# International Development Studies

**Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Wageningen University**

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# CONTENTS



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# Report on the bachelor programme in Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudies and the master programmes in International Development Studies and in Development and Rural Innovation of Wageningen University

This report takes the NVAO's Assessment framework for limited programme assessments as a starting point.

## Administrative data regarding the programmes

**Bachelor programme in Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudies**

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of the programme: | Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudies (International Development Studies) |
| CROHO number: | 56837 |
| Level of the programme: | bachelor |
| Orientation of the programme: | academic |
| Number of credits: | 180 EC |
| Specializations or tracks: | Sociology of Development<br>Economics of Development<br>Communication, Technology and Policy |
| Location(s): | Wageningen |
| Mode(s) of study: | full time |
| Expiration of accreditation: | 31-12-2013 |

**Master programme in International Development Studies**

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of the programme: | International Development Studies |
| CROHO number: | 66837 |
| Level of the programme: | master |
| Orientation of the programme: | academic |
| Number of credits: | 120 EC |
| Specializations or tracks: | Sociology of Development<br>Economics of Development<br>Communication, Technology and Policy |
| Location(s): | Wageningen |
| Mode(s) of study: | full time |
| Expiration of accreditation: | 31-12-2013 |

**Master programme in Development and Rural Innovation**

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of the programme: | Development and Rural Innovation |
| CROHO number: | 60103 |
| Level of the programme: | master |
| Orientation of the programme: | academic |
| Number of credits: | 120 EC |
| Specializations or tracks: | Communication and Innovation Studies<br>Rural Development Sociology<br>Technology and Agrarian Development |
| Location(s): | Wageningen |
| Mode(s) of study: | full time |
| Expiration of accreditation: | 31-12-2013 |

The visit of the assessment committee International Development Studies to the Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences of Wageningen University took place on 9 and 10 May 2012.

## Administrative data regarding the institution

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of the institution: | Wageningen University |
| Status of the institution: | publicly funded institution |
| Result institutional quality assurance assessment: | positive |

## Quantitative data regarding the programmes

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

## Composition of the assessment committee

The committee that assessed the bachelor programme in International Development Studies, the master programme in International Development Studies and the master programme in Development and Rural Innovation consisted of:

- Prof. F. Zwarts (chair), professor at University of Groningen and professor and manager at University Campus Fryslân;
- Mrs. R.L. Prenen, MSc, independent educational adviser;
- Mrs. prof. F. Wilson, International Development Studies, Roskilde University, Denmark;
- Prof. G. Van Huylenbroeck, professor of Agricultural Economics and Rural Environmental Economics at Ghent University, Belgium;
- Prof. C. Garforth, Professor of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development, University of Reading (UK);
- Mrs. L. Ivoanova, BSc, master student in International Economic Relations at the University of National and World Economy (Bulgaria).

The committee was supported by Mrs. M. Maarleveld, MSc, who acted as secretary. Appendix 1 contains the curricula vitae of the members of the committee.

## General information regarding Wageningen University

*Educational programme assessments in Life Sciences at Wageningen University*
A total of 31 educational programmes of Wageningen University which could not be included in a national disciplinary assessment had to be assessed in 2012 in order to apply for reaccreditation. In consultation with QANU, Wageningen University decided to divide the work among fourteen committees in the period between March and July 2012. For each site visit different expert committee members were invited to assess the programmes. In addition to the expert committee members, two non-expert committee members were involved as core members in all site visits and programme assessments. These non-expert committee members were the chairman, Prof. F. Zwarts, and the educational expert, Mrs. R.L. Prenen,

MSc. This construction was chosen to guarantee consistency between the fourteen assessments as well as to respect the diversity between the programmes. Prior to the site visits an extended kick-off meeting was held in February 2012, during which topics applicable to all programmes were discussed (for the programme, see Appendix 6). In addition to the core members of the committee, an expert member (Prof. E. Van Damme), a student member (Mrs. T.I.E. Veldkamp, BSc) and both secretaries to the committees (Dr M.J.V. Van Bogaert and Mrs. M. Maarleveld, MSc) were present. During the kick-off meeting, interviews were held with representatives of the Education Institute, Programmme Committees, study advisers, Examining Boards and alumni. The findings of the kick-off meeting were used as input for the fourteen site visits and are incorporated in the committee reports on the 31 educational programmes. Based on the information received in the first five site visits, the core committee members held another interview with the Examining Boards and a selection of study advisers. This meeting was held on 6 June 2012 and provided additional insight into the functioning of and relation between the Examining Boards and study advisers.

*Wageningen University*
Wageningen University is comprised of one faculty, the Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. The Faculty consists of 80 chair groups, arranged in five departments. All educational programmes, bachelor and master, are organized by the Education Institute (OWI). The Board of the OWI is responsible for the content, quality and finances of the educational programmes. Every programme has a programme director and a Programme Committee, consisting of equal numbers of students and academic staff. The Programme Committee is responsible for the content and quality of the programme, though in a formal sense this is subject to approval by the Board of the OWI. The programme director is responsible for the realization of the programme.

The courses are provided by staff of the chair groups, the 'supply side'. The Programme Committees are considered the 'demand side', with the programme director being the 'matchmaker'.

Wageningen has four Examining Boards, usually consisting of five to eight people from different disciplines. Before the site visit period, these boards were in the process of strengthening the quality management of assessment processes and procedures.

Each programme has one or more study advisers, who are tasked with supporting students throughout their study career. Study advisers provide information and invite students for progress evaluations and meetings to plan the student's individual curriculum. Each student needs the study adviser's approval for the elective parts of the programme s/he has chosen.

*Internationalization*
Wageningen University has an international reputation, in terms of both research qualities and the number of international master students. The committee especially considered the latter point since there are both possible drawbacks and advantages to having many international students. Extensive discussions during the site visits made it clear to the committee that despite the fact that it will always be difficult to assess the quality of enrolling international students, the programme managements are well aware of the imperfections of its procedures and have tightened the selection in the past few years. Overall the committee thinks that the advantages of having many international students outweigh the disadvantages.

## Working method of the assessment committee

*Preparation*
After receiving the critical reflection, the project manager checked the quality and completeness of the information provided. After approval, the critical reflection was forwarded to the committee, in both printed form and digitally. In addition, the committee members selected and read a total of 15 theses for each programme that was assessed (see Appendix 7).

Before the site visit the project manager created a draft programme for the interviews (see Appendix 6). The draft programme was discussed with the chair of the committee and the coordinator of the educational institute. As requested by QANU, the coordinators of the programmes carefully composed a select and representative panel for all interviews.

*Site visit*
During the initial meeting at the start of each site visit, the committee members discussed among themselves their findings regarding the critical reflection and the theses. They also discussed their task and working methods and the proposed domain-specific requirements (see Appendix 2).

During the site visit, interviews were held with representatives of the programme, students, staff members, the Educational Committee, and a study advisor. The Examining Boards were interviewed in the extended kick-off meeting, as can be read on page 6. The committee also received additional information, for example, study books and reports from the meetings of the Educational Committee. This information was examined during the site visit. When considered necessary, committee members could read additional theses during the site visit. A consultation hour was scheduled to give students and staff of the programmes the opportunity to talk to the committee. No requests were received for the consultation hour.

The committee used part of the site visit to discuss the assessment of the programmes and to prepare a preliminary presentation of the findings. The site visit concluded with an oral presentation by the chairman of the general assessment and several specific findings and impressions of the programme.

*Report*
After the site visit the project manager wrote a draft report based on the committee's findings. The draft was first commented upon by the committee members and then sent to the faculty to check for factual irregularities. All comments made by the faculty were discussed with the chair of the committee and, if necessary, with the other committee members. After revision, the report became official.

*Decision rules*
In accordance with the NVAO's Assessment Framework for Limited Programme Assessments (as of 22 November 2011), the committee used the following definitions for the assessment of each individual programme, both of the standards and the total programme.

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

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

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

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

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

## Summary judgement

This report provides the findings and considerations of the Life Sciences committee on the bachelor programme in Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudies and the master programme in International Development Studies and the master programme in Development and Rural Innovation at Wageningen University. The committee assessment is based on information in the critical reflection, interviews during the site visit and a selection of theses.

*Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes*
The objective, profile and intended learning outcomes of the programmes were discussed intensively during the site visit. The main issue concerned the distinctiveness of the two master programmes. The interviews during the site visit and the additional information sent to the committee after the visit convinced the committee that the programmes are in fact two distinct programmes. The bachelor and master programmes in International Development Studies are both social sciences-based programmes. They aim to teach students to study global social transformation processes related to livelihoods, agro-food networks and the environment within a dynamic international context.

The bachelor programme integrates different social science disciplines in a multidisciplinary programme, while the master programme is primarily discipline based, aimed to educate experts who can operate in multidisciplinary teams. The master programme in Development and Rural Innovation aims to integrate social sciences with natural sciences and educate hybrid professionals who can close the gap between those disciplines. It is tailored towards students with a technical or life sciences bachelor degree and with interest in international development. The committee agrees that the differences between the two master programmes justify the existence of both of them. Still, it believes that attention should be paid to carefully and convincingly writing down distinguishing objectives and profiles for both programmes.

Apart from the discussion of the justification of two separate master programmes, the intended learning outcomes are adequate but they do not do justice to the differences that exist between the programmes. Therefore, it recommends the programme team to review the intended learning outcomes and to carefully reflect of how they can better represent the uniqueness of both master programmes. The committee established that the additional information provided after the visit reflects a promising start in making the objectives of the master programmes more distinct from each other.

*Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment*
In general, the committee is positive about the teacher-learning environments in all three programmes. As the curriculum and the multidisciplinarity of the programmes are related to Standard 1, the few remarks the committee on this standard are derived from those discussions. The programme-specific services and student support, student intake, study load and output are similar in the three programmes, and evaluated by the committee as good.

The high quality of staff is regarded as a very strong point of the programmes, especially since the interaction between students and staff is frequent. A mix of different teaching methods in all three programmes is used properly. Regarding the bachelor programme, it is well structured with a coherent curriculum. The multidisciplinarity of the programme was explained as the combination of several disciplines, but all within social sciences.

With respect to the issues raised under Standard 1, on clarification of the profile of the different programmes, it was suggested to call this programme a social science bachelor programme rather than a multidisciplinary one, or otherwise to strengthen the technological layer. The committee was also positive regarding both master programmes. It appreciates the attention paid to accommodating students with different backgrounds and the variety this brings to the programmes. On the downside, the students have very limited common courses in the domain of International Development Studies in the master programme in International Development studies. A large part of the programme in Development and Rural Innovation is compulsory, ensuring a better structured and more coherent programme.

*Standard 3: Assessment and achieved learning outcomes*
The level of the bachelor and master theses impressed the committee and it agreed with all the grades. For all programmes the committee is very positive about the use of different assessment strategies. The drop-out rates vary between the programmes, but all are acceptable, and the committee appreciates the attention being paid to decrease it further. The success rates have improved over the last few years and now come close to the Wageningen University target.

The Examining Boards are in the process of strengthening their role in ensuring the quality of assessment and seem committed to formalizing the assessment system. Having only four Examining Boards is stimulating the consistency and equality of the procedures, at the same time these four Examining Boards are responsible for a total of 49 programmes. This might lead to a certain distance from the programmes, making it difficult for the Examining Boards to really be in control at the programme level.

The committee is of the opinion that with the current pressure on graduating in time in the Netherlands, the number of possible resits at Wageningen University is outdated.

**Conclusion**
The committee assesses the standards from the Assessment Framework for Limited Programme Assessments in the following way:

*Bachelor programme in Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudies:*

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

*Master programme in International Development Studies:*

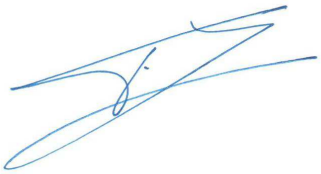
| | |
|---|---|
| Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes | satisfactory |
| Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment | satisfactory |
| Standard 3: Assessment and achieved learning outcomes | good |
| | |
| General conclusion | satisfactory |

*Master programme in Development and Rural Innovation:*

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

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

Date: 29 November 2012



Prof. Frans Zwarts

Marlous Maarleveld MSc.

## Description of the standards from the Assessment Framework for Limited Programme Assessments

**Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes**

The intended learning outcomes of the programme have been concretised with regard to content, level and orientation; they meet international requirements.

**Explanation**:
As for level and orientation (bachelor's or master's; professional or academic), the intended learning outcomes fit into the Dutch qualifications framework. In addition, they tie in with the international perspective of the requirements currently set by the professional field and the discipline with regard to the contents of the programme.

### 1.1 Findings

*Introduction*
After studying the programme objectives, profiles and intended learning outcomes of all three programmes in the critical reflections, the committee was not sure whether the programmes are distinct enough. Especially the rationale for having two separate master programmes was not clear to the committee. This was discussed intensively during the site visit. The consideration section of this standard elaborates on the specifics of these discussions. During the discussions the management, the lecturers and the students were able to clarify the differences between the programmes to the committee. This led to the conclusion that the critical reflections were not clear enough on the differences in the programme objectives and learning outcomes between the two masters. Therefore, at the request of the committee, the programme management was given the possibility to provide additional information describing the differences between the two master programmes. This information was presented to the committee after the site visit and discussed by the committee via e-mail exchanges. The committee decided to incorporate the additional information in its assessment of the programmes.

This part of the report discusses the objectives, profiles and intended learning outcomes as presented in the critical reflections, including the extra information provided after the visit. Furthermore, the level and orientation and requirements of the professional field and discipline are described.

#### Programme objectives and profile

*Bachelor programme in Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudies*
According to the critical reflection, the bachelor programme is a three-year, multidisciplinary programme with the objective of teaching students to study global social transformation processes related to livelihoods, agro-food networks and the environment within a dynamic international context. Graduates are expected to be able to study these transformation processes in an integrated and comparative way at different levels (local, regional, national and international). Special attention is paid to inclusion and exclusion processes, equity and unequal access to resources. The committee had expected to see a specific focus on agriculture or rural areas. The management team explained that it is an important part of the curriculum, but the programme intends to be broader and pay attention to rural-urban interaction, too. The main disciplines in the programme are sociology, economics, communication science, and law & governance. After a common part that provides a multidisciplinary basis in the domain of International Development Studies, students

specialize by choosing courses in one of the majors complemented with electives. The three majors are:

- Sociology of Development;
- Economics of Development;
- Communication, Technology and Policy.

*Master programme in International Development Studies*
According to the critical reflection, the programme focuses on the study of global social transformation processes related to livelihoods, agro-food networks and the environment in a dynamic international context. The two-year programme builds on a number of bachelor's programmes, generally in the areas of Development Studies, sociology, anthropology or economics.

Graduates are able to study social transformation processes independently in an integrated way, in a comparative perspective and at different levels (local, regional, national and international). Special attention is paid to inclusion and exclusion processes, equity and unequal access to resources. The programme not only gives students a critical understanding of social transformation processes, it also teaches them to integrate and share their knowledge, include the diverging views of different stakeholders, and work in multidisciplinary teams.

Students can choose one of three specializations:

- Sociology of Development;
- Economics of Development;
- Communication, Technology & Policy.

In the specializations, students study the domain from corresponding (inter)disciplinary-based perspectives. The additional information provided by the programme management after the site visit stated that the objective of the master programme in International Development Studies is to educate social scientists who are able to study and critically understand social transformation processes related to livelihoods, agro-food networks and the environment within a dynamic international context.

*Master programme in Development and Rural Innovation*
The two-year master programme in Development and Rural Innovation is tailored towards students with a technical or life sciences bachelor degree and with interest in international development. The programme is based on the philosophy that innovations in the field of agriculture, food and natural resource management have a dual nature: they consist of new technological practices, as well as new socio-organizational arrangements. This dual nature of innovation implies that life science and technological knowledge needs to be combined with knowledge on changes in human practices and forms of social organizations. The programme covers a variety of insights from social sciences with a focus on communicative and socio-political dynamics related to the production, exchange, integration and use of scientific and other knowledge. The critical reflection and additional information provided by the programme management after the site visit stated the programme aims to educate hybrid professionals who can analyse social and technological aspects of innovation processes and can bridge the gap between different worlds of experience, knowledge and expertise in the domain of development and rural innovation.

**Intended learning outcomes**
For the three programmes the intended learning outcomes provided in the critical reflections are presented in Appendix 3.

*Bachelor programme in Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudies*
The intended learning outcomes are quite similar to those of the master programme in International Development Studies (see below), which is understandable since both programmes are in the same domain, and the bachelor programme is designed as a preparation for the master programme. According to the critical reflection, a group of experts ( all external) in the field of development studies (professors at universities) confirmed that the intended learning outcomes are appropriate for a bachelor programme in this field and the programme meets the international standards. In the committee's opinion, the intended learning outcomes do not fully represent the programme but after deliberation the committee agrees with them.

*Master programmes in International Development Studies and in Development and Rural Innovation*
The intended learning outcomes of both master programmes were discussed together during the site visit, as they are insufficiently different according to the committee. The committee finds the intended learning outcomes of the master programmes to be rather general. The interviews during the site visit provided the committee with a more detailed view on the specifics of each programme. The students of the master programme in Development and Rural Innovation convinced the committee that their programme indeed deserves to be an independent programme with distinct features, but this is not reflected well enough in the intended learning outcomes. On the request of the committee the programme management provided additional information after the visit. This additional information reflects a promising start in making the objectives of the master programmes more distinct from each other. Translating this to more specific intended learning outcomes will do more justice to the programmes.

**Level and orientation**
The Dublin descriptors of the three programmes are related to the intended learning outcomes in the critical reflections. The bachelor programme is designed on the intermediate level and is oriented towards learning how to do research, as well as how to reflect critically on problems, theories and research results in the domain of Development Studies. Both master programmes are on an advanced level and require students to act more independently than in the bachelor programme. The committee has minor concerns that the bachelor programme is not oriented towards the professional field; this is discussed in the next section under requirements of the professional field.

Additional information confirmed that the master programme in International Development Studies is knowledge oriented, in which academic (inter)disciplinary-based analysis and a theoretically grounded perspective prevail. The focus is on broad academic understanding of change processes (including intervention processes) with a focus on co-operating in diverse teams (multidisciplinary) and organizational settings. The programme has a broad theoretical basis. The master programme in Development and Rural Innovation is more action oriented: it can be described as problem-solving, design and intervention oriented in which theory is grounded in practice. The focus is on the facilitation of intervention and change processes in multi-actor networks. The programme has a tailored theoretical basis.

The described differences in orientation between the master programmes helped the committee to see their distinct nature. The committee confirms that both programmes are sufficiently distinct.

**Requirements of the professional field and discipline**
The requirements of the discipline are described in the 2005 vision paper on Development Studies by the European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes (EADI). This forms the subject-specific reference framework for the three programmes (Appendix 2). To ensure compatibility with the professional field, the programme committee meets annually with its representatives to discuss the programme. This external advisory committee (EAC) consists of external professionals in the domain of Development Studies. According to the critical reflection, the External Advisory Committee supports the main focus of the bachelor programme: to provide an entry to the master's programme and not directly to the labour market. During the interviews students mentioned that they believe they need a master degree to apply for a job. One of the students also remarked that due to the more practical elements in the programmes, students do feel prepared for the internship.

Students from the master programme in Development and Rural Innovation had a better idea of their job prospects than students from the master programme in International Development Studies. This makes sense because most of the former already had some work experience. The committee also thinks that the programme is better designed in line with the requirements of the professional field than the programme in International Development Studies. It agrees with the students and programme management that the programmes are academic and understands that the bachelor programme is primarily designed as a preparation for a master programme. Nevertheless, the committee believes that academic programmes should have a clear view of how to prepare students for jobs in their domain. The Development and Rural Innovation programme does so adequately; the two programmes in International Development Studies could be more explicit on this point.

**1.2 Considerations**
The objective, profile and intended learning outcomes of the programmes were discussed intensively during the site visit. Prior to the site visit, the committee did not have a clear view on the specificities of the objectives and profiles of the programmes in the domain of Development Studies. In particular, the rationale for two separate master programmes was not clear to the committee. As a matter of fact, the apparent overlap made the committee wonder whether the master programme in Development and Rural Innovation and Specialization C (Communication, Technology and Policy) of the master programme in International Development Studies should not be integrated.

The programme management explained that the master programme in Development and Rural Innovation was developed over twenty years ago, even before the BA/MA structure was introduced. It was designed as an independent programme for students with a technical background and no experience in the social sciences. The main argument for having two separate master programmes is thus the different backgrounds of the students. Students in the International Development Studies programme have different social sciences backgrounds, while students in the Development and Rural Innovation programme have a technical background and often have two to five years of work experience. The committee is aware that students of the Development and Rural Innovation programme have a different background, but this is not by itself sufficient to provide separate master programmes.

The programme management suggested during the interviews that the programme in International Development Studies and Rural Innovation differentiates from that in International Development Studies by having a strong focus on agriculture/rural areas. The committee disagreed and stated that the profiles of both master programmes need to emphasise on rural development. Thus, the committee finds it insufficient to simply underline a specific focus on rural innovation in the Development and Rural Innovation programme while that of International Development Studies should not.

In spite of these differences in views, the objectives and profiles became clearer to the committee during the interviews. The management, lecturers and students explained that the bachelor and master programmes in International Development Studies are both social sciences-based programmes. The bachelor programme integrates different social science disciplines in a multidisciplinary programme, while the master programme is primarily discipline based, aimed to educate experts who can operate in multidisciplinary teams (multidisciplinarity is also discussed under Standard 2). The master programme in Development and Rural Innovation aims to integrate social sciences with natural sciences and educate hybrid professionals who can close the gap between those disciplines. The committee therefore agrees that there are relevant differences between the two master programmes.

The committee thinks that the visited programmes operate better than expected based on the written documents. At the end of the site visit, the committee concluded that the two master programmes are in fact different. Still, it believes that distinguishing objectives and profile of both programmes is essential, which should be written down carefully and convincingly for both programmes. Therefore, it recommends the programme team to review the intended learning outcomes and to carefully reflect of how they can better represent the uniqueness of both master programmes.

To further enhance the specific characteristics of both programmes, the committee believes it would be helpful for the programme management to think of ways to create more structure in the master programme in International Development Studies. As one of the lecturers remarked during the interviews, this programme could be made more demanding. It differs from the master programme in Development and Rural Innovation in having hardly any common courses. Another option would be to drop Specialization C and allow students of International Development Studies with a sufficient technical background to enter the Development and Rural Innovation programme. Although the students of the latter value their programme highly and believe that a merger with International Development Studies would represent a loss for WU, the committee recommends the programme management to take a good look at the structure of both master programmes.

The additional information provided after the site visit showed the committee that the programme management has made a good start in articulating the distinctiveness of the two master programmes. The committee is convinced that these efforts will lead to better articulated programme objectives and profiles. These will subsequently need to be translated into the intended learning outcomes and curricula of the programmes. Apart from the discussion of the justification of two separate master programmes, and the suggestion for finetuning the intended learning outcomes, the committee came to the conclusion that the intended learning outcomes meet the requirements of the professional field and discipline. A brief remark was made concerning the primary academic orientation of the programmes in International Development Studies. The committee appreciates and agrees with the additional information provided after the visit that further elaborated on the different orientations of the programmes. The level of all three programmes is adequate.

### 1.3 Conclusion

*Bachelor programme in Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudies:* the committee assesses Standard 1 as **satisfactory**.

*Master programme in International Development Studies:* the committee assesses Standard 1 as **satisfactory**.

*Master programme in Development and Rural Innovation:* the committee assesses Standard 1 as **satisfactory**.

**Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment**

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

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

## 2.1 Findings

### Curriculum and coherency of the programmes

The academic year of Wageningen University consists of two semesters, each with 3 periods. In periods 1, 2 and 5 ( eight weeks each, of which six weeks of teaching) two courses are taught, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Periods 3 and 4 are short periods with 4 weeks of teaching and only one course each. Period 6 lasts nine weeks. Each year students can take one exam and two resits for each course. Currently, this system is being reviewed, concerning the number of resits and the timing of the exams. An overview of curricula of the programmes in Development Studies is presented in Appendix 4.

*Bachelor programme in Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudies*

The programme starts with a common part for all students (114 credits). Subsequently, students take a major of 36 credits and a minor of 30 credits. The major is a logical continuation of the common part, while in the minor students may broaden or deepen a topic of interest. The common part is scheduled in the first two years, and consists of three types of courses:

- Fundamental courses which create a common disciplinary basis for all students and introduce the field of international development;
- Methodological courses which provide students with tools to conduct research and analyse cases presented in the course of the curriculum;
- Thematic courses in which development issues are analysed from different disciplinary viewpoints or in which integration of disciplines is sought in order to get a better grasp of aspects of these issues.

The programme offers three majors:

- Sociology of Development;
- Economics of Development;
- Communication, Technology and Policy.

Each major consists of a course in the second semester of the second year and three courses and a twelve credits thesis in the second semester of the third year. The committee established that these majors reflect the expertise of the chair groups involved. Political science was pointed out to be missing in the majors. The committee learned that the topic is dealt with in several courses, offered by the chair group Law and Governance even if the names of the courses do not explicitly indicate that political sciences are addressed as well. Also technical knowledge of rural processes and framing could be enhanced in the bachelor programme.

The committee has established that the overall, bachelor programme is well structured and its curriculum is coherent.

*Master programme in International Development Studies*
The programme has a common part, a specialization part and a supporting/ profiling part. The common part includes a course on ethics, an internship, the Seminar and the Academic Master Cluster that consists of academic consultancy training and Modular Skills training. In the specialization part, students can choose one of three specializations: Sociology of Development, Economics of Development or Communication, Technology and Policy. Within each specialization there is a common specialization course and several thesis tracks consisting of a thesis preparation course and the thesis itself, both to be taken in one particular Chair Group.

In the supporting/profiling part of the programmes, students choose courses to deepen their disciplinary and/or methodological knowledge or specialize on a theme. This depends on their educational background, competences, interests and preferred thesis track. Decisions on what courses to take are always done in consultation with the study advisor, who ensures that the courses chosen are on an appropriate level. In this way, the programme accommodates for the variety of student backgrounds, as students come from universities in the Netherlands as well as from abroad. The committee appreciates the attention paid to accommodating students with different backgrounds and the variety this brings to the programme. On the downside, the students have very limited common courses in the domain of International Development Studies.

*Master programme in Development and Rural Innovation*
The programme is thesis oriented, with the individual research project at its core. The programme consists of seven blocks:

- Introductory courses;
- Methodology courses;
- Academic Master Cluster;
- Thesis preparatory courses;
- Electives;
- Internship;
- Thesis.

A large part of the programme is compulsory, so students are in the same courses together in this programme, and form a year group. The committee was happy to see that this is possible within the Wageningen context and recommends this also for other programmes.

Depending on personal interest, students choose one of three thesis tracks related to the three core Chair Groups involved in the programme. These are Communication and Innovation Studies, Rural Development Sociology, or Technology and Agrarian Development. A course called Thesis Path is designed to promote cohesion between the blocks. It is scheduled in parts throughout the two-year programme. It pays attention to skills like scientific writing and presentation skills and information literacy. It also functions as a platform for students in the same cohort to meet and exchange regularly. The study advisor is the coordinator of this course, which stimulates regular contact between the student and study advisor. Students commented on this course, because in their opinion the thesis path is too fragmented. The committee appreciates the concept of the thesis path, but recommends

to make more explicit to students how the different parts of the course relate to each other and to the other courses in the programme.

**Multidisciplinarity**
Wageningen University aims to offer programmes with a multidisciplinary and holistic approach. This is meant to stimulate students to develop a broad view and a wide range of interests. Most of the courses are attended by students from different programmes, creating a setting that favours multidisciplinary education. This could also lead to a possible friction between breadth and depth. The committee assessed whether students receive a multidisciplinary programme with sufficient depth, making them experts in a specific discipline.

The committee comes to the opinion that multidisciplinary can be interpreted in many ways: each of the three critical reflections interpretes multidisciplinarity in a different form. This was initially confusing to the committee, but the interviews helped to clarify the situation.

The bachelor programme is based on several disciplines: sociology, economics, law & governance, and communication science. According to the critical reflection, it is a multidisciplinary programme. The fundamental courses introduce the students to the disciplines and give them a good basis. In the thematic courses that are scheduled throughout the year, development issues are analysed from different disciplinary viewpoints and integrated for a better understanding of the issues. The major provides disciplinary deepening. In the opinion of the committee, the programme has found a good balance between breadth and depth. It became clear that the different disciplines used in the multidisciplinary approach are social science-related and that multidisciplinarity does not mean combining natural and social sciences. With respect to the issues raised under standard 1, and to clarify the profile of the different programmes, the committee would suggest to call this programme a social science bachelor programme and not a multidisciplinary programme.

The master programme in International Development Studies is a disciplinary programme, but it aims to educate students to integrate and share knowledge and work in multidisciplinary teams. Learning outcome 9 states that graduates should be able to co-operate as a specialist in diverse (multidisciplinary) teams and organizational settings, taking into consideration the complex contexts of the domain of International Development Studies. This is mainly taught in the Academic Master Cluster. The three specializations provide disciplinary deepening. The committee agrees that this programme is disciplinary, but pays sufficient attention to a multidisciplinary approach.

The master programme in Development and Rural Innovation does not claim to be a multidisciplinary programme in the critical reflection. The programme aims to educate hybrid professionals, who understand how to align social and technological aspects of innovation, and how to bridge the gap between different worlds of experience and knowledge in complex settings. To the committee, this makes it a programme educating students in multidisciplinary approaches. In addition, students come from different backgrounds which adds to the training in multidisciplinary approaches. The thesis tracks, with the specific thesis preparation courses, ensure sufficient depth.

**Teaching methods**
Wageningen University strives to train its students to become academics with domain knowledge, a multidisciplinary attitude, interested in problem-solving, and an international orientation with a multicultural attitude. The programmes therefore work with small, diverse

student groups to stimulate the interaction between students and lecturers. A variety of didactic and learning methods are offered, including lectures, tutorials, group work, practical training, excursion and individual papers. According to the critical reflection, the teaching methods prepare graduates to work in multidisciplinary teams as well as individually, and often in a global context. Appendix 9 provides an overview and explanation of the teaching methods. The subject-specific framework not only describes the field of Development Studies, it also elaborates on which form of education is required in this field (Appendix 2). These aspects are reflected in the intended learning outcomes and incorporated in the programmes. The critical reflections state that the teaching methods have been chosen to maximise the learning outcomes. The committee has studied the mix of different teaching methods, and concludes that the programmes have found a good balance.

**Improvements to the curriculum**
The individual programme committees are responsible for improving the curricula, although occasionally improvements are introduced for all programmes jointly. One example is the introduction of scheduling of electives in one semester, including minors.

Ideas for improvement usually come from online course evaluations. Detailed results are reported to the lecturers and Programme Committees. Summaries of the results are published on the intranet. In addition to the course evaluations, there are bachelor first-year evaluations, bachelor and master graduate evaluations, career surveys among alumni, and the Education Monitor.

The Programme Committees regularly discuss the outcomes of the evaluations and take action, when considered necessary. In addition to the online evaluations, many programmes hold panel meetings with students to obtain oral feedback on the courses and the programmes. Since many of the programmes are small and the attitude between students and lecturers is informal, many issues are often dealt with informally rather than in a formal procedure.

The Programme Committee also gets input from the study adviser, Study Association, Chair Groups and the External Advisory Committee. The critical reflections mention several changes made in courses, varying from rescheduling and restructuring to shifting the focus towards a different subject.

**Staff**
Wageningen University staff generally teach in several programmes, making it difficult to provide exact student-staff ratios.

Staff members are required to be both an expert in their discipline and a skilful lecturer. This combination allows them to make use of new scientific insights in their teaching. Most lecturers hold a PhD degree. The research quality of the staff is beyond any doubt. The critical reflections report the awards won by several lecturers, both in research and education. The committee regards this as a very strong point of the programmes.

Wageningen University introduced the University Teaching Qualification (Basis Kwalificatie Onderwijs, BKO) for new permanent staff and staff on tenured track positions. Quality of teaching is evaluated after each course, which also evaluates the course content, position of the course in the curriculum, presentation and examination. Results of these evaluations form input for the annual performance and development interviews of staff members. Tailor-made training courses are provided by the Educational Staff Development unit for those interested,

or as a result of the course evaluation. The students interviewed by the committee indicated that the interaction between students and lecturers is very good and valuable.

**Programme specific services and student support**
Wageningen University has chosen to centralize all teaching facilities like lecture rooms, labs, rooms for group work and the university library on the new campus. The main education building is the Forum. The Orion education building is under construction and will add to the existing facilities in 2013. Education in the Social Sciences is concentrated in the Leeuwenborch building. Most Chair Groups are – or will be – located on the campus. The critical reflection indicated that the Leeuwenborch building is the main building for the programmes in Development Studies, and it facilitates students and staff to meet and exchange ideas and makes it possible working alone or in groups. The library is nearby, and the quality of the rooms and other audiovisual and multimedia facilities are good.

Study advisors support students to make well-considered choices within the programme, and they monitor and stimulate study progress. Students meet with their supervisor several times a year, starting from the annual introduction day, or even before that day in the case of international students. Students can request an appointment to discuss choices in their study programme. The study advisors also invite students for a talk if there are indications of a study delay. Along with individual meetings, the study advisor organizes plenary meetings, to inform students about different majors, possibilities in the minor/free choice parts of the bachelor, and about the choice for thesis tracks, thesis and internship in the master programmes.

Ipso Facto is the study association for the programmes in the domain of Development Studies. This association encourages interactions between students and lectures through social events, excursions and the organization of internship and career evenings. The committee believes that student support is well organized.

**Student intake, study load, output**
Students for the bachelor programmes are admitted on the basis of their pre-university qualifications. Individual admission of students who do not meet the standard requirements is centralized. The general admission requirements of master students are published on the internet, including detailed information on admission procedures. These requirements include a relevant bachelor degree, a grade point average of 70%, fluency in English, good skills in mathematics and statistics, and fundamental computer skills. Master students are admitted following approval by the Admission Committee. In total, there are four Admission Committees, reflecting the four domains. These Admission Committees consist of the relevant Programme Directors, supported by central staff. The four Admission Committees participate in the joint Admission Policy Committee. In total, approximately 5,600 applications are handled each year.

*Bachelor programme in Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudies*
Applicants for the study programme must have a secondary school pre-university diploma (vwo or equivalent). All profiles are admitted, on condition that mathematics A or B is included. Students with a foreign diploma equivalent to vwo can also join the programme, provided that their Dutch is sufficient (level NT2). Foreign diplomas are evaluated by the Bachelor Admission Committee. General admission regulations exist for applicants from Germany and Belgium. Starting in 2007 the inflow of students has increased (44 students in 2006, 73 students in 2007, and 85 in 2010, according to the critical reflection). The programme believes that one of the reasons for the higher inflow is a better visibility of

Wageningen University as a whole as well as an increased interest among today's students in sustainability and globalization. In recent years there has also been a considerable number of interested German students. Of the 181 students who started in 2009 and 2010, 38 (21%) were German. They follow a summer school to develop their Dutch language skills to the level required for entry into the programme.

The critical reflection reports comments from students on the study load, indicating that the programme is not perceived as too difficult, although students usually have to get accustomed to reading and digesting a lot in the first year and planning the thesis in the third year. Most graduates continue with the master programme in International Development Studies. Some students go to other universities, and get according to the critical reflection direct admittance,.

*Master programme International Development Studies*
Students with a bachelor degree in social sciences (such as Development Studies, sociology, anthropology and economics) are eligible for admission to this programme. Sometimes students with a degree from some specific Dutch universities of applied sciences (HBO) programmes also meet the admission requirements. In 2009 and 2010, 31% of the student inflow involved non-Dutch students of 28 different nationalities from all over the world. The intake of students between 2003 and 2010 has gradually increased. The critical reflection reports indicate that the study load is according to students balanced over the programme.

The critical reflection provided an overview of the current jobs of graduates, using LinkedIn. This indicates that about 30% of the graduates get jobs in research, in the Netherlands and abroad, in PhD positions and as researchers at research institutes. One-third of the graduates works as an expert in the non-profit sector, including positions like consultant, adviser, project coordinator and programme manager. They also work as policymaker at different government levels, in the private sector, in education and as freelancers.

*Master programme in Development and Rural Innovation*
To be accepted to this master programme, students need a bachelor degree in a technical science, life science or relevant management science. Preferably, this degree is related to agricultural and rural development, natural resource management, the food industry or similar fields. An overview in the critical reflections showed that the enrolment is diverse, with a wide range of nationalities and backgrounds. According to the students interviewed by the committee this variety of backgrounds makes the programme interesting and enriches it. Students with a social sciences background are advised to apply for the International Development Studies master. More than 50% of the students, especially international students, have two to five years' work experience prior to enrolment, the other half enters the programme directly after a finishing a bachelor programme. The critical reflection states that students generally have no problems meeting the course requirements. Enrolment varies between 20 and 30 students each year. The declining number of fellowships is a potential threat to the intake, yet the programme is optimistic about the future, as it finds there is increasing international consideration for issues like sustainable development.

According to the critical reflection, graduates of this programme are welcomed by a wide variety of organizations all over the world. LinkedIn gave information on careers for 60% of the graduates. They work in research, at different universities and research institutes. Most graduates work as programme coordinators, consultants and field/project officers in the non-profit sector and at UN agencies, and as advisor/consultant in the agriculture or engineering sector and private businesses.. A smaller group of graduates work as a policymaker or as freelancer.

## 2.2 Considerations

The committee studied the various aspects of the teaching and learning environment of all programmes. As the curriculum and the multidisciplinary of the programmes are related to Standard 1, the few remarks the committee on this standard are derived from those discussions. In general, the committee is positive about the teacher-learning environments in all three programmes. The mix of different teaching methods in all three programmes shows that the programmes have found a good balance. The committee is especially positive about the interaction between students and lectures; it enriches the learning environment. The programme-specific services and student support, student intake, study load and output are similar in the three programmes, and evaluated by the committee as good. The improvements made to the curricula showed that the programmes are continually improving. Several lecturers have won awards both in research and education. This indicates high quality of staff. The committee regards this as a very strong point of the programmes.

Regarding the bachelor programme, it is well structured with a coherent curriculum. The multidisciplinarity of the programme was explained as the combination of several disciplines, but all within social sciences. With respect to the issues raised under standard 1, on clarification of the profile of the different programmes, the committee would therefore suggest to call this programme a social science bachelor programme rather than a multidisciplinary one, or otherwise to strengthen the technological layer. A minor remark was made on the position of political science in the programme, as the names of the courses offered by the chair groups Law and Governance did not explicitly indicate that political sciences are addressed as well. Otherwise the committee was impressed with the teacher learning environment of the bachelor programme.

The committee was also positive regarding both master programmes. Regarding the master programme International Development Studies, the committee criticised that the students have very limited common courses in the domain of International Development Studies. Yet, it does appreciate the attention paid to accommodating students with different backgrounds and the variety this brings to the programme. The master programme development and Rural Innovation is in that way better structured: A large part of the programme is compulsory. This ensures that students are in the same courses together in this programme, and form a year group. The committee likes to see that this is possible within the Wageningen context.

Although differences exist between programmes, all Wageningen programmes provide a lot of freedom for the individual student, making the programmes student-centred. The chair groups and their research strongly influence the courses offered, making the programmes also course-oriented. This makes the position of the study advisor crucial and demands certain qualities of him/her. The committee thinks that the study advisor should be a member of the academic staff to be able to support students in their choice for certain courses.

Wageningen University has an international reputation, in terms of both research qualities and the number of international master students. The committee especially considered the latter point since there are also possible drawbacks as well as advantages to having many international students.

Overall the committee was very impressed with the teaching-learning environment in the three programmes.

### 2.3 Conclusion

*Bachelor programme in Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudies:* the committee assesses Standard 2 as **satisfactory**.

*Master programme in International Development Studies:* the committee assesses Standard 2 as **satisfactory**.

*Master programme in Development and Rural Innovation:* the committee assesses Standard 2 as **satisfactory**.

**Standard 3: Assessment and achieved learning outcomes**

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

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

## 3.1 Findings

### Assessment system

For each course the lecturers have to formulate five to eight intended learning outcomes, which are published in the Study Handbook and course guides. The course guide is obligatory for each course and explains what a course is about, how it is organized, and how students are expected to participate. Part of the course guide covers the assessment strategy, for which requirements have recently been introduced. The assessment strategy clarifies how and when a learning outcome is assessed, who is involved in assessing students, and how the final mark will be determined. It also shows the transparency and validity of the assessment. To enhance the reliability of the assessment, examiners need to explain which elements in the student's answers lead to a certain mark. For multiple choice questions this is embodied in the answer key, and for open answer questions this is shown by model answers, assessment criteria or rubrics (for an example, see Appendix 9). The previous practice was similar to the new theory, but had a less formalized manner. Currently, all Wageningen programmes are in the transition phase from the previous practice to the new situation.

The committee studied the assessment strategies in relation to the intended learning outcomes and the courses they are taught in. It concluded that for all three programmes, the different assessment strategies are used appropriately and are well distributed over the courses. In most courses a combination of different types of assessment is used. The examples of assessment strategies in the critical reflections illustrated this very well.

With the changes in the Higher Education and Research Act, the position of the Examining Boards has changed. They are currently in the process of strengthening their role in assuring the quality assessment, both via interim course exams and the evaluation of internships and theses. The new role of the Examining Boards has two elements. The first is that each examiner will be made explicitly responsible for ensuring that an assessment of a course is valid, reliable and transparent. This was made a regular part of the University Teaching Qualification. Wageningen University produced documents to help examiners and lecturers achieve this, and meetings between the Examining Boards and examiners were held in the spring of 2011. The second element is that the Examining Boards will visit chair groups on a regular basis to verify the quality of assessment of courses provided by the groups. Additional visits will take place when required, for example when indicated by the results of course evaluations.

The committee learned during the site visit that students can do many resits for each course if they don't pass the first time. Each year three exam possibilities are offered for each course and students can retake the exam as often as needed to pass.

**Quality and assessment of the thesis work**

The thesis work is always graded by two assessors: the supervisor and the examiner. Both are present during the presentation and final discussion of the thesis. In the study year 2011-2012 the assessment procedure for the thesis will be further improved by developing a rubric. A rubric is an assessment tool based on a set of criteria and standards linked to learning outcomes that is used to assess or communicate about product, process and performance. The rubric provides guidelines for the thesis evaluation. In Appendix 9 an example of a rubric is provided.

Prior to the site visit, the committee members received a total of 14 recent theses for the bachelor programme, 14 recent theses for the master programme in International Development Studies and 11 recent theses for the master porgramme in Development and Rural Innovation. All theses were selected from a list in the critical reflection of all theses that were completed during the last two years. The selection was done by the secretary on behalf of the chairman of the committee. When selecting the theses, the grading and the graduation date were considered. Student numbers of the selected theses are provided in Appendix 7. For all theses the committee read the thesis report; several of these theses were accompanied by a reflection report and/or posters with a presentation of the design. The use of the assessment form filled out by the supervisor has only recently been introduced; all theses had one.

*Bachelor programme in Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudies*

Since 2002 a thesis is included as the final part of the bachelor programme in International Development Studies.. For the assessment of a thesis in the social science bachelor programmest of Wageningen University a standard form is used. Criteria for the assessment of a bachelor thesis in the social science programmes are: research competencies (30-40%), report (50-65%), presentation (0-5%) and final discussion/examination (5%). The weight of each criterion is determined after approval of the research/project proposal.

At the end of the bachelor programme, students write a bachelor thesis, worth 12 credits. This is the most important tool for students to show what they have learned in the programme. The quality of the thesis work is very good according to the committee, which agrees with the grades that have been given. The thesis shows that students are able to formulate a problem, to develop a literature search strategy and to do a good literature review on the problem they study. They show good academic practice in the way literature is reviewed, and in citation and referencing; most show a strong conceptualization of the core topic being addressed. Students are also able to formulate a strategy for further research. It also shows that the thesis prepares students for a master programme very well. The committee appreciates the assessment format. Students reported that they value the feedback (oral) given to them in the process of writing their thesis but that feedback on the end result is minimal. The committee suggests that more written comments in the final assessment could improve the quality of the feedback to the student.

*Master programmes in International Development Studies and in Development and Rural Innovation*

For master programmes, the thesis, internship and Academic Master Cluster (AMC) form important parts of the learning outcomes. For the assessment of a master thesis a standard form is used throughout Wageningen University. There is an extensive assessment format for the AMC to evaluate each student's individual contribution to the final product and collaborative process. It aims at securing grading reliability across the large number of teams participating each year. For the internship an assessment form is used which is common to all programmes. An external and an internal supervisor are appointed for the internship: the

external supervisor advises on the quality of the student's performance, the internal supervisor grades the internship.

The quality of the theses is good, and the committee agreed with all the grades. In the master programme in International Development Studies, several theses have won awards in the last couple of years. The reading of the theses showed that students are able to formulate an own research question and strategy, to collect empirical data and to develop an empirical analysis strategy. The theses show strong conceptualization, awareness of links between theory and professional practice and evidence of wide reading in appropriate literature. Students also master the analytical tools they use and are able to formulate recommendations for the stakeholders involved. Overall the theses showed very well developped research competencies.

**Success rates**

*Bachelor programme in Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudies*
The critical reflection gives an overview of the success and drop-out rates. The average drop-out rate after the first year (based upon the size of the entry cohort and cohort T+1) is about 18%, which is slightly higher than the university average (15%). The programme management considers this to be acceptable, but is trying to lower it by informing prospective students better. A possible reason for the somewhat higher drop-out rate is that students starting the programme are aiming for a career in international aid, and sometimes experience the programme as being too scientific rather than idealistic. Also, some students choose the programme because of its breadth, delaying a 'real' choice, and later switch to another programme. The drop-out rates among students starting the second year is 5-8%, which is quite acceptable to the programme management. The committee agrees that the drop-out rates are acceptable. The current success rates of the programme are reasonable, too. According to the critical reflection it is close to the target set nationally (70% awarded diploma after four years), and it has increased over the last few years. The programme management expects their changed approach with respect to study advice and study success will further increase the success rate, aided by 'Bachelor-before-Master' and upcoming legislation making study delay more expensive ('Halbeheffing').

*Master programme in International Development Studies*
The critical reflection showed that the success rate is approaching 90% graduation within three years, which is the Wageningen University target for 2014. After two years, however, the success rate is only a little over 50%, which is partly due to the fact that many students spend more time than planned on their thesis and internship. This is according to the students interviewed often a deliberate choice by students who are ambitious and eager to stay longer in their internship or do more to complete their thesis. Sometimes they take extra credits as well. Drop-out rates are generally low which suggests that students have made a well-informed choice for the programme. This programme has the highest proportion of cum laude graduates in Wageningen University, with 7.7% compared to a university average of 5.7%. The committee is positive about the success rates of this programme.

*Master programme in Development Rural Innovation*
The critical reflection showed that the success rate is also approaching 90% graduation within three years. The information on drop-out rates is a little distorted by the fact that in 2004/2005 students were only temporarily enrolled, pending the accreditation of the applied Communication Science master. After that the drop-out rate decreased to a reasonable level.

### 3.2 Considerations

Overall, the committee did not find any major issues worth commenting on. It was impressed by the level of the bachelor and master theses, and it agreed with all the grades. For all programmes the committee is very positive about the use of different assessment strategies. The drop-out rates vary between the programmes, but all are acceptable, and the committee appreciates the attention being paid to decrease it further. The success rates have improved over the last few years and now come close to the Wageningen University target. The awards won by several master students in the International Development Studies master is also an indication of good performance.

The committee is very positive with regard to the initiatives Wageningen University is currently implementing in the bachelor and master programmes. The Examining Boards are in the process of strengthening their role in ensuring the quality of assessment and seem committed to formalizing the assessment system. The committee agrees that having only four Examining Boards is stimulating the consistency and equality of the procedures. However, these four Examining Boards are responsible for a total of 49 programmes. The committee is worried that the limited number of Examining Boards leads to a certain distance from the programmes, making it difficult for the Examining Boards to really be in control at the programme level.

The committee is of the opinion that with the current pressure on graduating in time in the Netherlands, the number of possible resits at Wageningen University is outdated. If students don't feel the need to pass an exam, they might not take the exam seriously. Chances are that this will lead to study delays.
In short, the committee has established that the programmes in the domain of Development Studies have a well-organized assessment system and students perform very well.

### 3.3 Conclusion

*Bachelor programme in Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudies:* the committee assesses Standard 3 as **good**.
*Master programme in International Development Studies:* the committee assesses Standard 3 as **good**.
*Master programme in Development and Rural Innovation:* the committee assesses Standard 3 as **good**.

## General conclusion

The committee assesses the *bachelor programme in Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudies* as **satisfactory**.
The committee assesses the *master programme in International Development Studies* as **satisfactory**.
The committee assesses the *master programme in Development and Rural Innovation* as **satisfactory**.

# APPENDICES

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

**Professor Frans Zwarts** was Rector Magnificus of the University of Groningen between 2002 and 2011. He studied linguistics at the University of Amsterdam (1967-1973) and at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1974), and wrote a doctoral dissertation on Categorical Grammar and Algebraic Semantics (cum laude). He was appointed lecturer at the University of Groningen in 1975 and became Professor of Linguistics in 1987. He was the initiator of the European Summer School in Logic, Language and Information (ESSLLI) in 1989. In 1992, Zwarts was a visiting scholar at UCLA (University of California, Los Angeles). Between 1995 and 2002, he was chair of the Netherlands Steering Committee for Research on Developmental Dyslexia, initiated by the NWO as part of a multidisciplinary national research programme. In 1999, he became academic director of the Graduate School of Behavioural and Cognitive Neurosciences of the University of Groningen. In 2003, he and the Rector Magnificus of Uppsala University established a close partnership between Groningen and Uppsala. This was extended in 2006, when the Universities of Ghent, Göttingen, Groningen, and Uppsala decided to form the U4. In 2011 he was appointed professor and manager to realise the University Campus Fryslân.

**Mrs. Renate Prenen MSc.** is an educational advisor and independent entrepreneur in educational advice. She studied Applied Educational Sciences at Twente University. She worked at Randstad secretarial bureau as advisor and programme manager. Later, she worked at the Academic Medical Centre (AMC) of the University of Amsterdam, where she was educational advisor. One task was to participate in research on learning requirements, obstacles and motivation for evidence-based medicine for family doctor trainers, teachers and family doctors in training. In September 2009 she started as an independent educational advisor. She has been a committee member on other QANU assessment committees.

**Professor Guido Van Huylenbroeck** is professor in agricultural and rural economics of Ghent University in Belgium. He did his PhD at the same university in 1988 and since then was appointed as lecturer, associate professor and full professor. He (co-)authored more than 120 refereed articles and edited several books in the field of agricultural economics, rural policy, environmental institutions. From 2004 he is coordinator of the International Master in Rural Development, a joint master program offered by a consortium of 6 EU and 8 non-EU universities. Since 2008 he is elected as Dean of the Faculty of Bioscience engineering of Ghent University (periods 2008-2010,2010-2012 and 2012-2014)

**Mrs. Fiona Wilson Professor Emeritus** in International Development Studies, at the Institute for Society and Globalization, Roskilde University, Denmark. There, she taught a range of Masters' courses in development studies and organized the program for doctoral students of the Graduate School in International Development Studies (1998-2008). Before that, she was Research Director of the Gender and Social Inequality Area, Centre for Development Research, Copenhagen (1990-1998). Her university degrees were in geography and agricultural economics. But from 1969, when first appointed to the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) at the University of Sussex, United Kingdom, she has preferred to work in an interdisciplinary way in development studies. Recently, she returned to IDS Sussex as Team Leader of the Governance Team (2008-2011). Her research has focused on Latin America, primarily Andean societies and Mexico. With colleagues from Denmark, Peru and South Africa, she coordinated a Danish-funded, comparative research program on 'Livelihood, identity and organization in situations of instability' (1997-2000). Her recent research has focused on gender and race; citizenship and workshop-based industry in Mexico; and on citizenship, radical movements and political violence in Andean Peru. She has

published on the politics of development aid, drawing on her experiences as a consultant in Latin America and Ethiopia. She was a member of the Social Science Research Council, and Research Council for Development Research in Denmark, as well as member of several international Boards and journal editorial boards.

**Professor Chris Garforth** gained a PhD from Cambridge University in 1977 for his study of interactions between land tenure and agricultural land use in south eastern Nigeria. After a period working for the Botswana government where he established a research unit within the Agricultural Information Service, he joined the University of Reading as a lecturer in 1980 and since 1995 has been Professor of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development within the university's School of Agriculture, Policy and Development. He developed Reading's MSc in Communication for Innovation and Development and was inaugural Director of the Graduate Institute of International Development and Applied Economics. His most recent project experience includes delivering training in consultancy skills for staff of large development programmes in Nigeria, developing a communication strategy for addressing iodine deficiency disorders in Tanzania, and researching farmers' perceptions of climate and farming system changes in China. His development experience ranges across a number of different donor groups including World Bank, FAO, DFID, SIDA, DANIDA, and GTZ. He is currently co-ordinating an EU consortium to develop formal and non-formal professional education for rural extension in the Western Balkans (2010 – 2013) and leading a research study of the contribution of farmer innovation to growth in the agricultural economy in three East African countries (2012 – 2014).

**Mrs. Lilya Ivanova** is a master student in Economics at the University of National and World Economy. As a Member of the Executive Committee of ESU (European Students' Union), she is responsible for the execution of the decisions of the Board of ESU, political affairs (mainly those related to quality assurance field) and the overall finances of ESU.

## Appendix 2: Subject-specific framework of reference[1]

### Definition and goals of Development Studies

- Development Studies (or International Development Studies) is a multi- and interdisciplinary field of study (i.e. not a discipline) that seeks to understand social, economic, political and cultural aspects of societal change, particularly in developing countries.
- Development Studies is characterised also by normative and policy concerns. It aims at contributing to possible solutions to societal problems that development or its absence may produce.
- In pursuit of these objectives, Development Studies is context sensitive. It examines societal change within a historical, comparative and global perspective. It aims to take into account the specificity of different societies in terms of history, ecology, culture, etc. and how these differences both can and often should translate into varied 'local' responses to regional and global processes, and varied strategies of development and methods.
- Development Studies is a changing and evolving field of study, at present covering topics and concerns such as poverty, environmental and socio-political sustainability; women's empowerment and gender equity, globalisation, sustainable development and human development.
- The range of topics it covers is, however, by no means fixed as witnessed by the evolution of the focus of the field of study over the last decades, and the emergence of new topics such as development issues and poverty in the industrialised countries.
- Though there have been dominant concerns in Development Studies, there has never been a simple consensus on solutions, nor should there be, nor should teaching suggest this desirable. There are too many uncertainties in the topics it covers and too much diversity in situations and objectives around the world to make this possible.

### Teaching Development Studies

- As a case-oriented, issue-oriented and policy-oriented field, Development Studies draws on various disciplines but the manner in which this is done varies. In most cases, programmes and courses are inter- and/or multidisciplinary and relate a number of disciplines to the particular (and diverse) context of the topics and concerns. In some other cases, deepening the grasp of a single discipline is prioritised but accompanied by steps to enhance the ability to use and integrate concepts from other disciplines.
- Which disciplines receive priority attention and which proportions will depend on the particular societal and policy issues considered, and hence on the particular specialisation followed within Development Studies. Anthropology, cultural studies, agriculture, ecology, economics, history, geography, management/planning/ administration, politics and sociology are each important.
- Education in Development Studies therefore needs to:
    1. Deepen, contextualise and broaden disciplinary understandings, by reference across disciplines and by giving historical, intellectual and comparative context;
    2. Investigate societal problems in a way that both provides students with relevant analytical tools and theories, and provides them with a wide range of examples, cases and histories which show that analytical tools and concepts may be of limited use or misleading unless applied together with other tools and concepts;

[1] Development Studies, Accreditation and EADI- A Vioson Paper (2005) by Joost Mönks and Hans Opschoor

3. It needs to give students a coherent specialisation focus, and
4. Yet flexibly accommodate their particular needs and interests given their academic and work background and career path. In this, career paths for which Development Studies may prove necessary or useful are specifically taken into account;
5. It needs to build-in ways for students to reflect on their own experience and to learn from each other's diverse experiences and backgrounds.

- Methodological enrichment, including from cultural studies, ethics, gender studies, history and the humanities, participatory and action research is emerging; with increasing attention to general skills and tools such as problem analysis, objective analysis, concept mapping, participatory methods and evaluation, and broad based assessment methodologies. A gradual shift from ad hoc case study work towards more comparative and integrative approaches is occurring.
- Education in Development Studies in the North is based on genuine partnership with sister organisations in the South. Enhanced complementarity, building on the respective comparative advantages and increasing North-South multi-locational delivery of teaching programmes pave the way for a movement from northern supply-driven Development Studies education to more demand driven cooperation in education between the North and the South.

**Learning objectives (outcomes)**

- To deal with the complexity of development processes and issues, graduates in Development Studies should be able to carry out analyses in broad perspectives, using conceptual frameworks sensitive to relevant socioeconomic and politico-ethical aspects. They must recognise the need to bring in features, concepts and tools from relevant ranges of disciplines and to relate these elements with scientific rigour.
- Graduates must be able to select and apply relevant tools for collecting, interpreting and assessing (qualitative and quantitative) information on development processes and their impacts, including knowledge and know-how from a variety of relevant sources. They must be able to operate intelligently in situations of incomplete data and information.
- They must be able to communicate the results of their analyses (and their ways of arriving at these results) to a variety of audiences ranging from professional (research-oriented as well as policyoriented) to non-professionals (stakeholders, other users).

## Appendix 3: Intended learning outcomes

*Bachelor programme in Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudies*

After successful completion of the bachelor programme Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudies, graduates are expected to be able to:

1. Explain fundamental theories and concepts of sociology, economics, communication science and law & governance (with the aim of explaining issues and themes within the domain of International Development Studies).
2. Explain social transformation processes related to livelihoods, agro-food networks, and the environment, at different levels and in a comparative perspective, with special attention to inclusion and exclusion processes, equity and unequal access to resources.
3. Analyse themes and problems within the domain of International Development Studies from the perspective of one of the majors: Sociology of Development, Economics of Development, or Communication, Technology and Policy.
4. Formulate a problem definition, research objectives, and research questions, within an adequate research design, in the domain of International Development Studies (under supervision).
5. Apply appropriate methods and techniques to collect and analyse data from literature and empirical research in the domain of International Development Studies (under supervision).
6. Explain the functioning of policies and intervention strategies within the domain of International Development Studies, including the relation with research and taking into account different stakeholder positions.
7. Reflect critically on problems, theories and research results in the domain of International Development Studies.
8. Identify the ethical and value-driven aspects of research and intervention strategies, and the various roles of the specialist in International Development Studies.
9. Communicate clearly (verbally and in writing) about the results of learning, project work and research with diverse publics.
10. Co-operate in a (multidisciplinary) team.
11. Reflect upon personal knowledge, skills, attitudes and functioning, both individually and in discussions with others, and design and plan their own study path (under supervision).

*Master programme in International Development Studies*

After successful completion of the master programme International Development Studies, graduates are expected to be able to:

1. Analyse social transformation processes related to livelihoods, agro-food networks, and/or the environment, at different levels and in a comparative perspective, with special attention to inclusion and exclusion processes, equity and unequal access to resources.
2. Assess and apply theoretical and methodological perspectives from one of the Specializations (Sociology of Development, Economics of Development, or Communication, Technology and Policy) to analyse themes and problems within the domain of International Development Studies.
3. Assess the changing relationships and (potential) conflicts between different stakeholders in various settings.

4. Design and assess research in the domain of International Development Studies, including formulating a problem statement and operationalizing objectives and research questions within an adequate research plan.
5. Select and apply appropriate methods and techniques to collect and analyse data from literature and empirical research in the domain of international development studies.
6. Critically reflect upon the functioning of policies and intervention strategies within the domain of International Development Studies, including the interaction with research and taking into account different stakeholder positions.
7. Critically reflect upon the different roles of the specialist in International Development Studies, including the ethical and value-driven aspects of research and intervention strategies.
8. Communicate convincingly (verbally and in writing) about (own) research and project results, and their rational underpinning, with a diverse audience including stakeholders involved in the respective research subjects, policy makers and scientists.
9. Co-operate as a specialist in diverse (multidisciplinary) teams and organizational settings, taking into consideration the complex contexts of the domain of International Development Studies.
10. Reflect upon personal knowledge, skills, attitudes and functioning, both individually and in discussions with others, and design and plan their own study path.

*Master programme in Development and Rural Innovation*

After successful completion of the master programme Development and Rural Innovation, graduates are expected to be able to:

1. Explain ideas, concepts and theories of development sociology, communication and innovation studies, and technology studies in relation to current issues, problems and challenges in the domain of development and rural innovation.
2. Assess and apply theoretical and methodological perspectives from development sociology, communication and innovation studies, or technology studies to analyse current issues, problems and challenges in the domain of development and rural innovation.
3. Design and assess research in the domain of development and rural innovation, including formulating a problem statement and operationalizing objectives and research questions within an adequate research plan.
4. Select and apply appropriate research methods and techniques to collect and analyse data from literature and empirical research in the domain of development and rural innovation.
5. Critically reflect upon the design, implementation, facilitation and evaluation of interventions and programmes in the domain of development and rural innovation.
6. Facilitate communication and decision-making in multi-actor networks with the aim of enhancing development and rural innovation.
7. Translate research results into recommendations for intervention and policy the domain of development and rural innovation.
8. Critically reflect upon the different roles of the specialist in development and rural innovation, including the ethical and value-driven aspects of research and intervention strategies.
9. Communicate convincingly (verbally and in writing) about (own) research findings and project results and their underpinning rationale.
10. Design and plan own learning processes based on continuous refection (both individually and in discussion with others) upon personal knowledge, skills, attitudes and functioning.

# Appendix 4: Overview of the curricula

*Bachelor programme in Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudies*

| Courses | | Year | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Common part** | **Category** | | | |
| MAT-12806 | Mathematics for Social Sciences | M | X | | |
| RHI-10506 | Introduction to International Development Studies | B | X | | |
| DEC-10306 | Economics A | B | X | | |
| RSO-10306 | Sociology | B | X | | |
| LAW-10306 | Law, Policy and Governance | B | X | | |
| YRM-10306 | Research Methods in the Social Sciences | M | X | | |
| MAT-15303 | Statistics 1 | M | X | | |
| MAT-15403 | Statistics 2 | M | X | | |
| TAD-10806 | Technology, Development and Natural Resources | T | X | | |
| YSS-10906 | Analysis of a Problem Situation | T | X | | |
| RSO-20806 | Agricultural and Rural Development: Sociological Perspectives | T | X | | |
| DEC-20806 | Introduction to Development Economics | T | | X | |
| COM-10306 | Introduction to Strategic Communication | B | | X | |
| LAW-20306 | International Policies and Institutions | T | | X | |
| RHI-20306 | Globalization in Historical Perspective | T | | X | |
| ENP-22803 | Theories and Themes: Sociology | B | | X | |
| DEC-22803 | Theorists of Economic Growth | B | | X | |
| DEC-20306 | Rural Households and Livelihood Strategies | T | | X | |
| ENR-20306 | Environmental Economics and Policy | T | | X | |
| RDS-21306 | Methods, Techniques and Data Analysis for Field Research | M | | X | |
| RDS-22306 | Field Research Practical | M | | X | |
| | **Major** | | | | |
| | **A Sociology of Development** | | | | |
| RSO-21306 | Policy, People and Resources in Comparative Perspective | | | X | |
| ENP-31806 | Globalization and Sustainability of Food Production and Consumption | | | | X |
| RSO-30806 | The Sociology of Farming and Rural Life | | | | X |
| RDS-30306 | Sociological Theories of Rural Transformation | | | | X |
| YSS-82812 | BSc Thesis Sociology of Development | | | | X |
| | **B Economics of Development** | | | | |
| ECH-21806 | Microeconomics | | | X | |
| DEC-21806 | Macroeconomics and International Trade | | | | X |
| AEP-20806 | Institutional Economics and Economic Organisation Theory | | | | X |
| AEP-22806 | Spatial and Regional Economics | | | | X |
| YSS-83312 | BSc Thesis Economics of Development | | | | X |
| | **C Communication, Technology and Policy** | | | | |
| COM-20306 | Communication and Policy Making | | | X | |
| TAD-30306 | Social Justice, Technology and Development | | | | X |
| COM-21306 | Innovation Management and Cross-Disciplinary Design | | | | X |
| LAW-21306 | Law and Public Power | | | | X |
| YSS-83812 | BSc Thesis Communication, Technology and Policy | | | | X |
| | **Free choice** | | | | |
| | Free Choice | | | | X |

| Course code | Course name | Credits | Year-period | Lectures | Tutorials | Practicals | Field excursions | Group work | Individual Paper* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Common Part** | | | | | | | | | |
| APP-20803 | Food Ethics *or* | 3 | M1/2-2/5 | 4 | 8 | | | | |
| APP-20303 | Ethics and Social Science | 3 | M1/2-5/6 | 4 | 8 | | | | |
| YSS-30803 | Seminar | 3 | M1/2 | 2 | 20 | | | | |
| YMC-60809 | Academic Consultancy Training | 9 | M1/2 | | | 16 | | 26 | |
| YMC-60303 | Modular Skills Training | 3 | M1/2 | | | 30 | | | |
| ...-70x24 | Internship** | 24 | M1/2 | | | | | | |

| Courses | | Year | 1 | 2 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Specialization part (45 credits)** | | | |
| | **A Sociology of Development** | | | |
| **Common Specialization Course** | | | | |
| RDS-32806 | Sociology in Development: Towards a Critical Perspective | | X | |
| **Thesis Track** | | | | |
| RDS-32306 | Anthropology and Development | | X | |
| RDS-80433 | MSc Thesis Rural Development Sociology | | | X |
| *Or* | | | | |
| RSO-31806 | Understanding Rural Development: Theories, Practices and Methodologies | | X | |
| RSO-80433 | MSc Thesis Rural Sociology | | | X |
| *Or* | | | | |
| ENP-32806 | Sociological Perspectives on Environmental Change | | X | |
| ENP-80433 | MSc Thesis Environmental Policy | | | X |
| *Or* | | | | |
| RDS-34306 | Conflict, Development and Disaster | | X | |
| RDS-80733 | MSc Thesis Disaster Studies | | | X |
| | **B Economics of Development** | | | |
| **Common Specialization Course** | | | | |
| AEP-31306 | Rural Economic Analysis | | X | |
| **Thesis Track** | | | | |
| AEP-30306 | The Economics of European Integration | | X | |
| AEP-80433 | MSc Thesis Agricultural Economics and Rural Policy *or* | | | X |
| AEP-81333 | MSc Thesis Regional Economics | | | X |
| *Or* | | | | |
| DEC-30306 | Central Themes in Development Economics | | X | |
| DEC-80433 | MSc Thesis Development Economics | | | X |
| *Or* | | | | |
| ENP-32306 | Advanced Environmental Economics and Policy | | X | |
| ENR-80433 | MSc Thesis Environmental Economics and Natural Resources | | | X |
| | **C Communication, Technology and Policy** | | | |
| **Common Specialization Course** | | | | |
| TAD-31306 | Investigating Knowledge | | X | |
| **Thesis Track** | | | | |
| COM-31306 | Management of Change: Inter-Human Processes and Communication | | X | |
| COM-80433 | MSc Thesis Communication and Innovation Studies | | | X |
| *Or* | | | | |
| TAD-30806 | Technography, Researching Technology and Development | | X | |
| TAD-80433 | MSc Thesis Technology and Agrarian Development | | | X |
| *Or* | | | | |
| LAW-30306 | Globalization and Governance | | X | |
| LAW-80433 | MSc Thesis Law and Governance | | | X |

*Master programme in Development and Rural Innovation*

| | Course | | Credits | Year 1 | Year 2 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| YSS-31306 Thesis Path MDR (6 credits) | RDS-21804 | Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge and Development | 4 | X | |
| | COM-22804 | Introduction to Communication and Innovation Studies | 4 | X | |
| | TAD-20804 | Introduction to Technology, Agro-ecology and Development | 4 | X | |
| | YRM-20806 | Research Design & Research Methods | 6 | X | |
| | COM-60306 | Facilitating Interactive Processes | 6 | X | |
| | YSS-60806 | Cutting Edge Issues in Development and Rural Innovation* | 6 | X | |
| | RDS-33306 | Methodology for Field Research in the Social Sciences | 6 | X | |
| | | Free academic choice | 18 | X | X |
| | | Internship | 24 | | X |
| | | **Thesis track Communication and Innovation Studies** | | | |
| | COM-31306 | Management of Change: Inter-Human Processes and Communication | 6 | X | |
| | COM-80430 | Thesis Communication and Innovation Studies | 30 | | X |
| | | **Thesis track Rural Development Sociology** | | | |
| | RDS-30806 | Governance, Livelihoods and Resources | 6 | X | |
| | RDS-80430 | Thesis Rural Development Sociology | 30 | | X |
| | | **Thesis track Technology and Agrarian Development** | | | |
| | TAD-30806 | Technography, Researching Technology and Development | 6 | X | |
| | TAD-80430 | Thesis Technology and Agrarian Development | 30 | | X |

* Together with COM-60306 this course forms the "Academic Master Cluster".

## Appendix 5: Quantitative data regarding the programmes

### Data on intake, transfers and graduation

*Bachelor programme in Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudies*

*Success rates*

| Cohort | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Size at the outset | 32 | 31 | 49 | 44 | 73 | 99 | 96 | 85 |
| *Size of re-enrolment T+1* | *27* | *30* | *33* | *36* | *60* | *81* | *77* | |
| Diploma after 3 years (%) | 11 | 17 | 27 | 25 | 15 | | | |
| Diploma after 4 years (%) | 48 | 50 | 58 | 67 | | | | |
| Diploma after 5 years (%) | 63 | 70 | 70 | | | | | |
| Diploma after 6 years (%) | 74 | 87 | | | | | | |
| *Drop-outs 1 October 2010 (%)* | *22* | *7* | *18* | *8* | *7* | *5* | | |

*Master programme in International Development Studies*

*Success rates*

| Cohort | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Size at the outset | 21 | 49 | 45 | 49 | 38 | 84 | 84 | 70 |
| Diploma after 2 years (%) | 57 | 49 | 47 | 51 | 55 | 55 | | |
| Diploma after 3 years (%) | 81 | 67 | 87 | 78 | 82 | | | |
| Diploma after 4 years (%) | 86 | 71 | 91 | 88 | | | | |
| Diploma after 5 years (%) | 86 | 73 | 91 | | | | | |
| *Drop-outs 1 October 2010 (%)* | *5* | *18* | *9* | *10* | *3* | *7* | *4* | |

*Master programme in Development and Rural Innovation*

*Success rates*

| Cohort | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Size at the outset | 27 | 30 | 25 | 26 | 30 | 21 | 20 | 23 |
| Diploma after 2 years (%) | 59 | 43 | 36 | 50 | 57 | 33 | | |
| Diploma after 3 years (%) | 70 | 57 | 72 | 81 | 87 | | | |
| Diploma after 4 years (%) | 74 | 67 | 76 | 85 | | | | |
| Diploma after 5 years (%) | 74 | 67 | 76 | | | | | |
| *Drop-outs 1 October 2010 (%)* | *26* | *30* | *24* | *8* | *3* | *10* | *5* | |

### Teacher-student ratio achieved

For Wageningen University the average student/staff ratio lies between 5.5 and 12.5 for bachelor programmes, and between 5.5 and 10 for master programmes.
For the bachelor programme in Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudies the student/staff ratio is 11. For the master programme in International Development Studies the student/staff ratio is 7,4. For the master programme in Development and Rural Innovation the student/staff ratio is 8,8.

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

*Number of programmed contact hours*

| Year | Contact hours | Contact hours (% of 1680) |
|---|---|---|
| B1 | 508 | 30 |
| B2 | 499 | 30 |
| B3 | 473 | 28 |
| M1- IDS | 397 | 24 |
| M2 –IDS | 30 | 2 |
| M1 – DRI | 505 | 30 |
| M2 – DRI | 80 | 5 |

## Appendix 6: Programme of the site visit

**9 May 2012**

| | |
|---|---|
| 12.00 – 14.30 | **Preparatory meeting committe – including lunch** |
| 14.30 – 15.30 | **Management BIN/MID** |
| | Dr. R. (Rico) Lie |
| | Drs. M.G.C. (Maria) Smetsers |
| | Prof.dr.ir. J.P.M. (Jan) van Tatenhove |
| | Prof.dr. L.E. (Leontine) Visser |
| 15.30 – 15.45 | **Break** |
| 15.45 – 16.45 | **Students BIN/MID** |
| | J. (Jasper) Werkman |
| | A.E.S. (Anneloes) Pronk |
| | M.E. (Miriam) van Muijlwijk |
| | S. (Sven) Da Silva |
| | N.C. (Nienke) Bilo |
| | L. (Luckmore) Jalisi |
| | N. (Nyamwaya) Munthali |
| | N.M.M. (Nelle) Kooren |
| 16.45 – 17.45 | **Lecturers BIN/MID** |
| | Prof.dr. E.H. (Erwin) Bulte |
| | Dr.ir. L.K.E. (Liesbeth) Dries |
| | Dr.ir. O. (Otto) Hospes |
| | Dr.ir. H. (Harro) Maat |
| | Dr.ir. P.J.M. (Peter) Oosterveer |
| | Dr. E.D. (Elisabet) Rasch |
| | Dr.ir. D. (Dirk) Roep |
| | Dr.ir. G.M. (Gerard) Verschoor |
| 17.45 – 18.00 | **Break** |
| 18.00 – 18.30 | **Programme committee BIN/MID** |
| | J.K. (Johanne) Deike |
| | I. (Imke) Greven |
| | S.L. (Sebastiaan) Reuijl |
| | Dr.ir. R.A. (Rob) Schipper |
| | Dr.ir. P.A. (Pieter) de Vries |

**10 May 2012**

| | |
|---|---|
| 9.00 – 9.45 | **Management MDR (responsible for content of the programme)** |
| | Prof.dr.ir. C. (Cees) Leeuwis |
| | Drs. M.G.C. (Maria) Smetsers |
| 9.45 – 10.00 | **Break** |
| 10.00 – 10.45 | **Students MDR** |
| | I.(Irma) Arts |
| | H. (Harriet) Agemo |
| | H. (Helga) Gruberg Cazon |
| | S. (Smriti) Thapa |
| | B.S. (Sjors) Bijen |
| | M. (Mario) di Florio |
| | Y.V. (Yenni) Astete Salazar |

| | |
|---|---|
| | A.R. (Ana) Koloffon Camarena |
| 10.45 – 11.30 | **Lecturers MDR** |
| | Prof.dr. M.N.C. (Noelle) Aarts |
| | Dr.ir. C.J.M. (Conny) Almekinders |
| | Dr. R.A. (Roy) Gigengack |
| | Dr. P.G.M. (Paul) Hebinck |
| | Dr.ir. L.W.A. (Laurens) Klerkx |
| | Drs. L.F.P. (Leon) Pijnenburg |
| | Dr.ir. S.R. (Sietze) Vellema |
| | Dr.ir. P.A. (Pieter) de Vries |
| 11.30 – 11.45 | **Break** |
| 11.45 – 12.15 | **Programme committee (students) MDR** |
| | M.I. (Marta) Dabrowska |
| | O. (Onno) Giller |
| | F. (Franziska) Nath |
| | Z. (Zaenudin) Zaenudin |
| | Dr.ir. G.M. (Gerard) Verschoor |
| 12.45 – 13.15 | **Lunch** |
| 13.15 – 14.15 | **Final meeting with management (final responsibility for programme)** |
| | Prof.dr.ir. C. (Cees) Leeuwis |
| | Drs. M.G.C. (Maria) Smetsers |
| | Prof.dr.ir. J.P.M. (Jan) van Tatenhoven |
| | Prof.dr. L.E. (Leontine) Visser |
| | Dr. R. (Rico) Lie |
| 15.15 – 15.30 | **Presentation of the preliminary findings by committee chair** |

**Programme for Kick-off meeting, 21 February: Common part of critical reflections**

09.00 – 09.15 **Welcome by the Rector and the Director of the EI**[2]
09.15 – 11.00 **Preparatory meeting of assessment panel**
11.00 – 12.15 **General management programmes**:
P. (Paulien) Poelarends (member, Board of the EI)
R.A. (Rosella) Koning (member, Board of the EI)
Prof. T.W.M. (Thom) Kuyper (member, Board of the EI)
Prof. L.E. (Leontine) Visser (member, Board of the EI)
Prof. E.W. (Pim)Brascamp (Director of the EI)
J.J. (Jan) Steen (Quality assurance and enhancement officer)
12.15 – 12.45 Lunch
12.45 – 13.30 **Study Advisers**:
Dr. A.E.M. (Anja) Janssen (BSc and MSc Food Technology, Food Safety, Food Quality Management)
C.M. (Neeltje) van Hulten (BSc and MSc Agriculture and Bioresource Engineering)
C.Q.J.M. (Stijn) Heukels (BSc and MSc Landscape Architecture and Planning)
W.T. (Willy) ten Haaf (MSc Geo-Information Science)
Dr. W. (Wouter) Hazeleger (MSc Animal Sciences) [not present]
R.N.M. (Gineke) Boven (BSc Management and Consumer Studies)
13.30 – 14.30 **Examining Boards**:
Dr. P.B.M. (Paul) Berentsen (secretary, EB[3] Social Sciences)
Dr. M.C.R. (Maurice) Franssen (secretary, EB Technology and Nutrition)
C.P.G.M. (Lisette) de Groot (chair, EB Technology and Nutrition)
Dr. D. (Dick) van der Hoek (secretary, EB Environment and Landscape)
Dr. K. (Klaas) Swart (secretary, EB Life Sciences)
Prof. W (Willem) Takken (chair, EB Life Sciences)
14.30 – 14.45 Break
14.45 – 15.45 **Lecturers of Programme committees**:
Dr. A.J.B. (Ton) van Boxtel (Biotechnology and Bioinformatics)
Dr. J. (Jan) den Ouden (Forest and Nature Conservation)
Dr. K.B.M. (Karin) Peters (Leisure, Tourism and Environment)
Dr. W.A.H. (Walter) Rossing (Organic Agriculture)
Dr. R. (Rico) Lie (International Development Studies)
Dr. W.T. (Wilma) Steegenga (Nutrition and Health)
15.45 – 17.15 **Meeting of assessment panel**: evaluation and first findings
17.15 – 18.00 **Graduates**:
Francesco Cecchi, MSc (MSc International Development Studies)
Prof. Charlotte de Fraiture (MSc International Land and Water Management)
Dr. Dinand Ekkel (MSc Animal Sciences)
Loes Mertens (MSc Organic Agriculture)
M. Visser (MSc Forest and Nature Conservation)

[2] EI = Education Institute
[3] EB = Examining Board

## Appendix 7: Theses and documents studied by the committee

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

| *Bachelor programme in Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudies* | *Master programme in International Development Studies* | *Master programme in Development and Rural Innovation* |
|---|---|---|
| 891023445130 | 850925156120 | 841108572070 |
| 890131957130 | 840219539120 | 821124598060 |
| 880110148060 | 850417381060 | 670803305120 |
| 870712048050 | 761212592010 | 840307004030 |
| 860626854100 | 820310162100 | 810818329100 |
| 871117721110 | 840140859305 | 840906617070 |
| 840314500090 | 820413773010 | 760512599080 |
| 880506213080 | 820320975110 | 790829202020 |
| 890517099030 | 841013402060 | 830124670050 |
| 750530287130 | 820818179090 | 850108037090 |
| 890714420050 | 861126530030 | 780129157080 |
| 880912498050 | 820522003080 | |
| 870901592080 | 780101592010 | |
| 880501197030 | 740820593110 | |

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

- Reports of consultations with relevant committees / organs (programme committee and examinations committee, relevant ad-hoc committees);
- Examination tasks with associated evaluation criteria and standard (answer keys) and a representative selection of completed examinations (presentations, internship and/or research reports, portfolios, etc.) and their evaluations;
- List of required literature;
- Summary and analysis of recent evaluation results and relevant management information;
- Thesis regulations and guidelines for preparing projects;
- Internship regulations/handbooks;
- Course, staff and curriculum evaluations, student satisfaction survey(s), etc.;
- Alumni/exit questionnaires;
- Material about the student associations;
- Documentation on teaching staff satisfaction;
- Course guides.

# Appendix 8: Declarations of independence

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**DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

TO BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

THE UNDERSIGNED

NAME: FRANS ZWARTS

HOME ADDRESS: PETRUS CAMPERSINGEL 253
9713 AP GRONINGEN

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

LIFE SCIENCES, SEE ATTACHMENT

APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTION:

WAGENINGEN UNIVERSITY

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

1

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

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

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

PLACE: Nageningen DATE: March 30, 2012

SIGNATURE:

2

Bijlage bij onafhankelijkheidsverklaring

| Visitatiebezoek | Opleiding (CROHO-nummer): | Variant: |
|---|---|---|
| A. Food Technology | B Levensmiddelentechnologie (BLT; 56973) | Voltijd |
| | M Food Safety (MFS; 60112) | Voltijd |
| | M Food Technology (MLT; 66973) | Voltijd |
| | M Food Quality Management (MQ; 60109) | Voltijd |
| B. Biotechnology en Bio-Informatics | B Biotechnologie (BBT; 56841) | Voltijd |
| | M Biotechnology (MBT; 66841) | Voltijd |
| | M Bioinformatics (MBF; 60106) | Voltijd |
| C. Agricultural and Bioresource Engineering | B Agrotechnologie (BAT; 56831) | Voltijd |
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| D. Forest and Nature conservation | B Bos- en Natuurbeheer (BBN; 56219) | Voltijd |
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| E. International Land and Water Management | B Internationaal Land- en Waterbeheer (BIL; 50100) | Voltijd |
| | M International Land and Water Management (MIL; 60104) | Voltijd |
| F. Landscape, Architecture and Planning | B Landschapsarchitectuur en ruim. Planning (BLP; 56848) | Voltijd |
| | M Landscape, Architecture and Planning (MLP; 66848) | Voltijd |
| G. Leisure, Tourism and Environment | M Leisure, Tourism and Environment (MLE; 60111) | Voltijd |
| H. Geo-Information Science | M Geo-Information Science (MGI; 60108) | Voltijd |
| I. Plant Sciences | B Planterwetenschappen (BPW; 56835) | Voltijd |
| | M Plant Sciences (MPS; 66835) | Voltijd |
| | M Organic Agriculture (MOA; 69300) | Voltijd |
| | M Plant Biotechnology (MPB; 60105) | Voltijd |
| J. Animal Sciences | B Dierwetenschappen (BDW; 56849) | Voltijd |
| | M Animal Sciences (MAS; 66849) | Voltijd |
| K. Climate Studies | M Climate Studies (MCL; 60107) | Voltijd |
| L. International Development Studies | B Internationale Ontwikkelingsstudies (BIN; 56837) | Voltijd |
| | M International Development Studies (MID; 66837) | Voltijd |
| | M Development and Rural Innovation (MDR; 60103) | Voltijd |
| M. Management, Economics and Consumer Studies | B Bedrijfs- en Consumentenwetenschappen (BBC; 56836) | Voltijd |
| | M Management, Economics and Consumer Studies (MME; 66836) | Voltijd |
| N. Nutrition and Health | B Voeding en Gezondheid (BVG; 56868) | Voltijd |
| | M Nutrition and Health (MNH; 66868) | Voltijd |

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## DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENTIALITY

TO BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

THE UNDERSIGNED

NAME: RENATE PRENEN

HOME ADDRESS: Simon Stevinweg 21
1401 TB Bussum

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

LIFE SCIENCES - SEE ATTACHMENT

APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTION:

WAGENINGEN UNIVERSITY

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



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

PLACE: Wageningen DATE: 29-03-'12

SIGNATURE:



Bijlage bij onafhankelijkheidsverklaring

| Visitatiebezoek | Opleiding (CROHO-nummer): | Variant: |
|---|---|---|
| A. Food Technology | B Levensmiddelentechnologie (BLT; 56973) | Voltijd |
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| | M Development and Rural Innovation (MDR; 60103) | Voltijd |
| M. Management, Economics and Consumer Studies | B Bedrijfs- en Consumentenwetenschappen (BBC; 56836) | Voltijd |
| | M Management, Economics and Consumer Studies (MME; 66836) | Voltijd |
| N. Nutrition and Health | B Voeding en Gezondheid (BVG; 56868) | Voltijd |
| | M Nutrition and Health (MNH; 66868) | Voltijd |

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**DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

TO BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE

PROGRAMME THE UNDERSIGNED

NAME:

LILIYA EMILOVA IVANOVA

HOME ADDRESS:

FILIP TOTYO Street № 14 A, POST CODE 1510, SOFIA, BULGARIA

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

1. International Development Studies
   - BSc International Development Studies
   - MSc International Development Studies
   - MSc Development and Rural Innovation
2. Management, Economics and Consumer Studies
   - BSc Management and Consumer Studies (BBC)
   - MSc Management, Economics and Consumer Studies (MME)

APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTION:

WAGENINGEN UNIVERSITY

1

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

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

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

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

PLACE: SOFIA, Bulgaria DATE: November 4th, 2011

SIGNATURE:

2

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**DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

TO BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

THE UNDERSIGNED

NAME: VAN HUYLENBROECK Guido

HOME ADDRESS: Paul de Smet de Nayerplein 12
9000 GENT
BELGIE

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

Bsc International Development Studies, Msc IDS en Msc Development and Rural Innovation

APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTION:

Wageningen Universiteit

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

1

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

PLACE: Gent DATE: 18/10/2011.

SIGNATURE:

2

**DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

TO BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

THE UNDERSIGNED

NAME:
Chris Garforth

HOME ADDRESS:
52 London Road
Reading
United Kingdom

HAS BEEN ASKED TO ASSESS THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMME AS AN EXPERT:
Life Sciences – International Development Studies

APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTION:
Wageningen University

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

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PLACE: DATE: Wageningen, 9 May 2012
SIGNATURE:

**DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

TO BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

THE UNDERSIGNED

NAME:
Fiona Wilson

HOME ADDRESS:
15 Marine Square
Brighton East Sussex
United Kingdom

HAS BEEN ASKED TO ASSESS THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMME AS AN EXPERT:
Life Sciences – International Development Studies

APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTION:
Wageningen University

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PLACE: DATE: Wageningen, 9 May 2012
SIGNATURE:

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**DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

TO BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

THE UNDERSIGNED

NAME: MARLOUS MAARLEVELD

HOME ADDRESS: BMC.
Smalle pad 34
3811 MG AMERSFOORT

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

SEE ATTACHMENT

APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTION:

WAGENINGEN UNIVERSITY

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PLACE: WAGENINGEN DATE: 29 - 03 - 2012

SIGNATURE:



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TO BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

THE UNDERSIGNED

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

PLACE: DATE: Wageningen, 9 May 2012
SIGNATURE:

## Appendix 9: Rubric for the assessment of a MSc-thesis

Author: Arnold F. Moene, Meteorology and Air Quality Group, Wageningen University
Version: 1.1 (December 15, 2010)


| Item | Mark for item | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **2-3** | **4-5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9-10** |
| 1. Research competence (30-60%) * | | | | | | |
| **1.1. Commitment and perseverance** | Student is not motivated. Student escapes work and gives up regularly | Student has little motivation. Tends to be distracted easily. Has given up once or twice | Student is motivated at times, but often, sees the work as a compulsory task. Is distracted from thesis work now and then. | The student is motivated. Overcomes an occasional setback with help of the supervisor. | The student is motivated and/or overcomes an occasional setback on his own and considers the work as his "own" project. | The student is very motivated, goes at length to get the most out of the project. Takes complete control of his own project. Considers setbacks as an extra motivation. |
| **1.2. Initiative and creativity** | Student shows no initiative or new ideas at all. | Student picks up some initiatives and/or new ideas suggested by others (e.g. supervisor), but the selection is not motivated. | Student shows some initiative and/or together with the supervisor develops one or two new ideas on minor parts of the research. | Student initiates discussions on new ideas with supervisor and develops one or two own ideas on minor parts of the research. | Student has his own creative ideas on hypothesis formulation, design or data processing. | Innovative research methods and/or data-analysis methods developed. Possibly the scientific problem has been formulated by the student. |
| **1.3. Independence** | The student can only perform the project properly after repeated detailed instructions and with direct help from the supervisor. | The student needs frequent instructions and well-defined tasks from the supervisor and the supervisor needs careful checks to see if all tasks have been performed. | The supervisor is the main responsible for setting out the tasks, but the student is able to perform them mostly independently | Student selects and plans the tasks together with the supervisor and performs these tasks on his own | Student plans and performs tasks mostly independently, asks for help from the supervisor when needed. | Student plans and performs tasks independently and organizes his sources of help independently. |
| | No critical self-reflection at all. | No critical self-reflection at all. | Student is able to reflect on his functioning with the help of the supervisor only. | The student occasionally shows critical self-reflection. | Student actively performs critical self-reflection on some aspects of his functioning | Student actively performs critical self-reflection on various aspects of his own functioning and performance. |
| **1.4. Efficiency in working with data** Note: depending on the characteristics of the thesis work, not all three aspects | **Experimental work** Student is not able to setup and/or execute an experiment. | Student is able to execute detailed instructions to some extent, but errors are made often, invalidating (part of) the experiment. | Student is able to execute an experiment that has been designed by someone else (without critical assessment of sources of error and uncertainty). | Student is able to execute an experiment that has been designed by someone else. Takes sources of error and uncertainty into account in a qualitative sense. | Student is able to judge the setup of an existing experiment and to include modifications if needed. Takes into account sources of error and uncertainty quantitatively. | Student is able to setup or modify an experiment exactly tailored to answering the research questions. Quantitative consideration of sources of error and uncertainty. Execution of the experiment is flawless. |

| Item | Mark for item | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **2-3** | **4-5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9-10** |
| (experimental work, data analysis and model development) may be relevant and some may be omitted | **Data analysis**<br>Student is lost when using data. Is not able to use a spreadsheet program or any other appropriate data-processing program. | Student is able to organize the data, but is not able to perform checks and/or simple analyses | Student is able to organize data and perform some simple checks; but the way the data are used does not clearly contribute to answering of the research questions and/or he is unable to analyze the data independently. | Student is able to organize the data, perform some basic checks and perform basic analyses that contribute to the research question | Student is able to organize the data, perform commonly used checks and perform some advanced analyses on the data | Student is able to organize the data, perform thorough checks and perform advanced and original analyses on the data. |
| | **Model development**<br>Student is not able to make any modification/addition to an existing model. | Student modifies an existing model, but errors occur and persist. No validation. | Student is able to make minor modifications (say a single formula) to an existing model. Superficial validation or no validation at all. | Student is able to make major modifications to an existing model, based on literature. Validation using some basic measures of quality. | Student is able to make major modifications to an existing model, based on literature or own analyses. Validation using appropriate statistical measures. | Student is able to develop a model from scratch, or add an important new part to an existing model. Excellent theoretical basis for modelling as well as use of advanced validation methods. |
| **1.5. Handling supervisor's comments and development of research skills** | Student does not pick up suggestions and ideas of the supervisor | The supervisor needs to act as an instructor and/or supervisor needs to suggest solutions for problems | Student incorporates some of the comments of the supervisor, but ignores others without arguments | Student incorporates most or all of the supervisor's comments. | Supervisor's comments are weighed by the student and asked for when needed. | Supervisor's comments are critically weighed by the student and asked for when needed, also from other staff members or students. |
| | Knowledge and insight of the student (in relation to the prerequisites) is insufficient and the student is not able to take appropriate action to remedy this | There is some progress in the research skills of the student, but suggestions of the supervisor are also ignored occasionally. | The student is able to adopt some skills as they are presented during supervision | The student is able to adopt skills as they are presented during supervision and develops some skills independently as well | The student is able to adopt new skills mostly independently, and asks for assistance from the supervisor if needed. | The student has knowledge and insight on a scientific level, i.e. he explores solutions on his own, increases skills and knowledge where necessary. |
| **1.6. Keeping to the time schedule** | Final version of thesis or colloquium more than 50% of the nominal period overdue without a valid reason (force majeure) | Final version of thesis or colloquium at most 50% of the nominal period overdue (without a valid reason). | Final version of thesis or colloquium at most 25% of nominal period overdue (without valid reason) | Final version of thesis or colloquium at most 10% of nominal period overdue (without valid reasons) | Final version of thesis or colloquium at most 5% of nominal period overdue (without good reasons) | Final version of thesis and colloquium finished within planned period (or overdue but with good reason). |
| | No time schedule made. | No realistic time schedule. | Mostly realistic time schedule, but no timely adjustment of time schedule. | Realistic time schedule, with some adjustments (but not enough or not all in time) in times only. | Realistic time schedule, with timely adjustments. of times only. | Realistic time schedule, with timely adjustments of both time and tasks. |

| Item | Mark for item | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **2-3** | **4-5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9-10** |
| 2. Thesis report (30-60%) * | | | | | | |
| **2.1. Relevance research, clearness goals, delineation research** | No link is made to existing research on the topic. No research context is described. | The context of the topic at hand is described in broad terms but there is no link between what is known and what will be researched. | The link between the thesis research and existing research does not go beyond the information provided by the supervisor. | Context of the research is defined well, with input from the student. There is a link between the context and research questions. | Context of the research is defined sharply and to-the-point. Research questions emerge directly from the described context. | Thesis research is positioned sharply in the relevant scientific field. Novelty and innovation of the research are indicated. |
| | There is no researchable research question and the delineation of the research is absent | Most research questions are unclear, or not researchable and the delineation of the research is weak | At least either the research questions or the delineation of the research are clear | The research questions and the delineation are mostly clear but could have been defined sharper at some points | The research questions are clear and researchable and the delineation is clear. | The research questions are clear and formulated to-the-point and limits of the research are well-defined. |
| **2.2. Theoretical underpinning, use of literature** | No discussion of underlying theory. | There is some discussion of underlying theory, but the description shows serious errors. | The relevant theory is used, but the description has not been tailored to the research at hand or shows occasional errors. | The relevant theory is used, and the description has been tailored partially successful to the research at hand. Few errors occur. | The relevant theory is used, it is nicely synthesized, and it is successfully tailored to the research at hand. | Clear, complete and coherent overview of relevant theory on the level of an up-to-date review paper. Exactly tailored to the research at hand. |
| | No peer-reviewed/primary scientific papers in reference list except for those already suggested by the supervisor | Only a couple of peer-reviewed papers in reference list. | Some peer-reviewed papers in reference list but also a significant body of grey literature. | Relevant peer-reviewed papers in reference list but also some grey literature or text books. Some included references less relevant. | Mostly peer-reviewed papers or specialized monographs in reference list. An occasional reference may be less relevant. | Almost exclusively peer-reviewed papers in reference list or specialized monographs (not text books). All papers included are relevant. |
| **2.3. Use of methods and data** | No description of methods and/or data. | Research is not reproducible due to insufficient information on data (collection and/or treatment) and analysis methods | Some aspects of the research regarding data-collection, data-treatment, models or the analysis methods are described insufficiently so that that particular aspect of the research is not reproducible. | Description of the data (collection, treatment) or models as well as the analysis methods used is lacking in a number of places so that at most a more or less similar research could be performed. | Description of the data (collection, treatment) or models as well as the analysis methods used is mostly complete, but exact reproduction of the research is not possible due to lack of some details. | Description of the data (collection, treatment) or models as well as the analysis methods is complete and clear so that exact reproduction of the research is possible. |
| **2.4. Critical reflection on the research performed (discussion)** | No discussion and/or reflection on the research. Discussion only touches trivial or very general points of criticism. | Only some possible weaknesses and/or weaknesses which are in reality irrelevant or non-existent have been identified. | Most weaknesses in the research are indicated, but impacts on the main results are not weighed relative to each other. | Most weaknesses in the research are indicated and impacts on the main results are weighed relative to each other. | All weaknesses in the research are indicated and weighed relative to each other. Furthermore, (better) alternatives for the methods used are indicated. | Not only all possible weaknesses in the research are indicated, but also it is indicated which weaknesses affect the conclusions most. |

| Item | Mark for item | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **2-3** | **4-5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9-10** |
| | No confrontation with existing literature. | Confrontation with irrelevant existing literature. | Only trivial reflection vis-a-vis existing literature. | Only most obvious conflicts and correspondences with existing literature are identified. The value of the study is described, but it is not related to existing research. | Minor and major conflicts and correspondences with literature are shown. The added value of the research relative to existing literature is identified. | Results are critically confronted with existing literature. In case of conflicts, the relative weight of own results and existing literature is assessed. The contribution of his work to the development of scientific concepts is identified. |
| **2.5. Clarity of conclusions and recommendations** | No link between research questions, results and conclusions. | Conclusions are drawn, but in many cases these are only partial answers to the research question. Conclusions merely repeat results. | Conclusions are linked to the research questions, but not all questions are addressed. Some conclusions are not substantiated by results or merely repeat results. | Most conclusions well-linked to research questions and substantiated by results. Conclusions are mostly formulated clearly but with some vagueness in wording. | Clear link between research questions and conclusions. All conclusions substantiated by results. Conclusions are formulated exact. | Clear link between research questions and conclusions. Conclusions substantiated by results. Conclusions are formulated exact and concise. Conclusions are grouped/ordered in a logical way. |
| | No recommendations given. | Recommendations are absent or trivial. | Some recommendations are given, but the link of those to the conclusions is not always clear. | Recommendations are well-linked to the conclusions. | Recommendations are to-the-point, well-linked to the conclusions and original. | Recommendations are to-the-point, well-linked to the conclusions, original and are extensive enough to serve as project description for a new thesis project. |
| **2.6. Writing skills** | Thesis is badly structured. In many cases information appears in wrong locations. Level of detail is inappropriate throughout. | Main structure incorrect in some places, and placement of material in different chapters illogical in many places. Level of detail varies widely (information missing, or irrelevant information given). | Main structure is correct, but lower level hierarchy of sections is not logical in places. Some sections have overlapping functions leading to ambiguity in placement of information. Level of detail varies widely (information missing, or irrelevant information given). | Main structure correct, but placement of material in different chapters illogical in places. Level of detail inappropriate in a number of places (irrelevant information given). | Most sections have a clear and unique function. Hierarchy of sections is mostly correct. Ordering of sections is mostly logical. All information occurs at the correct place, with few exceptions. In most places level of detail is appropriate. | Well-structured: each section has a clear and unique function. Hierarchy of sections is correct. Ordering of sections is logical. All information occurs at the correct place. Level of detail is appropriate throughout. |
| | Formulations in the text are often incorrect/inexact inhibiting a correct interpretation of the text. | Vagueness and/or inexactness in wording occur regularly and it affects the interpretation of the text. | The text is ambiguous in some places but this does not always inhibit a correct interpretation of the text. | Formulations in text are predominantly clear and exact. Thesis could have been written more concisely. | Formulations in text are clear and exact, as well as concise. | *Textual* quality of thesis (or manuscript in the form of a journal paper) is such that it could be acceptable for a pear-reviewed journal. |

| Item | Mark for item | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **2-3** | **4-5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9-10** |
| 3. Colloquium (5%) * | | | | | | |
| **3.1. Graphical presentation** | Presentation has no structure. | Presentation has unclear structure. | Presentation is structured, though the audience gets lost in some places. | Presentation has a clear structure with only few exceptions. | Presentation has a clear structure. Mostly a good separation between the main message and side-steps. | Presentation clearly structured, concise and to-the-point. Good separation between the main message and side-steps. |
| | Unclear lay-out. Unbalanced use of text, graphs, tables or graphics throughout. Too small font size, too many or too few slides. | Lay-out in many places insufficient: too much text and too few graphics (or graphs, tables) or vice verse. | Quality of the layout of the slides is mixed. Inappropriate use of text, tables, graphs and graphics in some places. | Lay-out is mostly clear, with unbalanced use of text, tables, graphs and graphics in few places only. | Lay-out is clear. Appropriate use of text, tables, graphs and graphics. | Lay-out is functional and clear. Clever use of graphs and graphics. |
| **3.2. Verbal presentation and defense** | Spoken in such a way that majority of audience could not follow the presentation. | Presentation is uninspired and/or monotonous and/or student reads from slides: attention of audience not captured | Quality of presentation is mixed: sometimes clear, sometimes hard to follow. | Mostly clearly spoken. Perhaps monotonous in some places. | Clearly spoken. | Relaxed and lively though concentrated presentation. Clearly spoken. |
| | Level of audience not taken into consideration at all. | Level of audience hardly taken intro consideration. | Presentation not at appropriate level of audience. | Level of presentation mostly targeted at audience. | Level of presentation well-targeted at audience. Student is able to adjust to some extent to signals from audience that certain parts are not understood. | Clear take-home message. Level well-targeted at audience. Student is able to adjust to signals from audience that certain parts are not understood. |
| | Bad timing (way too short or too long). | Timing not well kept (at most 30% deviation from planned time). | Timing not well kept (at most 20% deviation from planned time). | Timing is OK (at most 10% deviation from planned time). | Timing is OK. | Presentation finished well in time. |
| | Student is not able to answer questions. | Student is able to answer only the simplest questions | Student answers at least half of the questions appropriately. | Student is able to answer nearly all questions in an appropriate way. | Student is able to answer all questions in an appropriate way, although not to-the-point in some cases. | Student is able to give appropriate, clear and to-the-point answers to all questions. |

| Item | Mark for item | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **2-3** | **4-5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9-10** |
| 4. Examination (5%) * | | | | | | |
| **4.1. Defense of the thesis** | Student is not able to defend/discuss his thesis. He does not master the contents | The student has difficulty to explain the subject matter of the thesis. | Student is able to defend his thesis. He mostly masters the contents of what he wrote, but for a limited number of items he is not able to explain what he did, or why. | Student is able to defend his thesis. He masters the contents of what he wrote, but not beyond that. Is not able to place thesis in scientific or practical context. | Student is able to defend his thesis, including indications where the work could have been done better. Student is able to place thesis in either scientific or practical context. | Student is able to freely discuss the contents of the thesis and to place the thesis in the context of current scientific literature and practical contexts. |
| **4.2. Knowledge of study domain** | Student does not master the most basic knowledge (even below the starting level for the thesis). | The student does not understand all of the subject matter discussed in the thesis. | The student understands the subject matter of the thesis on a textbook level. | The student understands the subject matter of the thesis including the literature used in the thesis. | Student is well on top of subjects discussed in thesis: not only does he understand but he is also aware of current discussions in the literature related to the thesis topic. | Student is well on top of subjects discussed in thesis: not only does he understand but he is also aware of discussions in the literature beyond the topic (but related to) of the thesis. |

**Manual for use of the thesis evaluation form and the MSc-thesis assessment rubric (version 1.1) of Wageningen University**

## User instructions

- Grading the thesis work is generally done by two persons, the daily supervisor and the second reviewer/examiner. For the sake of grading uniformity, it is highly recommended by the Exam Boards that the second reviewer within a chair group is always the same person. Preferably it is the head of the group.
- The thesis evaluation form has four categories. The research competence category can only be filled in by the daily supervisor as this person has worked with the student. The Thesis report category can most objectively be filled in by the second reviewer who was not involved in the thesis process, as grading the thesis report should not be biased by positive or negative experiences with the student. The daily supervisor who has these experiences can take these into account when grading the research competence.
- Use of the comment fields on the thesis evaluation form is highly recommended. It is an extra feedback for the student.
- The assessment rubric has the form of an analytic rubric (see e.g. Andrade (2005), Reynolds *et al.* (2009), URL1, URL2). Each line discusses one **criterion** for assessment. Each column gives a **level** for the grading. Each cell contains the **descriptor** of the level for that criterion.
- The criteria in the rubric exactly follow the items presented in the Excel worksheet "Thesis evaluation Wageningen University" constructed by the Exam Boards. In a few cases the criteria in the original thesis evaluation document were split into two or more parts because the description of the criteria clearly covered different subjects.
- Since the final mark is composed of so many criteria, the scores on individual criteria should be discriminative. Not all levels are equally broad in marks. Since the final marks of theses usually range between 6 and 9, in the rubric individual levels have been established for the marks of 6, 7 and 8. When performance is at the 9-10 level, decide whether the student is on the low edge (9) or high edge (10) of this level. Descriptions at the 9-10 level tend to describe the ultimate performance (10). Hence, if a student performs well above 8, but below the description at the 9-10 level, a 9 would be the appropriate mark.
- Keep in mind that each line in the rubric should be read independently: it could be that a student scores a 2-3 on one criterion and a 9-10 on another.
- Always start at the lowest mark in the rubric, and test if the student should be awarded the next higher mark. In some cases achievements of a next lower level are not repeated at the higher level (i.e. the lower level achievements are implicit in the higher levels). Furthermore, if a level has a range of marks, choose the most appropriate one (consider the description of the level of performance as a continuum, rather than a discrete description).
- Wherever the student is indicated as 'he', one can also read 'she'.

## Remarks

- This rubric has been validated by a number of supervisors by comparing the original grade of a number of theses to the grade resulting from this rubric.

- The main intention of using a rubric is enhance homogeneity of assessments and the ability to communicate about assessments both with students and with colleagues. Furthermore, it clarifies to students the expectations of the supervisor and helps the supervisor to structure feedback during the process of thesis research. Although the intention is to homogenize the process of assessment, it should be noted that even with the use of a rubric some arbitrariness will remain.

- The two main categories on the thesis evaluation form (research competence and thesis report) should have an assessment of 'sufficient' (i.e. ≥ 5.5) before the total thesis work can be considered as sufficient. So, no compensation between these main categories is possible to obtain the lowest final mark of 6.0.
- Please report any positive or negative experiences with and suggestions for the rubric to arnold.moene@wur.nl.

- Author of the rubric: Arnold F. Moene (Meteorology and Air Quality Group, Wageningen University), with valuable contributions from Ellis Hofland, Edwin Peeters, Tamar Nieuwenhuizen, Maarten Holtslag, George Bier, Gerard Ros, Lijbert Brussaard, Judith Gulikers and Paul Berentsen.

**References**

Andrade, H.G, 2005. Teaching With Rubrics: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly. *College Teaching* **53**, p. 27-31.

Reynolds, J., R. Smith, C. Moskovitz and A. Sayle, 2009. BioTAP: A Systematic Approach to Teaching Scientific Writing and Evaluating Undergraduate Theses. *Bioscience* **59**, p. 896-903.

URL1: http://jonathan.mueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/toolbox/rubrics.htm (last visited November 17, 2009).

URL2: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rubric_(academic) (last visited November 17, 2009).