing features in the curriculum by sharpening the coherence among courses regarding international contents;
- adjust the contents of the pre-master programme;
- market its intrinsically international profile and orientation to international students – national authorities permitting;
- revitalize the previously existing professional field committee;
- build an alumni network and involve alumni more systematically.

Score table

The panel assesses the programmes as follows:

B Management, Society and Technology

Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes	meets the standard
Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment	meets the standard
Standard 3: Student assessment	meets the standard
Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes	meets the standard
Standard 5: Diversity	meets the standard
General conclusion	positive

M Public Administration

Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes	meets the standard
Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment	meets the standard
Standard 3: Student assessment	meets the standard
Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes	meets the standard
Standard 5: Diversity	meets the standard
General conclusion	positive

M European Studies

Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes	meets the standard
Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment	meets the standard
Standard 3: Student assessment	meets the standard
Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes	meets the standard
Standard 5: Diversity	meets the standard
General conclusion	positive

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.

Prof. Andrew Massey   Mark Delmartino
Chair   Secretary

Date: 16 February 2024

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Introduction

Procedure

Assessment

On 8 and 9 November 2023, an independent peer review panel visited the Faculty of Behavioural, Management & Social Sciences (BMS) at the University of Twente (UT) to assess the quality of three degree programmes: the BSc Management, Society and Technology, the MSc Public Administration, and the MSc European Studies. This visit is part of the cluster assessment Public Administration, involving 20 degree programmes at eight higher education institutions across the Netherlands. The assessment followed the procedure and standards described in the NVAO-EAPAA agreement signed on 18 May 2021. Programmes and institutions participating in this cluster assessment want to obtain accreditation by both the Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Body (NVAO) and the European Association for Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA).

On request of the cluster Public Administration, quality assurance agency Academion coordinated the assessment of the different programmes. It composed the peer review panel in cooperation with the institutions taking into account the expertise and independence of the members and ensuring consistency within the cluster. The composition of the panel was approved by EAPAA on 11 September 2023 and by NVAO on 14 September 2023

The coordinator at Academion, Peter Hildering, instructed the panel chairs on their role in the site visit according to the Panel chair profile (NVAO 2016) in May, and briefed the cluster panel members on the NVAO-EAPAA assessment procedures in June. On behalf of Academion, Mark Delmartino and Esther Poort - both NVAO-certified secretaries – liaised with the institutions and assisted the panels before and during the site visits. Afterwards, they drafted the assessment reports in close co-operation with the chairs and panels.

Assessment of UT programmes

The panel assessed three degree programmes at UT. The three-year full-time 180 EC bachelor programme Management, Society and Technology (MST) is taught in English. In their fourth semester MST students can opt to specialize in Public Administration, in European Studies or decide to combine elements from both tracks. A particular feature of this bachelor programme is that (German) students who enrolled at the University of Münster for a first year in Political Science can join the second year of the MST bachelor programme at UT through the so-called joint degree specialization "Public Governance across Borders". After completion of the full joint programme, students receive a joint degree bachelor's diploma Public Governance across Borders from both University of Twente and the University of Münster. While this opportunity has been discussed on site, it was not part of the panel's accreditation remit as the Public Governance across Borders programme was already accredited through the German agency AQAS in 2023 using the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes.

The master programme Public Administration (PA) is a one-year full-time 60 EC programme taught in English. In addition to common core courses, students choose a domain profile through elective courses and the topic of their master thesis. Since the previous accreditation the programme is offering one domain profile in Dutch: Local and Regional Governance (*Lokaal en Regionaal Bestuur*).

The master programme European Studies (ES) is a one-year full-time 60 EC programme taught in English. In addition to common core courses, students choose an elective from the PA programme and elaborate a topic of their interest in the master thesis. The programme can also be pursued as part of a two-year Comparative

Public Governance dual degree, which is offered in cooperation with the University of Münster. Graduates of this dual degree receive two diplomas: a one-year Master of Science (MSc) degree in European Studies from the University of Twente and a two-year Master of Arts (MA) degree in Comparative Public Governance from the University of Münster. The dual degree was reaccredited by AQAS in 2023 according to the Interstate Study Accreditation Treaty using the Ordinance regulating the details of study accreditation in North Rhine-Westphalia.

Site visit

In the months preceding the visit, the secretary, panel chair and UT team discussed the programme of the site visit. This resulted in a comprehensive schedule that is presented in Appendix 3. The panel wants to express its gratitude for the way these sessions were organized by the UT team and for the enthusiasm and openness of the participants towards the panel. The panel has used the internal meetings and breaks to prepare sessions and to discuss its findings on the respective degree programmes.

In the run-up to the site visit, the panel studied the self-evaluations and accompanying materials UT had put at disposition on a dedicated website. An overview of these materials is provided in appendix 4. Furthermore, the panel reviewed a sample of 15 theses per programme, which were representative in terms of final grades and examiners, and where applicable covered the different specializations. The theses were selected by the panel chair in consultation with the secretary. The selection was based on anonymized lists of students who had graduated in the academic years 2020-2021, 2021-2022 and 2022-2023. The panel wants to thank the team at UT for the high quality materials and for their assistance in making the documents available in time.

The panel members studied the materials and reviewed the theses and their assessments, and reported their initial findings to the secretary. The secretary processed this input in a document, which served as a basis for discussion during the preparatory meeting on 8 November 2023. During this meeting the panel identified the key strengths of the programmes and the issues that required further discussion. The Open Consultation Hour for students, teaching and support staff involved in the degree programmes under review was scheduled alongside the preparatory meeting. Eventually, nobody used the opportunity to discuss individually and confidentially with the panel.

Towards the end of the visit, the UT programme representatives and the panel discussed pathways for further development in the so-called Development Dialogue session. A separate report on this session will be produced by the UT team. The outcome of this session has no impact on the findings, considerations and conclusions in the present assessment report. At the end of the site visit, the panel chair publicly presented the preliminary findings of the panel on the three degree programmes according to the NVAO-EAPAA framework.

Report

After the site visit, the secretary wrote a draft report based on the panel's findings. This report is structured along the five NVAO-EAPAA standards. The report was first submitted to the coordinator at Academion for peer assessment and then to the panel for feedback. After processing this feedback, the secretary sent the draft report to UT in order to have it checked for factual inaccuracies. The secretary discussed the ensuing comments with the panel chair, implementing changes where relevant. The panel then finalized the report, and the coordinator sent it to the University of Twente.

Panel

The following panel members were involved in the cluster assessment:

- Prof. Andrew Massey, professor of Government, King's College London – chair;
- Prof. Monique Kremer, professor of Active Citizenship, University of Amsterdam – chair;
- Prof. Ernst ten Heuvelhof, emeritus professor of Public Administration, Delft University of Technology;
- Prof. Peter Bursens, professor of Political Science, University of Antwerp;
- Prof. Ellen Wayenberg, professor of Public Governance and Management at Ghent University and member of the EAPAA Accreditation Committee;
- Prof. Calin Hintea, professor of Public Administration and Management at Babes-Bolyai University and member of the EAPAA Accreditation Committee;
- Prof. Thurid Hustedt, professor of Public Administration and Management at Hertie School Berlin and member of the EAPAA Accreditation Committee;
- Dr. Hester Glasbeek, advisor Leadership Development at Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, and Senior Partner of Reflect Academy: For Leadership in Learning;
- Anje-Margreet Woltjer MSc, director of SPO Utrecht;
- Prof. Ria Janvier, professor of Social Law, University of Antwerp;
- Prof. Leo Huberts, emeritus professor of Public Administration, Vrije Universiteit;
- Prof. Heinrich Winter, professor of Public Administration, University of Groningen;
- Wim de Boer MSc, lecturer Public Administration and Governance at Haagse Hogeschool;
- Prof. Tanja Klenk, professor of Public Administration and Public Policies, Helmut-Schmidt-University Hamburg;
- David Van Slyke PhD, professor of Public Administration, The Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs;
- Prof. Geske Dijkstra, emeritus professor of Governance and Global Development, Erasmus University Rotterdam;
- Prof. Esther Versluis, professor of European Regulatory Governance, Maastricht University;
- Prof. Zoe Radnor, professor of Service Operations Management, Aston University;
- Prof. Sophie Vanhoonacker, professor of Administrative Governance, Maastricht University;
- Prof. Kees van Paridon, emeritus professor of Economics, Erasmus University Rotterdam;
- Prof. Tannelie Blom, emeritus professor of European Integration, Maastricht University – referee;
- Tom Hillenaar BSc, master student Engineering and Policy Analysis, Delft University of Technology – student member;
- Sibel Gökbekir BSc, master student of Complex Systems Engineering and Management at Delft University of Technology, and of International and European Union Law at Erasmus University Rotterdam – student member.

The panel assessing the three degree programmes at the University of Twente consisted of:

- Prof. Andrew Massey, professor of Government, King's College London – chair;
- Prof. Calin Hintea, professor of Public Administration and Management at Babes-Bolyai University and member of the EAPAA Accreditation Committee;
- Prof. Ernst ten Heuvelhof, emeritus professor of Public Administration, Delft University of Technology;
- Prof. Tanja Klenk, professor of Public Administration and Public Policies, Helmut-Schmidt-University Hamburg;
- Tom Hillenaar BSc, master student Engineering and Policy Analysis, Delft University of Technology – student member.

Mark Delmartino assisted the panel and drafted the assessment reports.

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Information on the programmes

Name of the institution: University of Twente
Status of the institution: Publicly funded institution
Result institutional quality assurance assessment: Positive

Programme name:	B Management, Society and Technology
CROHO number:	56654
Level:	Bachelor
Orientation:	Academic
Number of credits:	180 EC
Specializations or tracks:	Public Administration
	European Studies
Joint programme	Public Governance Across Borders - joint degree specialization with the University of Münster
Location:	Enschede
Educational minor:	Not applicable
Mode(s) of study:	Fulltime
Language of instruction:	English
Submission date NVAO:	1 May 2024

Programme name:	M Public Administration
CROHO number:	60020
Level:	Master
Orientation:	Academic
Number of credits:	60 EC
Specializations or tracks:	no formal specializations, but domain profiles
Location:	Enschede
Mode(s) of study:	Fulltime
Language of instruction:	English
Submission date NVAO:	1 May 2024

Programme name:	M European Studies
CROHO number:	69303
Level:	Master
Orientation:	Academic
Number of credits:	60 EC
Specializations or tracks:	none
Special programme:	two-year dual degree Comparative Public Governance (University of Münster)
Location:	Enschede
Mode(s) of study:	Fulltime
Language of instruction:	English
Submission date NVAO:	1 May 2024

Description of the assessment

Organization

This report covers three degree programmes that are embedded in the faculty of Behavioural, Management & Social Sciences (BMS), one of five faculties at the University of Twente. BMS is headed by a Dean and consists of four departments – Technology, Policy and Society; Technology, Human and Institutional Behaviour; Learning, Data-Analytics, Technology; and High-tech Business and Entrepreneurship – and the BMS Lab Research Infrastructure. Each department is headed by a chair. Most programme related staff belong to the Human and Institutional Behaviour department. The degree programmes under review are managed by one Programme Director who is assisted by two Programme Coordinators. In line with the provisions of Dutch Law, the Programme Committee consists of student and staff representatives from each programme and advises the Programme Director in matters relating to promoting and safeguarding the quality of education. The three programmes share a dedicated Examination Board Governance Sciences, which among others advises and safeguards the activity of the Programme management regarding the organization of testing.

Previous accreditation
In the previous accreditation round, the panel arrived at a positive conclusion on the three degree programmes. It did not issue any strong recommendations but made a few suggestions for improvement. The current panel noticed that these suggestions have been considered and integrated in the respective programmes. The panel appreciates in particular the improvements made in all three programmes with regard to thesis assessment. This and other developments/adjustments will be reported in the respective standards.

Standard 1. Intended learning outcomes

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

Findings

Profile
The three programmes under review – the BSc Management, Society and Technology (MST), the MSc Public Administration (PA), and the MSc European Studies (ES) - take up a specific position within the Dutch higher education landscape in public administration. MST and PA are the oldest public administration programmes in the Netherlands as they were established in 1976. Moreover, the three programmes are the only ones in the Netherlands who belong to a social science faculty in a University of Technology. Hence, the BMS staff present themselves on the faculty website as tech-savvy social scientists who are as excited about the wonders of humanness as about the powers of technology. Through academic education, fundamental science and societal problem-solving they see their students functions as translators between the human component and technology. During the site visit, the programme management and staff emphasized that they want to stand out as social science programmes with a focus on technology, not as technical public administration programmes. The programmes educate students to contribute from a social science perspective to the development and implementation of technological solutions. Students learn to translate technology and engineering for the political world, they cooperate with e.g. cybersecurity experts but are not trained as engineers.

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The panel gathered from the written materials and the discussions on site that the three programmes are defined by the question how the grand societal and technological challenges are addressed by governments and governance institutions. They educate students to acquire the academic knowledge and skills that are necessary to solve these challenges from a multi-actor perspective on public administration, on technology and on governance. The MST programme empowers students to study these challenges from an institutional perspective across different levels of governance; the PA programme does so from the perspectives of public governance, public policy, and public management, and the ES programme from the perspectives of European and global governance, and European and global public policy.

The programmes' vision is built on three components: (i) the multi-sector and multi-level nature of the grand societal and technological challenges requires an integrated perspective across the different levels of institutional governance; (ii) the public sector contributes actively to the solving of societal challenges; and (iii) technology is integral in the development of public policy solutions.

In the bachelor programme this vision is translated in the mission that MST educates students who are capable of contributing - from the perspective of public administration - to finding solutions to the grand challenges through the integration of knowledge and technology in the fields of public policy, public management, and public governance. The mission in the master programmes is to build specialized competences in social scientists to analyse and evaluate the current societal and technological challenges and to design relevant solutions for these challenges. The PA programme does this from a public administration perspective featuring institutional arrangements for governance, policymaking and public management organizations, while the ES programme takes a European Studies perspective looking at European and global solutions.

In the previous accreditation visit, the then panel indicated that all three programmes had a strong implicit vision that could be concretized and elaborated more on paper in order to use it structurally in curriculum design. The current panel acknowledges the further articulation of this vision, which does justice not only to the overall purpose of the programmes and their distinctive position within the Dutch higher education landscape but also forms the basis for the individual missions of the programmes. The current panel also noticed that the vision and missions reflect the university's Shaping 2030's mission: MST, PA and ES are all 'people first' programmes, teaching issues of empowering society and the provision of sustainable solutions while being committed to shaping a fair, sustainable, resilient and digital society.

Moreover, the current panel notices that the respective programme profiles are reflected in the programme objectives and in the curricula. In the MST programme, grand challenges have a clear technological component and include cybersecurity, migration in a digital world, artificial intelligence, sustainable development, smart cities, digital transformation in Europe and in the Global South, and implementation of technological projects in the public sector (including public health). The project topics in the different curriculum modules are embedded in these challenges. Throughout the programme, students are exposed to a variety of perspectives on globalization and localization of public policy, public management and governance in a technologically transforming world marked by multiple and conflicting stakeholder interests.

The master programmes feature a social sciences orientation to societal and technological transformation, focus on a "high tech – human touch" approach to modern technology, and encourage an entrepreneurial spirit among students. The PA programme integrates classical academic knowledge in public administration with contemporary institutional changes, and with societal and technological transformations. Its multi- and

interdisciplinary characteristics are visible in the curriculum among others through the breadth of choice options in the many domain profiles, which draw upon state-of-the-art research at the University of Twente. Asked during the visit what the programme's competitive advantages are, the staff mentioned that PA brings together the best the university has to offer in terms of research. The domain profiles are much broader than in a 'regular' public administration programme and attract bachelor graduates from different (technology and other) backgrounds.

The ES programme combines classical academic knowledge in European Studies with contemporary institutional changes and global political-administrative institutions in transforming societies in Europe and the world at large. As a social science programme in a university of technology, its curriculum includes course topics that are close to the heart of the university's research themes such as EU ecological politics (e.g. Green Deal), EU technological politics (e.g. AI Strategy) and EU economic governance (e.g. Digital Markets Act). Asked during the visit what the programme's competitive advantages are, the staff mentioned that the content they are teaching is inclusive of perspectives: it is about the European Union but also about the world, it is about policy making, politics and governance but also about technology and digital transformation.

The ES programme can also be pursued as part of the two-year master programme offered in cooperation with the University of Münster. After a first semester of European Studies in Twente, students go to Münster for a semester of courses and a semester of either exchange or an internship in combination with electives, before they dedicate the last semester to the master theses with supervisors from both Twente and Münster. The panel talked to staff and students of the dual degree and reviewed a few master theses. The panel appreciated the discussion on site with the German programme director. It demonstrated according to the panel that the long-standing cooperation with Münster university is solid and based on mutual confidence. The dual degree programme has been accredited in April 2023 by the German Accreditation Office AQAS. The panel has studied the accreditation report and endorses the positive result of the AQAS report that the dual degree Comparative Public Governance fulfils all formal and academic criteria.

The panel appreciates both the commonalities in and the specificity of the respective programme profiles. As one panel member wrote prior to the site visit: "after reading the vision, mission, and educational philosophy of the three programmes, I was initially somewhat critical due to the similarities between them and their shared wording. However, upon further reflection, I can now appreciate the alignment as an expression of a distinct Twente spirit." Another panel member indicated that it is fine that the programmes exploit their unique position as social science studies in a university of technology. Being embedded in this technological environment, the programmes focus on major societal transformations in technology, allow public administration students to specialize in a technical domain, and address specifically the many technical challenges in the new European governance agenda. By the end of the visit, the entire panel endorsed these reflections.

Furthermore, the programme stakeholders indicated during the discussions on site that the degree programmes share another feature that distinguishes them from other public administration programmes in the Netherlands. In addition to technology, which according to the programme is not a flavour or a sauce but a core ingredient of the programmes, there is the location of the programmes in Twente. The regional - and in Dutch geographical terms 'ex-centric' - university is located in the oldest cross border cooperation EU-region, targeting and welcoming both Dutch and German students and making the three public administration programmes intrinsically international. The students who find their way to Twente have a strong interest in the local, regional – and European – perspective of public administration. The programmes built strong connections to local and regional authorities through guest lectures, assignments and

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internships. The municipalities go at lengths to facilitate the inclusion of students from abroad, while the foreign students pick up Dutch language classes. Several programme graduates in fact move on to careers in local and regional authorities where they hold positions with an international outlook. Moreover, while all programmes are taught in English, the PA programme features one domain profile that is taught in Dutch without cannibalising the other specializations.

The programme stakeholders indicated that these unique selling propositions can be advertised more. The panel agrees to this viewpoint: there is room for clarification – and explicit communication on – what it means to study MST, PA and ES at a university of technology. Moreover, the panel noticed in particular that the programme title 'flags' MST and ES do not entirely cover the substantive 'load'. According to the panel, this does not necessarily mean that the programme names need to be changed, but that further clarification could be conveyed to prospective students that MST is at heart a public administration programme, and that the ES programme is about much more than 'only' European Studies. Similarly, the domain profiles of the PA programme deserve more targeted attention. Finally, the panel noticed that each programme has the appropriate profile to attract an international and intercultural audience of Dutch, German, European and non-European students. While the location has already proven to attract students from both sides of the Dutch-German border, the explicitly international dimension and orientation of the programmes should cater for other international students, as well. Given the specific geographical situation of the university, the panel is convinced that – national authorities permitting – the programmes can do more in selling their unique profile beyond the EU Region.

Intended learning outcomes
The panel gathered from the written materials and the discussions on site that the vision and mission of the three programmes lay the foundation for articulating the intended learning outcomes (ILOs). While each programme has its own learning outcomes, the three sets of final qualifications have a similar set-up along three (PA and ES) and four (MST) pillars: (i) knowledge base of the field, (ii) social scientific research competences, (iii) academic and professional skills, and (iv) analysis of challenges to society and public administration and design. The three sets of learning outcomes are presented in Appendix 1 to this report.

All three sets of ILOs are aligned to the Domain Specific Reference Framework (DSRF) for the Public Administration, Governance and Organization (PAGO) studies as adopted in 2010 and confirmed again in 2016 and 2022. This framework also takes into account the requirements of the Dublin Descriptors as criteria for first-cycle bachelor and second-cycle master programmes. The panel studied the programme learning outcomes and the DSRF, as well as the informative tables on the website illustrating for each programme the connection between the learning outcomes, the PAGO framework and the Dublin Descriptor components: knowledge and understanding, application of knowledge and understanding, judgement, communication skills and learning skills. The panel established that there was a clear alignment for each of the three programmes and that the formulations of the respective ILOs differed at bachelor and at master level.

During the previous accreditation visit, the then panel found that the ILOs of the three programmes were clear in terms of level and orientation, but formulated in a rather abstract way, notably regarding the respective knowledge base of the field. It was suggested that the learning outcomes could be elaborated in such a way that there was a closer link with the course objectives. The current panel noticed that in the meantime the ILOs of the bachelor programme have been reformulated with regard to the knowledge base. The learning outcomes now explicitly refer to the multi-level nature of public administrations and governance and announce that upon graduation students are able to analyse, evaluate and reflect on modern socio-technological challenges from a public administration perspective. Several programme stakeholders have been involved in the brainstorm that led to this adjustment. Moreover, the adjusted set of

learning outcomes has been operationalized through newly developed learning lines and serve as a bridge towards the learning goals at module level. Hence, the panel found that the current learning outcomes reflect the content (public administration), level (bachelor) and orientation (academic) of the MST programme.

In so far as the PA programme is concerned, the panel noticed no specific adjustments to the formulation of the learning outcomes. However, the existing learning outcomes have been operationalized and are clearly and comprehensively reflected in the course learning goals. Moreover, the knowledge base ILOs do refer to the different domain profiles that together constitute the PA programme. Hence, the panel found that the current learning outcomes reflect the content (public administration), level (master) and orientation (academic) of the PA programme.

The learning outcomes of the ES programme have been adjusted in the sense that the reference to global studies was taken out. Also in this case, the current learning outcomes have been operationalized in the learning goals of the modules. Hence, the panel found that the current learning outcomes reflect the content (European Studies), level (master) and orientation (academic) of the ES programme. Further to the discussions on its distinctive profile, the panel shares the opinion of the management and staff that the master ES through its focus on global, international and European public policy is about much more than 'only' European Studies. According to the panel, the programme may want to have this distinctiveness reflected more explicitly in the intended learning outcomes.

Professional field
The panel gathered from the written materials and the discussions on site that all three programmes have good connections to the professional field, notably but not exclusively with local and regional authorities in the wider environment of Twente. In a few cases these contacts take the form of a structural cooperation, for instance when a local municipality commits to providing project assignments for a module. Moreover, several alumni are in contact with teaching staff on an ad hoc basis or inform the programmes when there are opportunities for internships or employment.

While in the past there have been two field committees, the regular meetings of these advisory boards have been suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic. The programme management indicated that the connections are being revitalized with the intention to re-install one field advisory committee. The panel welcomes this intention and encourages the programme to give this issue priority attention. In fact, the panel had a very informative and useful discussion on site with a comprehensive group of alumni, who invariably showed enthusiasm for the programmes and interest in solidifying their connections to BMS. According to the panel, revitalising the advisory committee would provide a structural tool to monitoring the quality and relevance of the respective programmes.

Considerations
Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel considers that all three programmes have a well-defined and specific profile that sets them apart from other public administration programmes in the Netherlands. The three programmes are embedded in a social sciences faculty of a university of technology, which in turn is located in an EU Region at the Eastern outskirts of the Netherlands.

The panel considers that based on their distinctive profile, the programmes have elaborated a clear and relevant vision, which is operationalized in ambitious and individual missions that align with the educational philosophy and are articulated in the intended learning outcomes. For each programme, the panel found

that the ILOs are built around relevant pillars and formulated in a way that does justice to the content, level and orientation. Moreover, each programme falls within the domain specific remit of the PAGO framework.

The panel did notice, though, that there is room for better communicating (and marketing) the strengths and unique selling propositions of the three programmes. Contrary to what was mentioned in the development points of the self-evaluations, it is according to the panel not so much about reformulating or sharpening the programme profiles, but rather about 'selling'' the specificity of the three programmes, emphasising that MST is essentially about public administration in society and technology, that PA students can opt for a wealth of relevant and unique domain profiles, and that the ES programme is not 'your average foundational European Studies degree'. Moreover, all three programmes could do more in selling their unique and intrinsically international profile to international students beyond Münster.

Furthermore, the panel considers that the programmes can rely on good contacts with the professional field, notably through keeping in touch with enthusiastic and committed alumni. However, these contacts should be solidified by revitalising the previously existing professional field committee.

Conclusion
The panel concludes that all three degree programmes meet standard 1 of the NVAO-EAPAA framework.

Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment

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

Findings

Curriculum Management, Society and Technology (MST)
The bachelor MST is a three-year full-time programme that amounts to 180 EC and is offered in English. It stands out among other Dutch bachelor programmes in Public Administration as it addresses specifically the role of technology and digital transformation in societal steering, where technology is studied both as a driver that leads to the emergence of challenges and as an instrument for the development of policy solutions to these challenges from a public administration perspective.

In line with the Twente Educational Model (see below under learning environment), the curriculum consists of 12 modules, which are offered consecutively: one module of 15 EC per block, four blocks per year. After a first introductory year, there is a deepening and a specialization semester, followed by an elective period and a thesis semester. The MST curriculum is presented in Appendix 2 to this report.

The MST programme is built around five learning lines: (i) fundamental public administration concepts, (ii) technology in a public administration context, (iii) technology as a tool, (iv) integration of analysis and design, and (v) professional practice skills. Every learning line is addressed in each of the first eight modules covering the entire first and second year. Students can customize their study programme in the fourth and fifth semester: they can opt for a 30 EC specialization in Public Administration or European studies, followed by a 30 EC period in the fifth semester in which they follow a minor, a combination of electives, go on exchange or perform an internship. In the final semester, student prepare a thesis proposal and produce a bachelor thesis. Since the previous accreditation, the bachelor thesis trajectory is scheduled as a course with students meeting their supervisor regularly in so-called 'thesis circles'. According to the panel, the

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curriculum is well designed, comprehensive and coherent. The discussions on site have convinced the panel that the build-up of the curriculum in big blocks of integrated learning lines works well from an operational and intellectual point of view and constitutes a distinguishing feature of this bachelor programme in public administration.

The panel gathered from the written materials and the discussions on site that there is a clear connection between the programme learning outcomes, the learning lines and the modules of the MST curriculum. The detailed overview on the website indicates clearly that this connection has been strengthened since the previous accreditation visit. In this regard, the current panel noticed that the curriculum has been adapted adequately to include career preparation and professional skills, as advised by the previous panel.

Students who pass the first year of the bachelor Political Science at the University of Münster can join the second-year of MST. When they finish the specialization Public Governance across Borders, they graduate with a joint degree from both universities. The specialization is not part of this accreditation exercise as the joint degree has been accredited separately in June 2023 by the German Accreditation Office AQAS. However, given that a considerable number of students take part in this specialization thereby joining the existing MST cohorts, the panel did pay attention to the specialization by talking to staff and students. The panel furthermore appreciated the discussion on site with the German programme director. It demonstrated according to the panel that the long-standing cooperation with Münster university is solid and based on mutual confidence.

The MST students the panel spoke to indicated that they were overall satisfied with the substance and structure of the programme. They very much appreciated the international composition of the cohorts and found that the newcomers in the second year strengthened the international community atmosphere. Bachelor students mentioned that overall the curriculum is feasible and that there are no particular obstacles that prevent them from finishing the programme in time. Some students mentioned though that the substance of some modules could be covered more in depth, that there was sometimes overlap between modules, and that the study load within modules can be unevenly spread. The staff indicated to the panel that they are aware of and addressing these points, for instance on the overlap between modules. The contents in the first part of the curriculum sometimes remain stuck at the surface because of the very broad domain that is covered in these courses. Because the programme attracts students with different backgrounds, expectations and ambitions, the incentive to engage fully is not always present among all students. While it found the respective modules to be of sufficient level, the panel does advise the programme to address the content overlap between modules and to adjust the study load in such a way that all students are engaged at a reasonable level. Having learned that students informed the teaching staff and programme management about their issues both informally and formally through module evaluations and the Programme Committee, the panel welcomes the constructive dialogue between students and staff, who work together to enhance the quality of education.

During the visit, the panel discussed extensively with management and staff about the distinguishing feature of the MST programme: the connection between public administration and technology. While management and staff indicated that they are increasingly introducing technology subjects in the curriculum, they also emphasized that the MST profile is and remains first and foremost within social sciences whereas other faculties at the Twente University of Technology focus on engineering. The panel on the one hand endorses this position, but finds on the other hand that the MST programme is not yet pushed to the maximum as a Public Administration programme in technology. According to the panel, there is room for more hands-on cooperation with other UT faculties in a range of modules, beyond the minor courses: MST students could engage – even more than it is the case now – with students from other faculties in multidisciplinary projects.

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Curriculum Public Administration (PA)

The master PA is a one-year full-time programme that amounts to 60 EC and is offered in English. The year is divided in two semesters and four quartiles of three 5 EC courses each. Students can enrol in September or in February. The curriculum consists of five mandatory core courses, two elective domain profile courses, and a thesis trajectory of 25 EC. The PA curriculum is presented in Appendix 2 to this report.

Because there are two intake moments, the curriculum is set up in such a way that students can follow the core courses in any particular order. Students choose a specialist domain profile, which forms also the substantive basis for their thesis research. At the time of the accreditation visit, the PA programme offers eight domain profiles: Public Affairs, Health Care, Science and Technology, Sustainability, Safety and Security, Development Management, Evidence-based Policy, and *Lokaal en Regionaal Bestuur*. The courses connected to the latter domain profile are taught in Dutch. The panel was informed that the considerable study load associated to the thesis trajectory comprises not only a thesis proposal and a thesis product, but also allows students to acquire the substantive knowledge and possibly methodological skills that are connected with preparing a final product at academic master level in their specific domain profile. Since the previous accreditation, the master thesis trajectory features so-called 'thesis circles' where students with similar thesis topics meet each other and their common supervisor to provide peer review and discuss progress.

According to the panel, the curriculum is well designed and coherent. The core courses are up-to-date and contain the latest developments in public administration research and make use of relevant literature. The panel appreciates the idea of an early beginning of the thesis preparation, which helps students to gradually improve the design of their thesis. Given the rather limited intake, it is beneficial to have more common core courses and (a wide choice of) only two electives. The domain profiles on offer are well chosen given the embedding of the programme in a university of technology. The panel welcomes that some of these courses are designed in-house for PA students, while others are offered by other programmes in and beyond BMS. Finally, the panel welcomes the opportunity for students to choose a 'core public administration' domain profile and to do so in Dutch. It appreciates that this domain profile does well in terms of student interest without jeopardising the viability of the other profiles.

Furthermore, the panel noticed that there is a clear connection between the programme learning outcomes and the courses of the PA curriculum. The detailed overview on the website indicates that this connection has been strengthened since the previous accreditation visit.

The PA students the panel spoke to indicated that they were overall satisfied with the substance and structure of the programme. They liked in particular the interaction in the courses, the variety of backgrounds among students and the way the teaching staff engaged with them in class. They also appreciated the international composition of the cohorts and students who followed the Dutch-language domain profile were particularly satisfied with the combination of both languages. Master students mentioned that the overall study load is feasible and that there are no particular obstacles in the curriculum that would prevent them from finishing the programme in time. Students did suggest though that there could be more guest lectures in the core courses, that the programme could pay more attention to career opportunities, and that students who want to combine a thesis with an (extra-curricular) internship should be supported better. The staff indicated to the panel that they are aware of these suggestions, which had been raised both informally and formally through course evaluations and the Programme Committee. According to the staff, the points raised by the students are being addressed in cooperation with alumni, faculty and university services. The panel thinks that any progress on these issues will enhance the quality of

the programme in general, and its professional practice dimension in particular. It also underlines the relevance of a thesis-related internship period.

Curriculum European Studies (ES)
The master ES is a one-year full-time programme that amounts to 60 EC and is taught in English. The academic year is divided in two semesters and four quartiles. The first semester consists of six common core courses of 5 EC each. In the second semester students choose one elective course from the PA programme and work on their thesis. The ES curriculum is presented in Appendix 2 to this report.

The panel was informed that the programme team made a conscious decision to restrict the elective to a course within the PA programme. In this way, it strengthens the European Studies profile as part of the public administration cluster and the technology-inspired courses link it to the "high tech human touch" profile of the university. Moreover, the considerable study load associated to the thesis trajectory comprises not only a thesis proposal and a thesis product, but also allows students to acquire the substantive knowledge and possibly methodological skills that are connected with preparing a final product at academic master level. Since the previous accreditation, the master thesis trajectory features so-called 'thesis circles' where students with similar thesis topics meet each other and their common supervisor to provide peer review and discuss progress.

According to the panel, the curriculum reflects the particular profile of this ES programme combining core European Studies components with public administration and technology. Moreover, it is ambitious in its focus on global, international and European public policy. The ES curriculum is coherent and the course contents are highly relevant and state-of-the-art in terms of literature. The panel noticed that there is a clear connection between the programme learning outcomes and the modules of the ES curriculum. The detailed overview on the website indicates that this connection has been strengthened since the previous accreditation visit.

The students the panel spoke to indicated that they were satisfied with the substance of the courses in the programme, as well as with the quality of the teaching staff and the availability of the coordinators. They also appreciated the support of the staff during the COVID-19 pandemic. Students like the international dimension and atmosphere in the programme and among the cohorts. Because they enrol with a variety of backgrounds, the first module is well designed to bring all students up to par. Students did mention though that they would like more elective courses and would benefit from more communication on the connection between the courses and on labour market perspectives. Finally, students asked to resume the study trip to Brussels and to involve alumni more as guest lecturers. The staff indicated to the panel that they are aware of these requests and concerns. While it is difficult to organize a second elective course as part of the regular curriculum, the study visit and the guest lecturers are on the agenda. The panel welcomes the constructive dialogue between students and staff and endorses the concrete plans on the agenda. Further to its findings on the ES profile, the panel suggests that the programme may want to indicate more precisely for (potential) students the red thread that runs across its modules and that defines exactly how these elements are connected and integrated.

Language of instruction
All three degree programmes under review are offered in English. The panel gathered from the written materials and the discussions on site that for each programme, the language of instruction constitutes a conscious and well-motivated choice. The University of Twente is located in an international, cross-border region and regionally serves both Dutch and German students. The bachelor MST and the master ES attract German students through a joint and a dual programme, respectively. The multilevel perspective on grand

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societal and technological challenges (including the role of international organizations, EU governance and global governance) implies an international orientation. Such challenges emerge and must be addressed on multiple (global, EU, national, regional, local) governance levels. All three programmes are scientifically set in the interdisciplinary domain of public policy, public management, and public governance, which is a highly internationalized research field. The programme graduates hold labour market positions in which close collaboration with professionals from different cultural and/or national backgrounds is essential. Moreover, students who pursue a career in local and regional government or Dutch public organizations recognize the importance of the international dimension of the programmes. Hence, internationalization is key to the successful academic development of public administration students at UT. The panel endorses the approach of the educational management with regard to the language of instruction in the MST, PA and ES programmes. It found the rationale that was given for offering the programmes in English well thought through and strongly motivated. In this regard, the panel also thinks that the programmes choice to have an English language title is relevant and appropriate.

Learning environment
The learning environment of the MST programme is based on the Twente Educational Model (*Twents Onderwijsmodel*, TOM in Dutch). The model was launched in 2013 and incorporates elements such as student-driven learning, project-based education, and interdisciplinarity. In all UT bachelor programmes TOM is implemented through large 15 EC modules. Recently, the university organized some flexibility in the organization of modules. The panel noticed that the MST programme consists of both integrated modules, such as the first two foundational modules in year one, and coherent modules, such as the modules on Solutions and Challenges where dedicated components – in this case on statistics – are taught separately. The materials contained a very informative picture on how the MST curriculum is structured along the principles of TOM and how the learning lines are operationalized in the module components.

The didactic approach in the PA programme follows from the educational philosophy and rests on four pillars: (i) communality, (ii) student-centred interdisciplinarity, (iii) challenge-based work, and (iv) Dutch language profile. During their study, students are supported in mastering a Public Administration approach towards a societal and/or technological challenge in the interdisciplinary domain of their own interest. In the common core courses, students acquire a common academic and substantive baseline and choose their own topics of application. In the domain profile, students further specialize in their own interdisciplinary study path, which culminates in an individual master thesis on a topic of their choice. In addition to internationally oriented profiles, it is an explicit choice of the programme to offer one domain profile that is catered to students who want to focus on the local and regional dimensions of public administration. Some courses adopt educationally innovative approaches such as challenge-based learning. Moreover, students can opt in the master thesis trajectory to embed their research in a professional organization. In order to facilitate the timely completion of their study, students start preparing their thesis work in the second quartile of the first semester when they follow the core course Academic Research.

The didactic approach in the ES programme is based on similar educational principles. ES students are supported in mastering a European Studies approach towards a societal and/or technological challenge in an area of their own interest. The courses apply a variation of teaching methods, such as lectures, tutorials and intensive interactive classes. Students prepare their classes independently as well as in groups, aided by assignments. The relatively small group sizes stimulate interaction between students and teaching faculty, which in turn deepens the understanding at higher levels of learning. In order to facilitate the timely completion of their study, also ES students start preparing their thesis work in the second quartile of the first semester when they follow the core course Academic Research.

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Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel endorses the educational philosophy and its translation into the specific didactic approaches of the three programmes. According to the panel, the emphasis on student-centred learning and project work is a sound pedagogic approach because students are led gradually to a more integrated and independent learning style as they progress on the degree. Moreover, the principles are implemented in such a way that they offer diverse opportunities to students depending on their educational background and/or interest.

Student intake, integration and success rate
Compared to other public administration studies in the Netherlands, the three programmes at UT are small. In so far as the bachelor programme is concerned, the number of MST students has fluctuated somewhat since the previous accreditation between 67 and 94. More than half of the 69 MST students in 2022-2023 were German, most of whom joined MST in the second year through the joint degree, while one third was Dutch and about 10% international.

The programme management indicated that the current enrolment figures are lower than desired. Ideally, the MST programme would count between 100 and 120 students. Reasons for the lower intake are the COVID-19 pandemic which prevented German students from crossing the border, the demographic decline in the Eastern part of the Netherlands, and the changing study finance provisions making students study at a university close to home. The management is trying to counter the situation through more communication and marketing, including outreach activities to high schools in the region. The latter initiative is particularly important as the MST programme tends to attract only a few local/regional students. The panel agrees that the student numbers are low and that it is time to step up recruitment efforts. Further to its findings on the programme profile, the panel advises the management to focus its efforts also/more than before on international students beyond Germany.

Since the previous accreditation visit, the number of PA students has been relatively stable – between 24 and 34, with a one-time high of 49 - but overall low. The 29 PA students in 2022-2023 had a wide variety of educational backgrounds: just over half held undergraduate degrees from a university of applied science, while 28% studied at UT before and only 14% came in with a degree from abroad. The management indicated that many bachelor graduates leave UT for a specialist master at another university in the Netherlands or abroad. Hence, the throughput from bachelor to master is smaller than in other PA programmes in the Netherlands. Moreover, the latest Government provisions did not allow the university to advertise its programmes abroad, not even in Münster. The panel was informed by the programme stakeholders that these provisions may be suspended in the future. In view of the many interesting and relevant domain profiles, the panel thinks that the programme would benefit from more students. It agrees to the analysis of the management that the PA programme could be marketed more strongly among various audiences – local, national, cross-border and international. Given the distinctly international orientation of the programme and most of its domain profiles, the panel thinks that recruitment efforts should also target international students.

The ES programme faces a similar intake situation: the numbers are relatively stable – between 14 and 23 – but low. Half of the 14 ES students in 2022-2023 studied at UT before, while 3 came from a university of applied science and another 3 from abroad. Also in this case, the panel agrees with the analysis of the management that the programme could be marketed more strongly to attract more students, notably from abroad and from other universities in the Netherlands.

The panel gathered from the written materials and the discussions that the admission of bachelor and master students is regulated properly and communicated transparently. Bachelor graduates who do not

have the required background to directly enter the PA or ES programme can follow a pre-master programme of 30 EC. It consists of four courses: statistics, academic writing, introduction to PA or ES, and one module of the MST curriculum. The panel was informed that the pre-master programme allows to eliminate any deficiencies and explore whether students have the competencies for a master programme. Students who manage to enter the programme via the pre-master indicated that they felt prepared for a master study of academic orientation. However, some students at least felt they were still lagging behind in terms of substantive knowledge and essay writing. The panel suggests the programme management to look for ways how these elements can be incorporated in the pre-master programme and refreshed in the first quartile of the master programmes.

In terms of success rate, on average 20% of the bachelor students drops out in the first year. Students who collect a minimum of 45 EC in their first year receive a positive Binding Study Advice. Around 80% of those who are allowed to re-enrol, finish the programme within the nominal duration of three years. Another 10% does so after four years. According to the panel, these figures are very positive. In the PA programme, students can enrol both in September and in February. While the entry moment should not impact on the feasibility of the curriculum, only 20% of the master students finish the programme in one year, while 60% does so in two years. As students indicated that there were no particular stumbling blocks in the PA curriculum, the panel advises the programme to look into the causes for the relatively low success rates. Furthermore, the panel was informed that it is difficult to interpret the success rate figures of the ES programme as most students follow the two-year double degree programme. Around 20% finish in one year, while 50% does so in two years and 70% takes up to three years. According to the panel, these figures require also some further follow-up.

The relatively low intake figures allow the programmes to create a low-threshold study environment for all students. The students indicated in the student course evaluations, the exit surveys, the student chapter and during the discussions on site that overall, they are very satisfied with the programmes. The panel noticed during the visit and the discussions that there is a positive study environment with students feeling part of both a bigger UT community and a smaller programme community.

Moreover, the panel noticed that the study adviser takes up an important role in the programmes. This study adviser is assigned to the programmes to monitor the study progress of students and to assist them in their educational choices, for instance how to cope with unexpected delays in the study. At the same time, the study adviser also counsels the programme management on specific personal situations and/or requests of students, while maintaining confidentiality. Given her oversight over students and programmes, the study adviser was invited by the management to join the first discussion session between the panel and the management. Students from their side praised the efforts of the study adviser, both from a technical-substantive point of view and as an engaged staff member who is interested in the wellbeing and development of all students. The panel acknowledges the efforts of the programmes and the study adviser to create and implement a truly student-centred study environment.

Staff
The staff data provided by the programmes show that in total 29 teaching staff are involved in (one of) the three programmes. Eight staff belong to the University of Münster. The panel was informed that over the past few years, there have been quite some changes in staff. While some retired and others moved to other universities, quite a few new staff members with diverse backgrounds joined the programmes and the departments since 2020.

In the previous accreditation report, the then panel indicated that the increasing focus of the programmes towards technology could have implications for the required expertise of the teaching staff. The new panel gathered from the discussions on site that the newly recruited staff bring additional expertise, particularly in domains such as technology, digital transformation, societal transition, the Global South, and European politics and governance. In this way, the programmes have addressed properly the concern of the previous panel. The panel noticed during the discussions that the new staff and their areas of research interest are being integrated in the programmes.

It is university-wide policy that all staff members are required to hold – or obtain shortly after recruitment – a university teaching qualification (UTQ). Those who hold a UTQ spend 24 hours per year on teacher professionalization activities. Moreover, staff should demonstrate their English language proficiency at least up to level C1 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Where necessary, staff takes the UT English Proficiency Assessment from the UT Language Centre. Only staff who comply with both teaching qualification and language requirement can be appointed as examiner.

Students indicated in their student chapters and during the discussions on site that they appreciate the quality and motivation of the teaching staff. Staff is knowledgeable about the domain they teach but also has the appropriate didactical skills to transfer their knowledge to students. Moreover, students praised the expertise, coaching skills and feedback quality of the thesis supervisors. Students emphasized that the programme coordinators are very approachable and that staff is responsive to their comments. The panel understands this positive feedback because the staff it met during the sessions were all knowledgeable, talented and passionate about their research domain, the programmes and the students. Further to what was mentioned before on the 'easy' level of the MST programme, the panel thinks that the mutual appreciation between students and staff might sometimes hinder staff to challenge students. It informed the management accordingly, who in turn accepted the point.

Considerations

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel considers that the teaching-learning environment of three programmes is robust. This appreciation applies not only to the curriculum but also to the educational approach and the staff. Furthermore, the panel endorses the approach of the educational management with regard to the language of instruction in the MST, PA and ES programmes. It found the rationale that was given for offering the programmes in English well thought through and strongly motivated.

According to the panel, all three programmes have a dedicated curriculum that is coherent in itself and aligns with the respective mission and profile of the programme. The connection between the programme learning outcomes and the module and course contents has been strengthened since the previous accreditation visit. The three programmes are feasible: there are no specific obstacles that prevent students from finishing the programme in time. The organization of the bachelor thesis as a structured course with thesis circles proves a useful instrument to avoid study delay.

The panel considers that the educational philosophy is clearly visible in the specific didactic approaches of the programmes. Students play a central role in these programmes and are supported in academic, practical and personal terms. In this regard, the work of the study adviser is to be commended.

The panel thinks highly of the teaching staff, who bring substantive, methodological and research expertise to the programmes and connect their academic knowledge with educational and linguistic qualifications.

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Moreover, the staff contributes to the student-centred learning environment through their enthusiasm, commitment and availability.

In addition to all positive considerations, there are two elements in the teaching-learning environment that require attention and/or improvement.

First, the master programmes attract a wide range of students from diverse educational backgrounds, including several students who enter via a pre-master programme. The programmes may want to adjust the contents of the pre-master curriculum in order to provide students with more research and essay-writing skills as well as with sufficient substantive knowledge.

Second, the three programmes are distinctive in the Dutch higher education landscape by their attention to the grand societal and technological challenges in combination with their international outlook. While these elements are clearly present, the panel thinks that they can still be articulated more in the respective curricula. Hence, the panel advises all programmes, and in particular the bachelor MST, to make optimum use of the technological opportunities that are offered on campus. Similarly, the panel believes that the contents and orientation of the programmes are such that the current focus on cross-border international cooperation can be widened to a more comprehensive international outlook in all three programmes. This includes adjusted and enhanced marketing and recruitment, but also a sharpening of the international contents, notably in the master ES.

Conclusion
The panel concludes that all three degree programmes meet standard 2 of the NVAO-EAPAA framework.

Standard 3. Student assessment

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

Findings

Assessment system
The panel gathered from the written materials and the discussions on site that in terms of assessment, all three programmes adopt very similar approaches that are embedded in the policies at faculty and university level. The core element of the assessment system is the programme assessment plan. The programme director is responsible for both the design and assessment system of each programme. The assessment system distinguishes five levels: (i) programme; (ii) course; (iii) tests; (iv) thesis; and (v) examiners. The assessment plan provides insight how learning objectives are tested in the programme. For each course, the types of assessment align with the module learning goals, which are derived from the programme ILOs. The module coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the learning goals are addressed in the content of the module and are adequately assessed. This information is provided in the course/module testing plan, specifying among others the number and type of tests, as well as their weight in the course grade. The alignment between learning goals and ILOs are discussed between the module coordinator and the programme director. In order to safeguard the quality of the tests and assessments, the Examination Board regularly invites module coordinators to present the testing plan, individual tests and model answers for the modules and where necessary provides advice and recommendations for improvement. Students from their side provide input on the assessment via course evaluations.

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The panel noticed during the discussions on site that the system of assessment is not only existing on paper, but also effectively implemented in reality. All assessment stakeholders were informed about the assessment system and acted accordingly. Hence, the panel is convinced that for each programme there is clear alignment not only between the programme learning outcomes and the module learning goals, but also that the respective course assessments ensure that all learning goals and eventually all learning outcomes are tested.

The programmes use various assessment methods: individual tests and group assignments, as well as formative and summative assessment. Students are not only tested via written exams, written papers and oral presentations, but also produce video recordings, posters, and policy briefs. The assessment forms, their weights in the calculation of the final grade, and the deadlines are communicated in advance to students in the introduction to the module. The website contained an overview of the assessment forms for each programme. The panel noticed in the overview that the sizeable (15 EC) modules in the bachelor programme often use different forms of assessment: the eight modules in the first two years all combine individual summative tests with group assignments/presentations. As a general rule based on the TOM educational philosophy, group assessment counts up to one third of the module grade. In the master programmes, the emphasis lays on individual summative assignments. Moreover, some modules (mainly in the ES programme) foresee formative tests or group assignments (mainly in the PA programme). The panel noticed from the discussions with staff and students that each programme does feature a good mixture of formative and summative approaches and that the assessment types are varied and sometimes innovative. Students indicated that the assessments are organized properly and communicated transparently. The number of assessments per module ensure according to the panel that student performance is analysed objectively.

Module coordinators are core lecturers who are responsible for the design, assessment and improvement of the courses. They are appointed as examiners by the Examination Board, which means that they comply with the university-wide requirements regarding didactic (UTQ) and language (C1 CEFR) qualifications. Examiners produce test schemes and answer models. Some examiners use inter-collegial consultation to increase reliability. Teaching staff are supported in their teacher professionalization by the university Centre for Expertise in Learning and Teaching, the BMS Teaching Faculty and the faculty advisors. The staff the panel spoke to during the site visit indicated that they feel well supported by the faculty and the university. In addition to the formally established procedures, individual teaching staff consult colleagues in an informal and ad hoc manner to discuss the quality of their tests. Moreover, assessment is on the meeting agendas of core lecturers and teaching faculty. The panel gathered from the materials and the discussions that course assessment is well organized in all three programmes and that module coordinators have the proper qualifications and competencies to implement the system of assessment.

During the visit, the panel discussed with several stakeholders how the programmes address the raise of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI). Students and staff mentioned that the use of ChatGPT and other forms of generative AI is discussed in class every time a new assignment is announced. Across all courses, it is agreed that these tools can be used for translation purposes and as a source to quote from. Students have been informed – and by now are aware – that a plagiarism scan is likely to notice the use of ChatGPT and that any unquoted use of the system would be considered as plagiarism. The Examination Board indicated that there has been some general guidance at university level emphasising that students should be informed in every course on what is (not) allowed and that assignments should be sufficiently specific. In the meantime, several module coordinators have increased the number of tests and test formats to ensure that the course grade does not only rely on one assignment. The panel welcomes the transparency among students, staff and Examination Board on how to deal with generative AI at course level. It advises the programmes – as well

as the faculty and university hierarchy – to discuss how to deal with tools such as Chat GPT beyond their practical use.

Furthermore, the panel discussed with students and staff the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on assessment. According to the staff, teaching continued through distance learning, while students who were on campus could follow blended forms of education in periods outside lockdown. The peculiar circumstances led to different teaching and assessment formats. During the periods of strict lockdown, the faculty policy was to use proctoring for course assessments. Staff mentioned that they could rely on the expertise of the educational advisers at university and faculty level to enhance their online teaching skills and to adjust their testing forms to an online/distance format. Students indicated that they first and foremost appreciated the efforts of the university, the programmes and the individual teaching staff to ensure that education and assessment continued. The Examination Board informed the panel that they did not receive any direct notifications from students that there were specific lockdown-related issues regarding assessment. In sum, the panel concluded from these discussions that also during the COVID-19 pandemic, fairness of assessment was maintained.

Thesis assessment
During the previous accreditation visit, the then panel noticed that all three programmes often gave very high thesis grades while it did not find any ground in its own review to assume that the theses were of exceptionally high quality. It therefore recommended the programmes to improve the quality assurance of their thesis assessments by reconsidering the role of the second assessor and by monitoring the quality of the written feedback on the evaluation form. The current panel gathered from the website, the discussions on site and its own review of a sample of thesis assessments that the thesis assessment process was thoroughly revised after the previous accreditation according to the recommendations of the previous panel: the role of the second assessor has been revised, new evaluation forms were produced, and calibration sessions were introduced to ensure equity in scoring.

The current panel established that the three programmes adopt a similar procedure for the assessment of the bachelor and master theses. Each thesis is supervised by two staff members: the supervisor and the second reader. While the supervisor accompanies the student during the entire thesis trajectory, the second reader steps in at two specific moments: to review the thesis proposal and to assess the final thesis product. In both cases, the two assessors assess the thesis/proposal separately and report their individual assessments on separate marking sheets before they reach a consensus on a Go/No go for the thesis proposal and on the final grade for the thesis product. ES students in the dual degree with Münster have two assessors for their thesis: one from Twente and one from Münster. This set-up safeguards that the theses fulfil the criteria of both universities.

In addition to the formal safeguarding tasks of the thesis assessment quality by the Examination Board, the programmes initiated a so-called "thesis carrousel" in spring 2023. This carrousel aimed to ensure that theses are assessed consistently, to gather data on assessment for discussion with the Examination Board and (future) supervisors, and to improve the thesis assessment process. The results of the thesis carrousel indicated according to the programmes a good level of consistency between the original supervisors and the re-assessment. The data, moreover, will be used to further enhance consistency.

As part of its external review, the panel studied a representative sample of 15 theses per programme, submitted in the academic years 2020-2021, 2021-2022 and/or 2022-2023. This sample contained also several theses submitted by ES students who eventually obtained the dual degree. While the quality of the theses is addressed in the next section on Achieved Learning Outcomes, the panel also looked at the completed

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evaluation forms. The panel noticed that the format of the evaluation forms is very similar across the three programmes. There are separate marking sheets for the supervisor and the second assessor, every form contains the learning objectives of the bachelor/master thesis, and every form contains both extensive room for qualitative feedback and a quantitative section where each assessor is providing one score per criterion. The learning goals of the bachelor and the master theses are different, and so are the assessment criteria.

Each bachelor thesis is assessed on six criteria: (i) introduction and research question, (ii) theory, (iii) data, operationalization and methods, (iv) analysis, (v) conclusion and discussion, and (vi) form and style. The PA and ES theses are reviewed on seven criteria: (i) introduction and research question, (ii) literature review and theoretical framework, (iii) research method and design, (iv) analysis and results, (v) conclusion and discussion, (vi) skills, and (vii) presentation. The panel noticed that while the learning objectives and assessment criteria were set already a few years ago, the evaluation forms have been redesigned for the thesis assessments in the academic year 2022-2023. While the 'old' forms contained rubrics per assessment criterion, the 'new' forms allowed for more qualitative feedback. The panel welcomes the new thesis assessment forms, which are clear and effective in obtaining both quantitative grades and qualitative feedback. Both the common and the specific elements are relevant and align with the learning goals of the bachelor and master thesis, respectively.

The panel was overall satisfied with the way the theses in all three programmes had been assessed. This appreciation covers both the overall scores students obtained for the thesis and the assessors' written feedback on the evaluation form. In fact the panel found that in each of the 45 cases, the thesis evaluation form had been completed properly and the final score reflected the quality of the thesis. While each thesis assessment was motivated at least to some extent, the combination of scores and feedback made each thesis assessment transparent and insightful. Moreover, the panel noticed that several assessor teams in each of the three programmes who had used the new evaluation forms had gone at lengths to provide insightful feedback on their scores per criterion.

All in all, the panel was very positive about the quality of the thesis assessment in all three programmes. It endorses the efforts made by the assessment stakeholders to address the recommendations of the previous panel and found the result highly satisfactory. Given that the panel also reviewed a sample of the most recent (2022-2023) theses, it fully subscribes to the findings of the thesis carrousel that the theses were assessed and scored in a very consistent way. Moreover, all final scores were "to the point" and there were no cases of over-grading as noticed by the previous panel. As an element to take into consideration for future developments, the programmes may want to consider if assessor teams should provide qualitative feedback on each criterion or not. In general, the panel found the feedback relevant and insightful. However, the size and focus of the feedback still differed per assessor team, and this in all three programmes.

Assuring assessment quality
The panel was informed that the quality of assessment in the three degree programmes under review is safeguarded by the Examination Board (EB) Governance Sciences. The EB consists of a chair, three members, an external member, and a registrar. The chair and members of the Board are teaching in the three programmes under review; the external member is a staff member with assessment expertise at the nearby University of Applied Sciences (Saxion).

The EB Governance Sciences is one of four Boards in the BMS faculty and is organized in accordance with the provisions of the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act. There is regular collaboration between the four EB chairs in the so-called BMS Faculty Chamber of Chairs. The activities of the four EBs are presented together in a joint annual report.

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In accordance with the Safeguarding Assessment Quality protocol, the EB meets the Programme Director twice per year. Moreover, the Board regularly invites examiners to present and discuss the design and implementation of tests and assessments. In addition to their formal safeguarding tasks, the EB members also advise colleagues individually or in group.

During the discussion on site, the panel was informed that the EB has followed the trajectory that started right after the previous accreditation visit and led to the adjustment of the thesis evaluation forms. It was also involved in the set-up, implementation and follow-up of the thesis carrousel. This first carrousel identified three concrete questions/suggestions that will be discussed internally among the assessment stakeholders: (i) whether the new evaluation forms should also have a rubric, as was the case in the older forms; (ii) whether students should obtain at least a pass score on all six/seven criteria; and (iii) whether each of the six/seven criteria should be weighted in a uniform way. The panel advises the stakeholders not to leave the issues in the open but effectively take a decision and abide by it.

The panel gathered from the written materials and the discussions on site that quality of assessment is an important and recurring issue in the day-to-day implementation of the three degree programmes under review. In so far as the safeguarding of assessment quality is concerned, the panel noticed that the programmes can rely on good quality regulations. Moreover, the EB Governance Sciences has extensive, relevant and complementary expertise to fulfil its tasks. In this regard the panel welcomed the analysis shared by the EB with regard to the results of and follow-up to the thesis carrousel. Reading the EB annual report and the thesis carrousel analysis and hearing the analyses of the EB representatives during the site visit, the panel found the EB to be competent and its analyses pertinent. According to the panel, it would be to the benefit of the programmes and their assessment quality if the EB were more assertive in enforcing the regulations and following up on its own recommendations.

Considerations

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel considers that assessment is organized in a similar – and exemplary – way in all three programmes under review. The programme assessment plan describes not only the connection between the programme learning outcomes and the module learning goals, but also demonstrates that the respective course assessments effectively test all learning goals and programme learning outcomes. Each programme features a good mixture of formative and summative approaches as well as a variety of assessment types. The number of tests per module ensure that student performance is objectively analysed.

The panel thinks highly of the thesis assessment quality in all three programmes. It commends the assessment stakeholders for the way in which they addressed the recommendations of the previous panel and found the result highly satisfactory. Its own sample review showed that in every case the final score reflected the quality of the thesis and that the feedback by the supervisor and second assessor was transparent and insightful. If anything, the programmes may want to issue some guidance on the size of the feedback and consider that assessor teams should provide feedback on each criterion or not. It also advises the assessment stakeholders to follow-up on the conclusions from the thesis carrousel.

The panel considers that the quality of assessment is an important and recurring issue in the day-to-day implementation of the three degree programmes under review. In line with its findings on the educational quality of courses, the panel considers that there is also a genuine assessment quality culture among staff. Moreover, the safeguarding of assessment quality in the MST, PA and ES programmes is in competent hands

with the Examination Board. If anything, the panel advises the EB to be more assertive in enforcing the regulations and following up on its own recommendations.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that all three degree programmes meet standard 3 of the NVAO-EAPAA framework.

Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes

> The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Findings

There are two ways to establish whether the programme learning outcomes have been achieved – through a quality review of the final products and through checking what graduates are doing after they finished the programme. The panel has looked at both elements when assessing the end level qualifications of the three bachelor and master programmes.

Thesis quality
As part of its external review, the panel studied a sample of 15 bachelor MST theses, which had been submitted in the academic year 2022-2023. The sample was representative in terms of final scores and included a variety of thesis supervisors. Overall, the panel found that each thesis fulfilled at least the minimum standards of a final product at academic bachelor level. It also agreed in all cases with the final score given by the assessors: theses with a high score were indeed of better quality than those who received a lower (pass) mark.

Reporting on their thesis sample review, the panel members indicated that the topics were of contemporary interest and that students embraced both the challenges and the methodological issues and perspectives. It was clear from the theses that students have been trained extensively in the previous modules and were supported properly in the thesis semester to produce such good quality reports. Furthermore, the panel noticed a big difference in quality between the highly scored theses and those with a lower (but still pass) score. The latter theses described the research they had conducted following an identical template. In these cases the literature review and empirical research were of satisfactory quality but the documents were written in a laborious style. The good quality theses, however, were really good: the panel found them interesting to read and prepared by inspired students.

In its reflection on standard 4, the programme mentioned as a strong point that the improvement in coherence in the learning objectives within and across modules had strengthened the constructive alignment of the programme with the final project, i.e. the bachelor thesis. Based on its own sample review, the panel endorses this statement and confirms that the thesis topics indeed reflect the latest societal and technological developments. This, in turn, showcases how the programme can adjust to changing trends.

As part of its external review, the panel studied a sample of 15 PA theses, which had been submitted in the academic years 2020-2021, 2021-2022 and 2022-2023. The sample was representative in terms of final scores and domain profiles. Overall, the panel found that each thesis fulfilled at least the minimum standards of a final product at academic master level. It also agreed in all cases to the final score given by the assessors: theses with a high score were indeed of better quality than those who received a lower (pass) mark.

The panel also studied a sample of 15 <u>master ES theses</u>, which had been submitted in the academic years 2020-2021, 2021-2022 and 2022-2023. The sample was representative in terms of final scores and included a variety of thesis supervisors. Moreover, the panel included in the sample several theses who were produced by students who eventually obtained the dual degree. Also for this programme, the panel found that each thesis fulfilled at least the minimum standards of a final product at academic master level. The panel also agreed in all cases to the final score given by the assessors: theses with a high score were indeed of better quality than those who received a lower (pass) mark.

Reporting on their thesis sample reviews, the panel members indicated for the PA and ES master programmes that the thesis topics were highly relevant for both policy research and policy practice. Students, moreover, had made an effort to collect their own data, and to analyse and discuss these in the context of a substantial literature review. The methodological skills displayed in the theses were good and students showed that they were able to relate observed empirical phenomena to the existing literature. In addition, several thesis topics had been explored from various theoretical perspectives, which demonstrated according to the panel that the students had the opportunity to explore the breadth of political science thinking and were not limited to a single dominant approach. The panel also noticed that the higher scored theses displayed a mature and informed understanding of the research requirements for an academic approach to problem solving combining theory and practice in a mature and coherent way.

During the previous accreditation visit, the then panel noticed that all three programmes often gave very high thesis grades while it did not find any ground in its own review to assume that the theses were of exceptionally high quality. Based on its own extensive sample review, the current panel established that each thesis in every programme was scored adequately. The programme teams and assessors should be given credit for this improvement.

Performance of graduates
The panel gathered from the written materials and the discussions on site that each of the three programmes under review constitute an adequate preparation for a follow-up study or professional career.

Two tables on the website show that bachelor students have different choices once they graduate from the <u>MST programme</u>. Those who decide to continue their education at UT generally pursue the PA or ES master. Other students continue their studies elsewhere in the Netherlands or abroad. Another group decides to take a gap year or accept an internship position before enrolling on a master programme. Over the years, roughly a quarter of the MST graduates moved on directly to the PA or ES programme. This means that 75% of the graduates left UT. Asked about their plans for next year, 30% of the MST graduates indicated in the 2022-2023 exit survey that they would take a gap year, while 25% would do "other" things (in particular internships) and just above 20% planned to study in another university in the Netherlands or abroad.

While the discussions with a very broad group of alumni showed that all MST graduates eventually manage to find a decent position on the labour market, the panel was surprised by the limited throughput from the bachelor to the master programmes. The programme teams on the one hand indicated that bachelor graduates are nowadays highly mobile and tend to build their educational career by pursuing degrees at different universities in order to strengthen their future position on the labour market. On the other hand, the management conceded that the current throughput figures are really low. Hence, the panel and the management agreed that it may be worthwhile enhancing the communication to those bachelor students who are already in Twente that the PA and the ES programmes constitute good quality choices for a follow-up master study.

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According to data gathered by the programme, all <u>PA graduates</u> who actively look for a job manage to find employment. A LinkedIn study among the graduates and information from the Alumni office of the university show that graduates are successful in their professional careers. They occupy senior administrative and political positions with local authorities, such as in the municipalities of Enschede, Almelo or The Hague, or at national level with the Ministry of Justice and Safety, the Ministry of Internal Affairs or the National Police. Several other alumni work in different domains as consultants, advisors, or lobbyists, or in research institutions at the University of Twente. The very informative session on site with alumni and employers confirmed that PA graduates pursue a variety of careers and are employed at a level that is in line with their qualifications.

Similar findings apply to the performance of <u>ES graduates</u>: they all pursue a variety of careers in line with their master studies. Some graduates end up in similar positions as their PA colleagues with local (Municipalities of Deventer or Nuenen) or national authorities (Ministries of Health or Infrastructure and Environment). Others work at international level, for instance at the European Commission. Several graduates become consultants, advisers or lobbyists, or work in research institutions, such as the Centre of Policy Studies or at The Hague University of Applied Sciences.

Alumni
Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel gathered that the programmes are keeping in touch with their alumni in different ways. In addition to dedicated LinkedIn groups and the alumni association Pallas Athena, alumni are invited for guest lecturers or function as providers of internship positions. In one case, an alumnus is the contact person at the local municipality which offers a module group assignment to an entire cohort. The panel noticed that these activities are *ad hoc*, not to say *ad hominem*. However, a comprehensive group of alumni the panel spoke to during the visit showed enthusiasm for the programmes and interest in solidifying their connections to BMS.

In addition to inviting some of these alumni to join the professional field committee, the panel thinks that the programmes could adopt a more personal approach towards their alumni and invite them to dedicated events to meet with each other and with students. In this way a real alumni network would evolve that can serve as a source for guest lectures, internships, career talks, etc. The ES programme could benefit in particular from the presence of alumni in Brussels to help organize a study visit for its students.

Considerations
Based on the written materials, the thesis sample and the discussions on site, the panel considers that students who eventually graduate the MST, PA and ES programmes have effectively achieved all learning outcomes. Based on its sample review, the panel thinks highly of the thesis quality in all three programmes. Compared to the thesis review by the previous panel, the thesis scores were now much more adequate and aligned in all cases with the appreciation of the panel. The current panel wants to commend the three programmes for this improvement.

Furthermore, the panel concludes that upon graduation students find a job that is in line with the objective of their respective programme. In this regard, the panel is convinced that the MST, PA and ES programmes constitute an important lever for the career of their graduates. The competencies acquired by the bachelor graduates allow them to pursue master programmes at UT and elsewhere in the Netherlands or abroad, while the PA and ES programmes offer a good quality and comprehensive preparation for professional employment as their graduates invariably find a job that is commensurate with their level and the field of their specialization.

The panel welcomes both the concrete initiatives and the structural attention to involve alumni in the programmes. However, there is room to do more. Hence the panel's suggestion that programmes step up their efforts and involve alumni more systematically in both curriculum-related activities and dedicated extra-curricular events.

Conclusion
The panel concludes that all three degree programmes meet standard 4 of the NVAO-EAPAA framework.

Standard 5. Diversity

> Staff and student populations should adequately reflect society, in various ways. The programme has an adequate strategy for dealing with the diverse backgrounds of students.

Findings

Policy
The panel gathered from the website that diversity among students, staff and professors has gained prominence in the university. In September 2020, UT committed itself to the National Action Plan for more Diversity and Inclusion in higher education and research. Right from the start, UT decided to add Equity to the equation of Diversity and Inclusion because (social) privileges are unequally distributed and equity allows for fair access and increasing inclusion. The current Diversity, Equity & Inclusion plan 2022-2024 determined three focus areas for structural improvement: (i) cultural cohesion and social safety, (ii) access and equity, and (iii) gender, gender identity and gender expression. Across all focus areas, the aim is to create a socially safe university as an essential step towards a truly inclusive university.

The panel was informed that the MST, PA and ES programmes acknowledge the importance of diversity and support the work of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion team at central university level to expand diversity awareness among faculties, programmes, staff and students. One concrete example is the support by the programme and the university team for the organization of a feminist book club, which was launched among others by an MST student. Staff from their side for instance successfully submitted a project application to the UT Incentive Fund to develop anti-racist training workshops. The panel welcomes both the individual initiatives of staff and students and the opportunities to bring diversity, equity and inclusion "to the classroom and the work floor" through university funding.

Student diversity
Data provided by the programmes on the student gender balance show that the bachelor programme usually attracts somewhat more female than male students: while the average distribution is 60%-40%, there was an almost perfect balance in the 2022-2023 cohort. The numbers and shares of male and female PA students have fluctuated over time: in 2021-2022, there were much more female than male students, while the balance was completely overturned in 2022-2023. Due to the low absolute numbers of ES students, the fluctuation is relatively high, but the gender distribution among ES students has never been too much out of balance. According to the panel, the current gender representation in the different cohorts is likely to contribute in the future to a better representation of women in leadership positions in the public sector.

Staff diversity
Since the previous accreditation visit, the programmes have continued to strengthen staff diversity. While several teaching staff left the programmes, the newly recruited staff is quite diverse in terms of gender and

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nationality. Data provided by the programmes show that the male and female staff are almost in balance: 53% vs 47%. Moreover, programmes now include a considerable share (47%) of international staff. The panel noticed the staff diversity during all sessions on site, not in the least during the management session featuring both a Dean and a Programme Director who are female and international. The panel expects that the growing number of female assistant and associate professors is likely to lead in the future to a balanced gender representation also at the level of full professors.

Considerations

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel considers that diversity is on the radar of the programmes, the faculty and the university. It welcomes the developments at central university level and considers that they provide a useful framework for concrete initiatives at grassroots level. The panel also welcomes the overall aim to create a socially safe university as an essential step towards a truly inclusive university. According to the panel, the efforts of all programme stakeholders to effectively implement student-centred education contribute to achieving these long-term goals. At the level of the individual programmes, the panel thinks highly of the diversity in the staff team.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that all three degree programmes meet standard 5 of the NVAO-EAPAA framework.

General conclusion NVAO-EAPAA framework

The panel has established that all three degree programmes at UT meet all five NVAO-EAPAA standards under consideration: intended learning outcomes, teaching-learning environment, assessment, achieved learning outcomes and diversity.

As a result, the panel's overall assessment of the quality of the bachelor programme Management, Society and Technology is **positive**.

As a result, the panel's overall assessment of the quality of the master programme Public Administration is **positive.**

As a result, the panel's overall assessment of the quality of the master programme European Studies is **positive**.

Developments points

Given its overall positive conclusion, the panel does not issue any strong or binding recommendations. However, the materials and discussions have revealed a number of areas where the panel sees room for improvement. It advises the programme management to:
- enhance communication on the strengths and distinguishing features of the three programmes by emphasising that:
  - MST is essentially about public administration in society and technology
  - PA students can opt for a wealth of relevant and unique domain profiles
  - ES is not 'your average foundational European Studies degree'
- articulate these distinguishing features in all curricula, particularly in:
  - MST – to make optimum use of the technological opportunities on campus
  - ES – to sharpen the coherence among courses regarding international contents
- widen cross-border internationalization towards a comprehensive international outlook
- adjust the contents of the pre-master programme
- revitalize the previously existing professional field committee
- build an alumni network and involve alumni more systematically.

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Appendix 1. Intended learning outcomes

Bachelor Management, Society and Technology

1. Knowledge-base of the field of Management, Society and Technology

1.1 A student has knowledge and comprehension of:

- the interdisciplinary foundations of public administration: policy, governance, and public management;
- the multi-level nature of public administrations and governance - the local, regional, national, European, and the global level.

1.2 A student is able to analyse, evaluate and reflect on modern socio-technological challenges from a public administration perspective.

1.3 A student has knowledge and comprehension of the development of ideas in the field of public administration and philosophy of science.

2. Social scientific research in public administration

2.1 A student is able to perform, under supervision, all aspects of a social scientific study in the field of public administration:

- formulate a scientific research question and consistent sub-questions that produces new knowledge in the field;
- formulate testable hypotheses that are logically derived from an appropriate theoretical framework;
- develop a feasible research design;
- carry out a simple research, using appropriate methods and techniques of the social sciences for data collection and -analysis;
- reflect on the results of a study—including their own—in terms of the research design, hypotheses, theory, and the research problem.

2.2 A student is able to, under supervision, interpret and evaluate the results of social science research, and form a well-reasoned opinion in the case of missing or incomplete data.

3. Analysis of challenges to society and to public administration and design

3.1 A student is able to employ a systematic approach to theorizing and problem solving. A student is able to use that approach to identify and reformulate ill-structured societal challenges as a (combination of) a policy, a governance, and a public management problem.

3.2 A student can analyse a societal challenge, combining the knowledge base of public administration with knowledge from relevant disciplines.

3.3 A student has the creative skills to design a solution to the reformulated societal problem in terms of policy, governance, and public management—taking into account the socio-technical context and the implementation and evaluation of the design.

3.4 A student is able to reflect on (changes in) the ethical, political, and societal implications of the designed policy-, governance-, or public management-solution.

4. Academic and professional skills

4.1 A student has basic analytical skills:

- A student is able to recognise modes of reasoning, including deduction, induction, and analogy.
- A student is able to logically reason, exchange, and justify arguments in a critical, open, and constructive way—both with specialists in the field of public administration and non-specialists.

4.2 A student is able, with supervision, to critically self-reflect on his/her own thinking, decision-making, and acting—and to adjust these on the basis of this reflection. A student is able, with supervision, to spot gaps in his/her own knowledge, and to revise and extend it through study, using information skills and literature study. A student is able to understand the important debates and new developments in the field.

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4.3 A student is able to effectively communicate in the English language about his/her work and the work of others (specialist and non-specialist audiences), including the provision and reception of constructive feedback: (a) verbally (speaking in public, debates, discussions); (b) in writing (papers, reports, posters).

4.4 A student is able to:

- perform project-based work in (interdisciplinary and intercultural) teams;
- understand team roles and team dynamics.

4.5 A student is able to reflect on future career perspectives in the field of public administration.

4.6 A student is able to comprehend the socio-economic, ethical/normative, and cultural consequences of changes in the knowledge base for society at large—including issues of reflexivity, legitimacy, and moral leadership.

Master Public Administration

1. Knowledge-base of the field of Public Administration

Graduates have mastered interdisciplinary knowledge and skills at an advanced level in the field of Public Administration.

Graduates:

1.1 are able to identify, discuss, and review state of the art theories, models, and results of research in the fields of policy, governance, management, and societal challenges.

1.2 are able to identify, discuss, and review applications of research in a relevant domain, such as health, communication / ICT, education, science and technology, safety and security, sustainability, city innovation.

2. Social scientific research and design competences in Public Administration

Graduates have research and design competences at an advanced level in the field of public administration.

Graduates are largely independently able to:

2.1 identify, (re)define, and analyse a complex, ill-structured societal problem from a theoretical framework in terms of a (combination of) a policy, governance and/or management problem.

2.2 incorporate knowledge from relevant other domains, including technology.

2.3 Carry out all aspects of an advanced-level social scientific study in the field of public administration. They are able to:

- formulate a scientific research question and consistent sub-questions;
- formulate testable hypotheses that are logically derived from an appropriate theoretical framework;
- develop a feasible research design and carry out a research, using appropriate methods and techniques of the social sciences for data collection and -analysis;
- interpret and evaluate the results of their analysis. They reflect on the results of their completed research, including a well-reasoned opinion in the case of missing or incomplete data;
- indicate and (ex-ante) evaluate the theoretical, practical, and ethical implications of the research for the field of public administration and provide recommendations for further research.

2.4 Using scientific knowledge and models, graduates are able to design a solution to, or develop an advice about, a societal challenge in terms of (either) policy, governance, and management.

- They use a systematic design approach, creative skills, and—if applicable—technology.
- They take into account (the organization of) the implementation of their design.
- They reflect on the ethical, political, and societal implications of the solution.

3. Academic and professional skills

Graduates have general academic and professional skills at an advanced level they can employ for the benefit of their future career.

Graduates:

3.1 have academic reasoning skills, they are able to apply modes of reasoning (including deduction, induction, and analogy) and exchange and justify arguments in a critical, open, and constructive way.

3.2 are able to critically reflect on, and form an opinion on, the work and professional actions of themselves and others. Students are able to give constructive feedback (advice) and receive and make use of feedback (advice) from others to improve their actions, work (processes) and products.

3.3 are able to effectively communicate in the English language about the research and designs of themselves and others, both verbally (speaking in public, debates, discussions) and in writing (papers, reports, posters) in an academic and professional environment—taking into account the appropriate norms and conventions, as well as characteristics of the target group or audience.

3.4 are able to effectively and efficiently collaborate with others, both in an academic and professional environment.

3.5 are able to use the results of their work to advise a commissioning party in a convincing and goal-oriented way.

3.6 are able to spot gaps in their knowledge and know the ways to revise and extend their knowledge in a goal-oriented way. They are able to use their information-, media-, and ICT-skills.

Master European Studies

1. Knowledge-base of the field of European Studies
Graduates have mastered interdisciplinary knowledge and skills at an advanced level in the field of European Studies.

Graduates:
1.1 have academic knowledge of the key disciplines in European Studies such as international and European law and politics, and the governance of social and economic policies.
1.2 are able to identify, discuss, and review state of the art theories, models, and results of research in the fields of European studies.
1.3 are able to identify, discuss, and review applications of research in a relevant domain, such as security, welfare and health, science and technology and sustainability.

2. Social scientific research and design competences in European Studies
Graduates have research and design competences at an advanced level in the field of European Studies.

Graduates are largely independently able to:
2.1 identify, (re)define, and analyse global societal challenges from a theoretical framework on the basis of policy, governance and regulatory perspectives.
2.2 incorporate knowledge from relevant other domains, including technology.
2.3 Carry out all aspects of an advanced-level social scientific study in the field of European Studies. They are able to:
- formulate a scientific research question and consistent sub-questions;
- formulate testable hypotheses that are logically derived from an appropriate theoretical framework;
- develop a feasible research design and carry out a research, using appropriate methods and techniques of the social sciences for data collection and -analysis;
- interpret and evaluate the results of their analysis. They reflect on the results of their completed research, including a well-reasoned opinion in the case of missing or incomplete data;
- indicate and (ex-ante) evaluate the theoretical, practical, and ethical implications of the research for the field of European Studies and provide recommendations for further research.
2.4 Use scientific knowledge and models, in such a way that graduates are able to design a solution to, or develop an advice about, a societal challenge on the basis of policy, governance, and regulatory perspectives.

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- They use a systematic design approach, creative skills, and—if applicable—technology.
- They take into account (the organization of) the implementation of their design.
- They reflect on the ethical, political, regulatory and societal implications of the solution.

3. Academic and professional skills

Graduates have general academic and professional skills at an advanced level they can employ for the benefit of their future career.

Graduates:

3.1 have academic reasoning skills, they are able to apply modes of reasoning (including deduction, induction, and analogy) and exchange and justify arguments in a critical, open, and constructive way.

3.2 are able to critically reflect on, and form an opinion on, the work and professional actions of themselves and others. Students are able to give constructive feedback (advice) and receive and make use of feedback (advice) from others to improve their actions, work (processes) and products.

3.3 are able to effectively communicate in the English language about the research and designs of themselves and others, both verbally (speaking in public, debates, discussions) and in writing (papers, reports, posters) in an academic and professional environment—taking into account the appropriate norms and conventions, as well as characteristics of the target group or audience.

3.4 are able to effectively and efficiently collaborate with others, both in an academic and professional environment.

3.5 are able to use the results of their work to advise a commissioning party in a convincing and goal-oriented way.

3.6 are able to spot gaps in their knowledge and know the ways to revise and extend their knowledge in a goal-oriented way, using their information-, media-, and ICT-skills.
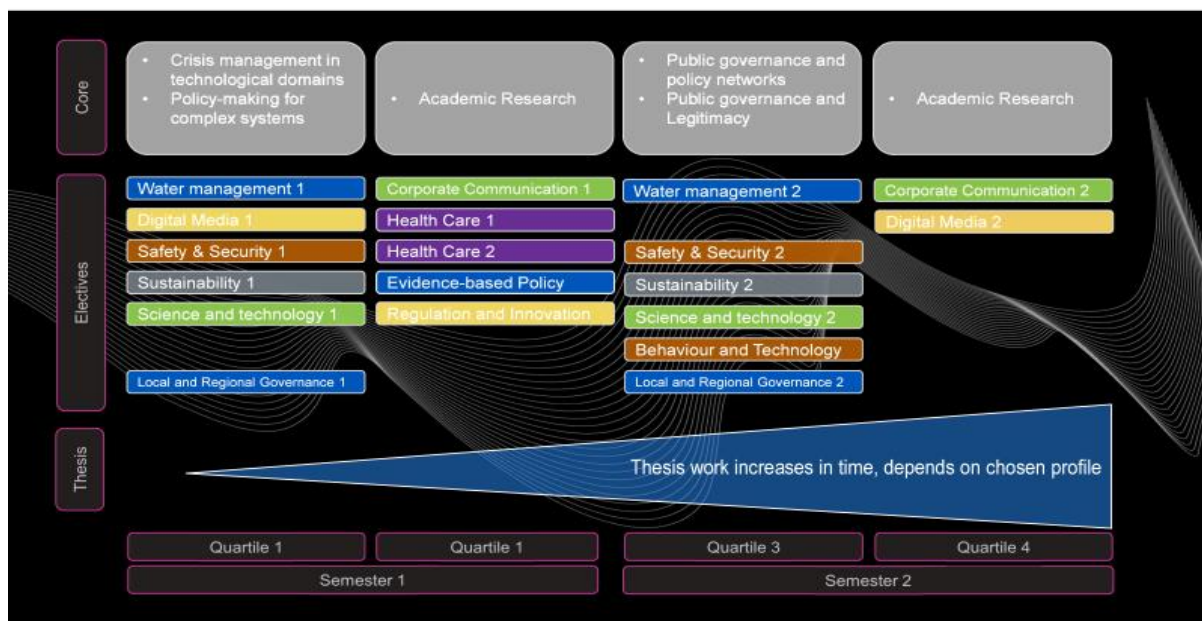
Appendix 2. Programme curricula

Bachelor Management, Society and Technology

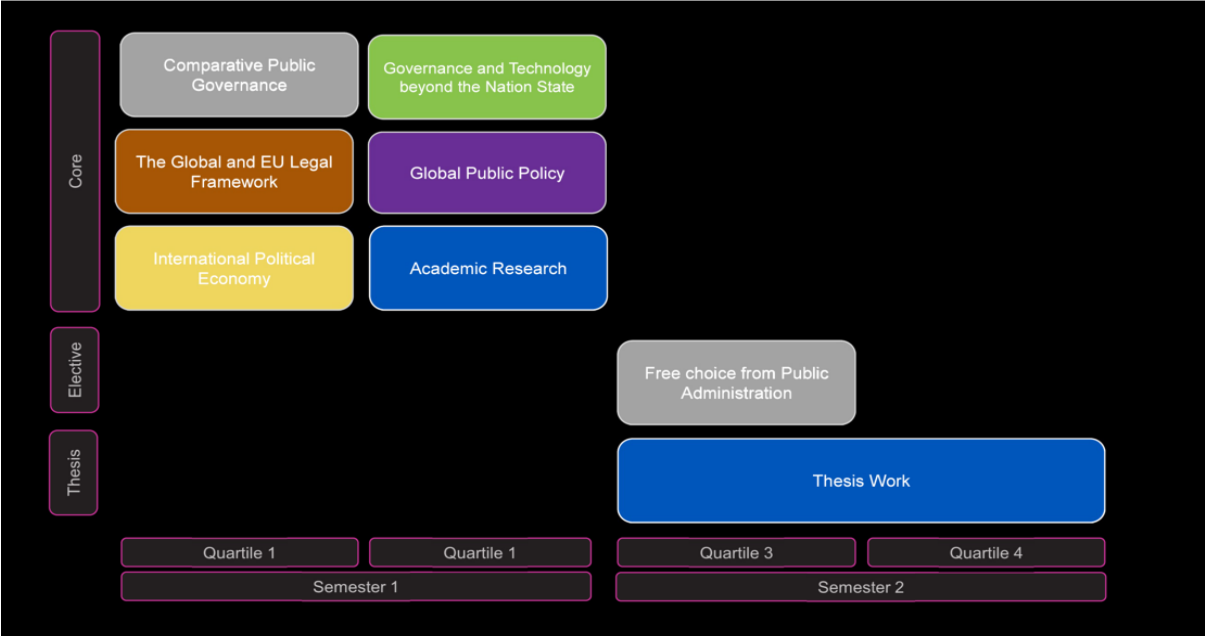Curriculum Diagram of the Bachelor Management, Society and Technology
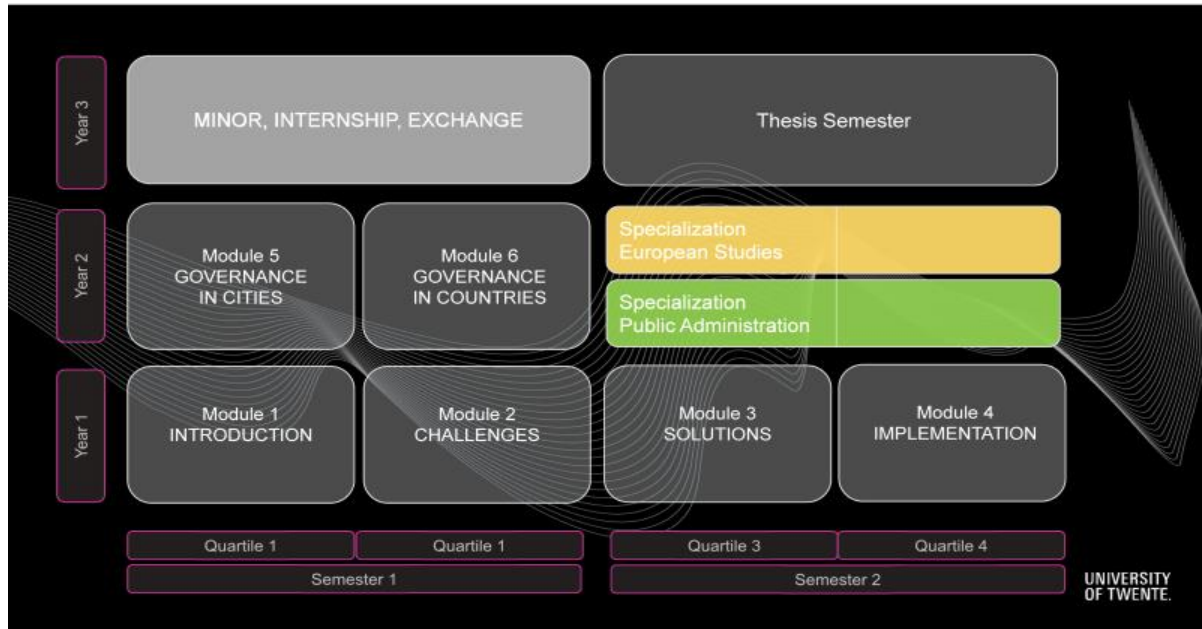
Master Public Administration

Curriculum Diagram of the Master Public Administration

Master European Studies

Curriculum Diagram of the Master European Studies

Appendix 3. Programme of the site visit

Wednesday 8 November 2024

08.45	Arrival, welcome and settling in
09.00	Internal meeting
11.00	Interview Management
12.15	Interview Bachelor students
13.00	Lunch and internal meeting
14.00	Interview Bachelor staff
15.00	Interview students MSc Public Administration (PA)
16:00	Interview students MSc European Studies (ES)
17:00	Interview professional field and alumni
18.00	Internal meeting and wrap-up of the day
19.30	Departure for dinner in the city

Thursday 9 November 2024

08.30	Arrival and internal preparation
09.00	Interview staff MSc PA and MSc ES
10.15	Interview Examination board
11.00	Internal meeting
11.30	Final interview management
12.15	Development Dialogue
13.15	Lunch and internal deliberations
14.15	Oral feedback
15.00	End of site visit

Appendix 4. Materials

Prior to the site visit, the panel studied 15 theses and their evaluation for each of the three programmes under review. Information on the selected theses is available from Academion upon request.

In the run-up to the site-visit Twente University put at disposition a website with the following materials:

- Self-Evaluation Report Bachelor Management, Society and Technology
- Self-Evaluation Report Master Public Administration
- Self-Evaluation Report European Studies

Annexes:

- BMS Faculty Organogram
- Domain Specific Reference Framework PAGO
- Curriculum overview
- Course descriptions
- Faculty data
- Completion rates
- Teacher student ratio
- Student chapter
- SWOT-analysis
- Education and Examination Regulations
- Annual Report Programme Committee
- Annual Report Exam Board
- Exit surveys
- Thesis manuals
- Thesis evaluation forms
- Thesis carrousel
- Public Administration Jobdigger
- European Studies Jobdigger
- Previous accreditation report (QANU Netherlands)
- Accreditation report Public Governance across Borders (AQAS Germany)
- Accreditation report Comparative Public Governance (AQAS Germany)

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