



NVAO • THE NETHERLANDS

## INITIAL ACCREDITATION

WO-PI-MASTER

M ADVANCED LLM IN TECHNOLOGY

GOVERNANCE

Universiteit van Amsterdam

SUMMARY REPORT

9 JULY 2023

## 1 Peer review

The Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) determines the quality of a new programme on the basis of a peer review. This initial accreditation procedure is required when an institution wishes to award a recognised degree after the successful completion of a study programme.

The procedure for new programmes differs slightly from the approach to existing programmes that have already been accredited. Initial accreditation is in fact an ex ante assessment of a programme. Once accredited the new programme becomes subject to the regular review process.

A panel of independent peers including a student reviews the plans during a site visit to the institution. A discussion amongst peer experts forms the basis for the panel's final judgement and the advisory report. The agenda for the panel visit and the documents reviewed are available from the NVAO office upon request.

The outcome of this peer review is based on the standards described and published in the limited NVAO Assessment framework for the higher education accreditation system of the Netherlands (Stcrt. 2019, nr. 3198). Each standard is judged on a three-point scale: meets, does not meet or partially meets the standard. The panel will reach a conclusion about the quality of the programme, also on a three-point scale: positive, conditionally positive or negative.

NVAO takes an accreditation decision on the basis of the full report. Following a positive NVAO decision with or without conditions the institution can proceed to offer the new programme.

This report contains the findings, analysis and judgements of the panel resulting from the peer review. It also details the commendations as well as recommendations for follow-up actions. A summary report with the main outcomes of the peer review is also available.

Both the full and summary reports of each peer review are published on NVAO's website [www.nvaonet.net](http://www.nvaonet.net). There you can also find more information on NVAO and peer reviews of new programmes.

## 2 Panel

### Peer experts

- mr. dr. Sjoerd Claessens LLM (chair), Associate professor in European Law / Vice-dean for Education, Faculty of Law, Maastricht University;
- prof. dr. Jaap-Henk Hoepman, Associate professor IT-law, Faculty of Law, University of Groningen, Associate professor, Dept. of Computer Science, Radboud University, Nijmegen and guest professor Computer Science, Karlstad University, Sweden;
- prof. dr. Jeanne Mifsud Bonnici, Professor in European Technology Law and Human Rights; Faculty of Law, University of Groningen;
- Karlijn Landman LLM (*student member*), advisor of the Director of Operation and Housing of the House of Representatives).

### Assisting staff

- dr. Meg van Bogaert (secretary)
- drs. Frank Wamelink (NVAO policy advisor and process coordinator)

### Site visit

5 June 2023 at the University of Amsterdam

### 3 Outcome

The NVAO approved panel reaches a positive conclusion regarding the quality of the Master Advanced LLM in Technology Governance offered by the University of Amsterdam. The programme complies with all standards of the limited NVAO framework.

The Advanced Master LLM in Technology Governance addresses the role of regulation and law in the digital society. It offers an ambitious curriculum that links thorough legal understanding of regulatory frameworks in (digital) technology with a multidisciplinary approach to technological developments. Public and private sector employers expressed a huge need for legal experts in this field. The programme aims at training graduates with a multidisciplinary perspective who are able to communicate with other disciplines, can explain legal aspects and know what relevant questions to ask from other relevant disciplines. The intended learning outcomes (ILOs) are appropriate for the ambition of the programme and fulfil the international requirements of a master's programme in law (LLM). The Domain Specific Reference Framework for Law (Domeinspecifiek Referentiekader Rechtsgeleerdheid) (SSFR Law) applies to the Advanced LLM in Technology Governance. The good interaction with the professional field should be continued when the programme commences, for example by means of an advisory board.

The design, structure and content of the curriculum have been well thought through. The curriculum is based on two large core courses which lay the groundwork for the legal and non-legal forms of technology governance. Four other courses, two of which are electives, make up the rest of the curriculum. At the end of the first semester, students start the final project. All compulsory courses are spread over several blocks, providing space for reflection and the acquisition of multidisciplinary knowledge and skills. The final project offers students room and flexibility with regard to context, collaboration and output. Students have to demonstrate in underlying documentation that they realise the ILOs. This is realised satisfactorily in the assessment forms. Co-teaching and project work ensures a multidisciplinary approach to the topics in the courses. The educational background, work experience and nationality of students is expected to be diverse. The didactic concept, including co-creation, suits the diversity of the student population and the advanced level of the programme. However, it is important that the programme clearly formulates the intake profile it is aiming for. The programme's small scale and close-knit team of lecturers provide a good basis for the planned, intensive student supervision. The panel expects the process of student-community building to be swift and will be stimulated by the learning environment and guidance.

The teaching staff consists of recognized researchers in this field, is enthusiastic, well qualified and will be able to incorporate current developments in research and society into teaching. Interpersonal relationships within the team of lecturers provide dynamism and quality. The panel stresses the importance of formalising and recording processes and practices to assure quality and continuity in case staff members depart.

The programme has given careful thought to a thorough assessment plan and assessment programme that reflect both the advanced level and multidisciplinary of the programme. With a variety of assessment formats appropriate to the teaching methods, all ILOs are adequately assessed. The panel stresses the importance of also documenting processes and working methods for assessment. The faculty wide Examinations Board (EB) can carry out its function properly. The multidisciplinary of the programme will lead to final projects on topics that might be outside the EB members' area of expertise, which should be taken into account when assessing the final level.

The method of assessing the (potentially) wide variety of final products is well-designed. The panel recommends using at least one examiner who was not involved in the process at all, even if two supervisors are involved as examiners. The panel compliments the programme for establishing a *Programme Consistency Assessment Committee* to ensure constructive alignment.

Standard	Judgement
1. Intended learning outcomes	meets the standard
2. Teaching-learning environment	meets the standard
3. Student assessment	meets the standard
4. Achieved learning outcomes	NA

<i>Conclusion</i>	<i>Positive</i>
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#### 4 Commendations

The programme is commended for the following features of good practice.

1. **Socially topical:** The ambitious, multidisciplinary, well-structured advanced LLM programme responds to a strong societal need for multidisciplinary experts in Law, Technology and Governance.
2. **Lecturing team:** The panel met with an enthusiastic and well qualified lecturing team, which is highly qualified to offer the programme. Lecturers have up-to-date knowledge, are involved in national and European research projects and policies, and are highly regarded internationally. Good interpersonal contacts within the lecturing team contribute to the development of a coherent and high-quality curriculum.
3. **Guidance:** Community building of students is well considered, and thought has been given to the community-building of the student group, with (personal) guidance adapted to the diverse and advanced student intake.
4. **Stakeholders:** Representatives from the professional field and potential employers of graduates were involved in the process of development and were able to provide input. According to the panel, this provides an excellent basis to set-up an advisory board.

#### 5 Recommendations

For further improvement to the programme, the panel recommends a number of follow-up actions.

1. **Expectation management:** it is important to clearly formulate what prospective students and prospective employers can expect from this programme. It should be clear in the marketing towards perspective students that the programme has a strong legal character, is multidisciplinary and trains students to connect with and talk to other disciplines. However, they will not become experts in a certain technology nor will the diploma have civil effect.
2. **Admission criteria:** to engage in co-creation with students, it would be beneficial to formulate more precisely what the intake profile is and which candidates the programme is targeting.
3. **Independent examiner:** The panel recommends to always include a fully independent second examiner for the final project alongside the supervisor(s), even if the student had two supervisors (legal and non-legal), whom are assessing the final project.
4. **Examinations Board:** The multidisciplinary of the programme will lead to final projects on topics outside the EB members' areas of (legal) expertise. By anticipating in time and ensuring sufficient relevant expertise, the EB can properly verify the final level of the final works and ensure the achievement of the ILOs.

#### 6 What comes next?

NVAO grants initial accreditation to a new programme on the basis of a panel's full report. The decision is valid for a maximum of six years. For conditional accreditation other regulations apply. Upon accreditation the new

programme will follow the NVAO review procedures for existing programmes. NVAO publishes the accreditation decision together with the full report and this summary report. <sup>1</sup>

Each institution has a system of quality assurance in place ensuring continuous follow-up actions and periodic peer-review activities. Peer reviews help the institution to improve the quality of its programmes. The progress made since the last review is therefore taken into consideration when preparing for the next review. The follow-up activities are also part of the following peer-review report. For more information, visit the institution's website. <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nvaio.net/nl/besluiten>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.uva.nl>

## 7 Summary in Dutch

Het panel oordeelt positief over de kwaliteit van Advanced Master LLM in Technology Governance van de Universiteit van Amsterdam Dit is de uitkomst van de kwaliteitstoets uitgevoerd door een panel van peers op verzoek van de Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie (NVAO). Voor deze beoordeling heeft het panel gesprekken gevoerd met de opleiding op .

De Advanced Master LLM in Technology Governance gaat in op de rol van regulering en recht in de digitale samenleving. De opleiding biedt een ambitieus curriculum aan dat diepgaand juridisch begrip van regelgevende kaders in (digitale) technologie koppelt aan een multidisciplinaire benadering van technologische ontwikkelingen. Werkgevers geven aan een grote behoefte te hebben aan juristen op dit gebied. Het programma richt zich op het opleiden van experts met een multidisciplinair perspectief die kunnen communiceren met andere disciplines, juridische aspecten kunnen uitleggen en weten welke relevante vragen ze moeten stellen aan andere relevante disciplines. De beoogde leerresultaten zijn passend bij de ambitie van het programma en voldoen aan de internationale eisen van een masteropleiding in de rechten (LLM).

Het ontwerp, de structuur en de inhoud van het curriculum zijn goed doordacht. De basis bestaat uit twee grote kernvakken, de juridische en niet-juridische vormen van technology governance. Vier andere vakken, waarvan twee keuzevakken, vormen de rest van het curriculum. Aan het einde van het eerste semester beginnen studenten met het afstudeerproject. Het afstudeerproject biedt studenten ruimte en flexibiliteit met betrekking tot context, samenwerking en output. Co-teaching en projectwerk zorgen voor een multidisciplinaire aanpak. Voorgaande opleiding, werkervaring en nationaliteit van de studenten is naar verwachting divers. Het didactische concept, inclusief co-creatie, past bij deze diversiteit en bij het gevorderde niveau van het programma. Het is belangrijk dat de opleiding in de marketing duidelijk formuleert welk instroomprofiel zij nastreeft. De kleinschaligheid van de opleiding en het hechte docententeam vormen een goede basis voor de geplande, intensieve begeleiding van studenten. Het enthousiaste docententeam is gekwalificeerd, bestaat uit erkende onderzoekers en is in staat om actuele ontwikkelingen in onderzoek en maatschappij te verwerken in het onderwijs. De interpersoonlijke relaties binnen het docententeam zorgen voor dynamiek en kwaliteit. Het panel benadrukt het belang van het formaliseren en vastleggen van processen en werkwijzen om kwaliteit en continuïteit te waarborgen in het geval medewerkers vertrekken.

Er is nagedacht over een gedegen toetsplan, dat zowel het gevorderde niveau als de multidisciplinariteit weerspiegelt. Met een verscheidenheid aan beoordelingsvormen die passen bij de onderwijsmethoden, wordt het onderwijs adequaat beoordeeld. De faculteitsbrede Examencommissie (EB) kan haar functie naar behoren uitvoeren. De multidisciplinariteit van het programma zal leiden tot afstudeerprojecten over onderwerpen die mogelijk buiten het expertisegebied van de EB-leden liggen, waarmee rekening moet worden gehouden bij de borging van het eindniveau. De methode voor het beoordelen van de (potentieel) grote verscheidenheid aan eindproducten is goed ontworpen. Het panel beveelt aan om ten minste één examinerator in te zetten die helemaal niet bij het proces betrokken is, zelfs als er twee supervisors als examineratoren betrokken zijn. Het panel complimenteert de opleiding voor het instellen van een Programma Consistentie Beoordelingscommissie om constructieve afstemming te waarborgen.

Meer informatie over de NVAO-werkwijze en de toetsing van nieuwe opleidingen is te vinden op [www.nvaio.net](http://www.nvaio.net). Voor informatie over de Universiteit van Amsterdam verwijzen we naar de website van de instelling.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.uva.nl>

