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Research Master's Programme Linguistics
University of Amsterdam

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Summary

Standard 1. Intended learning outcomes
The panel is pleased with the broad profile of the research master's (RMA) programme Linguistics taught at the University of Amsterdam. It considers the addition of argumentation and communication a potentially positive new direction that may well bear fruit. It encourages the programme to continue working on the combination and integration of linguistics and communication, creating a truly interdisciplinary programme. It finds that the programme's ILOs clearly reflect the Dublin descriptors for master's programmes and are sufficiently ambitious for a research master. The ILOs do not explicitly reflect the RMA's recent amplification with communication, and they are generally and broadly stated. The panel advises the programme to formulate its vision on the combination of linguistics and communication, including the minimum requirements in each discipline, either in the ILOs or elsewhere. In this way, the decisions taken by the programme are made explicit to outsiders and can be reflected upon in future programme adaptations.

Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment
The panel appreciates the carefully designed curriculum of the RMA Linguistics. The new curriculum offers students breadth and depth, allowing them to shape their own learning process and to work closely with ACLC researchers on various projects, in a master-apprentice setup. The curriculum is taught at research master's level and pays attention to research ethics. As a result, students in the RMA are educated in a stimulating, welcoming and high-level research environment. The programme allows students many options and possibilities of specialization, but remains coherent due to solid, and often one-on-one, guidance and tutoring. The panel considers this crucial both in retaining coherence in all individual study paths, and in allowing for a feasible, if intensive, programme. It learnt that the current increase in student numbers will lead to staff increase, which it supports.

The teaching methods are fitting and varied, facilities are good, and Covid-19 adaptations have been well-executed. The panel appreciates the co-teaching setup of various courses, which brings out the interdisciplinarity of the programme, and the intensive teaching made possible by the small groups and limited number of students. The programme combines a clearly academic focus with a strong professional and job-market orientation. All in all, the panel is pleased with the new curriculum and hopes that the integration of communication and linguistics will continue to deepen in future years.

Standard 3. Student assessment
According to the panel, assessment and assessment practises are up to standard in the RMA Linguistics. Assessment is aligned with programme and course objectives, and transparent, valid and reliable. Assessment types are varied and fitting for a research master's programme, and the students complete the entire research cycle. The impact of covid on assessment has been limited. The panel recommends storing the separate forms of both thesis supervisors for quality assurance purposes.

The panel considers the current working method of the Examination Board to be adequate, but is of the opinion that that it should be expanded. The Board is responsible for many programmes and the delegates for the separate programmes carry a lot of responsibility in signalling programme-specific issues to the Board. The panel advises looking into ways to provide solid input, for instance by scheduling evaluation after the assessment for a higher response rate or producing statistical analyses of the exams, so that irregularities are automatically and quickly made apparent. It considers the planned addition of an assessment panel charged with regularly checking individual courses an important step towards further improving quality of assessment.

Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes
The panel finds that the final theses of the RMA Linguistics demonstrate the research master's level and make clear that intended learning outcomes are achieved by the graduates. Because of the recent change to

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linguistics and communication, the theses do not yet reflect the addition of the fields of argumentation and communication to the RMA, but the panel is hopeful that this will be different in the near future. Alumni are well prepared for both academia and the working field, and an impressive 50% end up in PhD positions.

Score table

The panel assesses the programme as follows:

Research master's programme Linguistics

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

Prof. dr. Maarten Mous, chair

Date: 21 February 2022

Dr. Fiona Schouten, secretary

Introduction

Procedure

Assessment

On 5 November 2021, the research master's programmes Linguistics and Literary Studies of the University of Amsterdam were assessed by an independent peer review panel as part of the cluster assessment Research Master's Linguistics & Literature cluster. The assessment cluster consisted of 9 programmes, offered by the University of Groningen, Leiden University, Utrecht University, University of Amsterdam, Radboud University and Tilburg University. The assessment followed the procedure and standards of the NVAO Assessment Framework for the Higher Education Accreditation System of the Netherlands (September 2018), as well as the Specification of additional criteria for research master's programmes (May 2016).

Quality assurance agency Academion coordinated the assessment upon request of the Research Master's Linguistics & Literature cluster after taking over from Qanu per July 2021, when the first two site visits to Leiden University and University of Groningen had already taken place. On behalf of Qanu, Fiona Schouten acted as coordinator and secretary during the start-up phase and the site visits to Leiden University and the University of Groningen. On behalf of Academion, Fiona Schouten acted as coordinator for the remaining process, and as secretary for the site visits at the University of Amsterdam, Radboud University and Tilburg University. Peter Hildering was secretary for the site visit at Utrecht University. Both secretaries have been certified and registered by the NVAO.

Preparation

Qanu composed the peer review panel in cooperation with the institutions and taking into account the expertise and independence of the members as well as consistency within the cluster. On 25 May 2021, the NVAO approved the composition of the panel. The coordinator instructed the panel chairs on their role in the site visit.

The contact persons for the University of Amsterdam composed a site visit schedule in consultation with the coordinator (see appendix 3). They selected representative partners for the various interviews. It was determined that the development dialogue would take place at the end of the site visit. A separate development report was made based on this dialogue.

The programmes provided the coordinator with a list of graduates over the period 2019-2020. In consultation with the coordinator, the panel chair selected 15 theses per programme. He took the diversity of final grades and examiners into account, as well as the various thematic specializations. Prior to the site visit, the programmes provided the panel with the theses and the accompanying assessment forms. They also provided the panel with the self-evaluation reports and additional materials (see appendix 4).

The panel members studied the information and sent their findings to the secretary. The secretary collected the panel's questions and remarks in a document and shared this with the panel members. In a preliminary meeting, the panel discussed the initial findings on the self-evaluation reports and the theses, as well as the division of tasks during the site visit. The panel was also informed on the assessment framework, the working method and the planning of the site visits and reports.

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division of tasks during the site visit. The panel was also informed on the assessment frameworks, the working method and the planning of the site visits and reports.

Site visit

During the site visit, the panel interviewed various programme representatives (see appendix 3). The panel also offered students and staff members an opportunity for confidential discussion during a consultation hour. No consultation was requested. The panel used the final part of the site visit to discuss its findings in an internal meeting. Afterwards, the panel chair presented the preliminary findings.

Report

The secretary wrote a draft report based on the panel's findings and submitted it for peer assessment within Academion. Subsequently, the secretary sent the report to the panel for feedback. After processing this feedback, the secretary sent the draft report to the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Amsterdam in order to have it checked for factual irregularities. The secretary discussed the ensuing comments with the panel chair and changes were implemented accordingly. The panel then finalised the report, and the coordinator sent it to the Faculty of Humanities and the Executive Staff of the University of Amsterdam.

Panel

The following panel members were involved in the cluster assessment:
- Prof. dr. M.P.G.M. (Maarten) Mous (panel chair)
- Prof. dr. H.E. (Henriette) de Swart (panel chair/panel member)
- S. (Sannah) Debreczeni BA (student member)
- Prof. dr. Y. (Yra) van Dijk (panel member)
- S. (Suze) Geuke MA (student member)
- Prof. dr. B. (Birgit) Hellwig (panel member)
- Dr. N.H. (Nivja) de Jong (panel member)
- Prof. dr. B.L.J. (Bettelou) Los (panel member)
- Em. prof. dr. M.J.H. (Maaike) Meijer (panel member)
- Prof. dr. A. (Ad) Neeleman (panel member)
- J. (Julia) Neugarten MA (student member)
- Prof. dr. D.M. (Diederik) Oostdijk (panel member)
- Prof. dr. H. (Hugo) Quené (panel member)
- Prof. dr. D. (Dominiek) Sandra (panel member)

The panel assessing the programmes at the University of Amsterdam consisted of the following members:
- Prof. dr. M.P.G.M. (Maarten) Mous, professor of African Linguistics at Leiden University (panel chair)
- Em. prof. dr. M.J.H. (Maaike) Meijer, author and emeritus professor of Gender Studies at Maastricht University (panel member)
- Prof. dr. A. (Ad) Neeleman, professor of Linguistics at University College London (panel member)
- Prof. dr. D.M. (Diederik) Oostdijk, professor of English and American Literature at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (panel member)
- S. (Suze) Geuke MA, alumna (2020) research master in Linguistics at Leiden University (student member)

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Information on the programme

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

Programme name: Linguistics (research)
CROHO number: 60817
Level: Master
Orientation: Academic
Number of credits: 120 EC
Specialisations or tracks: Linguistics and Communication
Location: Amsterdam
Mode(s) of study: Fulltime
Language of instruction: English
Submission date NVAO: 1-5-2022 (extended due to legislation WHW art 5.31 lid 3)

Description of the assessment

Standard 1. Intended learning outcomes

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

Findings

Profile
The research master's (RMA) programme Linguistics taught at the University of Amsterdam aims to equip students with the methodology and theoretical knowledge necessary to analyze languages in their breadth, ranging from sound waves to speech acts and intercultural communication. The RMA is interdisciplinary in its teaching, as the field of linguistics is approached from various different angles, ranging from physics (analysis of speech sounds) to biology (language disorders, neurolinguistics) and psychology (psycholinguistics). Graduates of the programme are expected to have acquired excellent research skills during their studies, a good understanding of the diversity of the linguistic field, and the ability to position their own research interests within this field.

The RMA programme is associated with the research institute Amsterdam Center for Language and Communication (ACLC) with its typological focus on 'Constraints on Variation'. To a lesser degree, the Institute for Logic, Language and Computation (ILLC) is also of relevance for this RMA. In 2019, the programme was revised in terms of both content and structure. It now also covers the research topic of communication, formerly represented by the separate research master's programme Communication and Information Studies. This new programme started in the academic year 2020/2021. The recent combination of the two disciplines of linguistics and communication into one RMA has enlarged the interdisciplinary character of the programme.

The panel discussed this profile and the addition of communication as a research topic with programme management, teaching staff, and students. It considers the programme's broadened profile a potentially positive development, partly because it addresses a concern voiced by the previous assessment panel about the previous, more narrow focus. It considers the addition of argumentation and communication components a new direction that may well bear fruit. The panel learnt that at this early stage, the programme is still working hard on bringing the disciplines together, carefully choosing where to combine the two (see also standard 2). It encourages the programme to continue doing so and creating a truly interdisciplinary programme. The success of the new curriculum will depend on the extent to which the teaching in Linguistics and Communication can be integrated into a coherent whole.

Intended learning outcomes
The programme has a set of 9 faculty-wide master's level exit qualifications, 5 research master's level exit qualifications and 4 exit qualifications that are specific for the RMA Linguistics (see appendix 1). The panel studied these sets of intended learning outcomes (ILOs) and concluded that they clearly reflect the Dublin Descriptors for master's programmes and are sufficiently ambitious for a research master. They also refer to a possible career outside academia.

The panel noticed that the ILOs are quite broadly formulated and do not explicitly reflect the recent amplification of the programme. The panel appreciates that the ILOs are stated in a relatively open manner, allowing space to make small adaptations in the curriculum which is still being finetuned. At the same time, it considers this a missed opportunity to reflect the programme's vision on the addition of communication to linguistics. During the site visit, the panel learnt that the programme did formulate such a vision in developing the new curriculum. It encourages the programme to make this better visible for students,

people external to the RMA, and for possible new staff members unacquainted with the past. The programme could describe in more detail what the minimum requirements in the intended learning outcomes are in terms of linguistics and in communication for all students, independent of their study paths and specialization. In this way, the decisions taken by the programme are made explicit to outsiders and can be reflected upon in future programme adaptations.

Considerations

The panel is pleased with the RMA Linguistics' broad profile and considers the addition of argumentation and communication a potentially positive new direction that may well bear fruit. It encourages the programme to continue working on the combination and integration of linguistics and communication, creating a truly interdisciplinary programme. It finds that the programme's ILOs clearly reflect the Dublin descriptors for master's programmes and are sufficiently ambitious for a research master. The ILOs do not explicitly reflect the RMA's recent amplification with communication, and they are generally and broadly stated. The panel advises the programme to formulate its vision on the combination of linguistics and communication, including the minimum requirements in each discipline, either in the ILOs or elsewhere. In this way, the decisions taken by the programme are made explicit to outsiders and can be reflected upon in future programme adaptations.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programme meets standard 1.

Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment

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

Findings

Curriculum

The renewed curriculum of the RMA Linguistics, which started in the academic year 2020-2021, consists of 36 EC in core courses, 24 EC in electives, 30 EC in graduate school courses, tutorials, and internship, and 30 EC in a thesis and research project. The distribution of courses over the two-year curriculum can be found in appendix 2. The language of instruction is English, as is the programme title. Considering the academic as well as the working environment that the programme prepares for, the panel considers this a correct and logical choice. In the field of linguistics, English constitutes the *lingua franca*.

The 6 EC core course Statistics in Linguistics (6 EC) is taught together with the one-year master's programme Linguistics, and the electives (24 EC) are followed with students from other master's and research master's programmes. Apart from these courses (total 30 EC) where no additional demand is posed to RMA-students, the programme is taught exclusively at research master's level. The panel considers this proportional and fitting for a research master's programme and appreciates the extra 6 EC of RMA-specific courses that were introduced in the new curriculum.

The core courses consist of Perspectives on Language & Communication 1 and 2 (12 EC each), the statistics course (6 EC) and Life after Graduation (6 EC). Perspectives 1 introduces students to the notion of the utterance from various disciplines. This course is taught in the first block by two researchers, presenting a functional-semantic and a discourse-communicative perspective. In the second block, guest lecturers join in each week and shed light on 'the utterance' from other (sub-)disciplines. Perspectives 2 focuses on different methodologies and puts the utterance in a more applied context. In block 1, this is done from a psycholinguistic perspective: the students are familiarized with how psycholinguistic experiments are

conducted and how they assess the processing of the utterance. In block 2, they learn about communication analyses of utterances. Again, a team of two teachers is responsible for this course, with additional teachers presenting their expertise through guest lectures.

The panel considers the Perspectives courses to be well-designed: they strike a balance between argumentation and communication on the one hand and linguistics on the other. Team teaching works well here to consistently combine disciplines, and students work together in small mixed groups, learning with and from each other. The panel learnt from its conversation with current students that the Perspectives courses adequately address the difference in background between incoming students through focusing on the concept of the utterance. This focus is new to all, including students who did a Linguistics bachelor and are familiar with many of the concepts taught here. Students mentioned that the chosen angle prevents them from repeating BA content and provides them with more in-depth knowledge. The panel applauds the careful design of the Perspectives courses, which are crucial to the new curriculum.

As part of the core courses, students also follow the co-taught course Statistics in Linguistics (6 EC), together with students of the one-year master's programme. They learn how to set up a testable research question and how to use the statistical programme R to analyse data. Finally, Life after Graduation (6 EC) is likewise taught by a team of two researchers. In this course, the students become familiar with the academic and the non-academic job market. The first is achieved through examining possible national and international research groups that perform studies in which the students are interested or where they could see themselves as future PhD students. For the second, they investigate the question of how linguistics can be implemented in society and what constitutes its relevance to society. During this course, students acquire such practical skills as preparing a CV, performing a job interview, and looking for suitable journals for publication. If they plan to go abroad during this semester, Life after Graduation can be followed online. In creating an option to follow a semester abroad, the programme addresses a recommendation of the previous panel.

The panel appreciates the statistics course and especially Life after Graduation, which strengthens both the research and the professional orientation of the programme and is highly appreciated by students. In this course, students also reflect on research ethics and citation politics, write a job application and a research proposal, and perform a job interview for a PhD position. Students are pleased with the focus on professional as well as academic job options. They pointed out to the panel that these elements were present in the previous curriculum, but in a less structured way and without credits assigned specifically to career orientation. They consider Life after Graduation a real improvement. The panel agrees.

In their elective space, the students of the RMA Linguistics follow courses either at the UvA or at other universities. They also take part in courses of the Netherlands Graduate School of Linguistics / Landelijke Onderzoekschool Taalwetenschap (LOT). In the LOT Summer and Winter Schools, they learn about the most recent trends and methods in linguistics from renowned researchers from the Netherlands and abroad, and get to know their peers from other universities. The amount of EC in courses they choose in the Summer School depends on their choices in the first tutorial.

All students follow two tutorials (6-9 EC and 12 EC), where they learn under the close supervision of an ACLC researcher to set up a relevant research question, collect language data in order to answer this question, and write down the results in an informed and comprehensible way (for the second tutorial, this takes the form of a journal article). Students can replace one of the two tutorials with an internship by assisting internally in research projects or externally at a host institution. Tutorials are usually done individually, each time with a different staff member as supervisor. In the tutorials, the ethics of data collection and storage are addressed.

Finally, students move on to an extended Research Project (12 EC) and report on this in their final Master Thesis (18 EC). The Graduate School of the Humanities (GSH) introduced the research project in all RMA

programmes to ensure that the research component of the thesis written in the RMA is more significant than that in a 1MA thesis. The students collect data for their thesis, perform in-depth analyses, and report on these findings according to the standards of high-quality linguistic journals.

The panel considers the new RMA Linguistics curriculum to be well-designed and carefully thought through. It offers students breadth and depth, allowing them to shape their own learning process and to work closely with ACLC researchers on various projects, in a master-apprentice setup. The programme allows students many options and possibilities of specialization, but remains coherent (see also 'Feasibility and guidance'). The teaching methods are fitting and varied, from presentations and tutorials to guest lectures and internships. The panel appreciates the co-teaching setup of various courses, which brings out the interdisciplinarity of the programme, and the intensive teaching made possible by the small groups and limited number of students. The programme combines a clearly academic focus with a professional and job-market orientation. All in all, the panel is pleased with the new curriculum and hopes that the integration of communication and linguistics will continue to deepen in future years, as the various staff members from both disciplines collaborate in educating and supervising students.

Feasibility and guidance
Students enter the programme with varied backgrounds. Admission requirements include a Bachelor's degree from an accredited university, with ideally a minimum of 30 EC taken in the field of linguistics and/or communication; a grade point average of at least 7.5 or an explanation why they do not have such an average; and a proof of English proficiency. Students also send in a motivation letter. Students enrolled in the one-year Linguistics or Nederlandse taal en cultuur master's programmes can apply for a transfer to the RMA towards the end of their first semester after a consultation meeting with the RMA coordinator and an application to enrol in February.

The panel considers the admission requirements lenient, but adequate for this programme. It learnt that the programme's admissions board takes time and care to select students who fit the programme, and succeeds in selecting students who are successful (see also standard 4). Students admitted are offered remedial reading upon request before the start and during the courses, and as mentioned, the Perspectives courses play a substantial role in creating an equal playing field among students with various and/or non-linguistics backgrounds.

The programme is considered quite intense by the students, with a high study load. The RMA supports its students through various measures, such as an introductory meeting at the start of the academic year. During this meeting, the programme coordinator familiarizes the students with their new surroundings and discusses what is expected from them in terms of self-study and active attendance. This meeting and the shared Perspectives 1 course at the start of the programme improve cohort formation and answer to a recommendation from the previous assessment. The programme coordinator also acts as tutor, holding regular individual meetings with students to provide information and guide them through the programme. For academic problems unrelated to the programme or for non-academic problems, the students are directed to the student advisor.

There are also various programme meetings and events, such as the Research Fair in November, where ACLC research groups present their ongoing projects, which helps RMA students to find interesting projects for their tutorial(s), internships or theses. At the Poster Festival at the end of January, first-year RMA students present a methodology they have acquired during the LOT winter school courses. The Career Event in March/April hosts two groups of presenters: current PhD students, who share how they obtained a PhD position and what their research entails, and alumni (from the RMA and the MA Linguistics) from a profession outside academia, who share job and job finding experiences as well as how these relate to the skills they acquired as RMA students. Towards the end of their last semester, RMA students present the topic and results of their thesis in a layman talk at the Thesis Festival, together with the students of the MA. All ACLC

members are invited to the Poster Festival and the Thesis Festival, and usually several members attend. Of course, students are also guided and helped in the tutorials and by the thesis supervisor.

The panel is impressed with the guidance students receive in the programme. The students and alumni interviewed confirmed that they feel very well supported and get to know ACLC researchers and their work closely. The panel appreciates the work of the programme coordinator, who plays a key role in safeguarding feasibility and guiding all students towards a coherent study path. The panel points out that this frequent one-on-one guidance is an important asset of the programme, which provides students with a lot of options and freedom. In practice, students tend to follow the suggested learning lines offered them by the programme and are well advised in their study choices. The panel points out that the new curriculum has led to a remarkable growth in student numbers (from 10-13 between 2014 and 2020 to 22 in 2020-2021), and that this personal approach might have to be adapted if this trend continues. It discussed this with the programme management and learnt to its satisfaction that an increase in students will be accompanied by an increase in teaching staff, so that the UvA can continue offering this level of student guidance.

Covid-19 period
From the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, in March 2020, all teaching was moved online. According to the students the panel met with, this led to some confusion and unclear communication at first. As a positive effect, online teaching opened up new possibilities, such as the idea of 'outsourcing' some of the interaction in the form of short videos (by teachers or students) that could be prepared and/or watched outside of the designated classes, or inviting researchers from abroad for short lectures or discussions. The use of blended learning increased. Most teaching could be easily transformed into an online format as the courses in the RMA programme take the form of smaller work groups (rather than lectures) with class sizes below 25 students. One-on-one supervision (for tutorials, guidance, or theses) turned out to be even more easily organized than in pre-pandemic times. The programme monitored the effect of its measures through its course evaluations. The panel concludes that quality of education was guaranteed effectively.

Students regretted the absence of live interaction with their peers and struggled with online interaction, but reported to the panel that the programme worked hard on ensuring their wellbeing. The social binding within the RMA Linguistics was enhanced through online social meetings organized by a student assistant throughout 2020/21 (made possible with extra corona funding by the GSH). In the LOT courses, interaction with peers and researchers on a national level was sorely missed, although the LOT winter school 2021 used platforms (such as Gathertown) to partially remedy this and enable social 'get-togethers'. The panel learnt that student performance did not suffer. The student success rate remained stable, and no unusual delays were visible among graduates. The panel appreciates the manner in which the RMA adapted to the Covid-19 pandemic and advises to retain the good things developed as a consequence.

Teaching staff and research environment
The panel is pleased with the research environment in which RMA Linguistics students are educated, including the teaching staff. The programme is most closely connected to the ACLC, whose research quality was assessed as very good 2018, and also associated with the ILLC, evaluated as excellent in 2019. According to the panel, the teaching staff in the RMA is composed of well-reputed researchers who are very active in the field.

The teaching staff work together with the students frequently, for instance in tutorials, internships, and theses. Students told the panel they quickly get to know the staff members and their expertise, thanks to the Research Fair and the introduction at the start of the academic year, as well as the various courses. They consider them open, approachable, and very helpful. The panel was pleased to learn that as students specialize over the course of the programme, they often start participating in research groups and attend their weekly meetings. The panel also applauds the various occasions where students are invited to participate in ACLC events, such as lectures or the two-weekly ACLC seminars on Friday afternoon (when no

classes are scheduled), where either ACLC members or invited national and international researchers present their ongoing work. It concludes that students in the RMA are educated in a stimulating, welcoming and high-level research environment.

The panel appreciates the didactic skills and attention to ongoing professionalisation among staff members. All teaching staff in the programme hold a UTQ (university teaching qualification) or obtain one within two years after being appointed. There are several other programmes and courses for lecturers offered by the Teaching & Learning Centre of the Faculty of Humanities, which cover teaching methods, test assessment, curriculum assessment, and educational leadership courses. The panel considers the number of teaching staff members currently available to teach the programme clearly sufficient, allowing for much individual attention and small-group teaching. It understood (as mentioned under 'Feasibility and guidance') that a rise in student numbers will lead to a staff increase and supports this.

Facilities
Due to the online nature of the site visit, the panel was not able to see the programme-specific facilities in place. It learnt that students of the RMA can make use of the speech laboratory of the ACLC. This lab is equipped with two sound-treated rooms, two pieces of BioSemi EEG equipment, two eye trackers, an ultrasound machine, and specialized hardware and software. The electronics engineer provides help and support in using the lab and in setting up experiments (including experiments done online). The panel considers these facilities clearly adequate for the programme. The ACLC also has its own, peer-reviewed online journal, Linguistics in Amsterdam (LiA), that showcases work by its members. This forum gives RMA students the possibility to publish papers resulting from course work, tutorials or final theses. Since 2016, 14 of the 33 published papers were (co-)authored by RMA students. According to the panel, LiA offers students in various stages of the programme a good platform for publishing their research results.

Considerations

The panel is pleased with the carefully designed curriculum of the RMA Linguistics. The new curriculum offers students breadth and depth, allowing them to shape their own learning process and to work closely with ACLC researchers on various projects, in a master-apprentice setup. The curriculum is taught at research master's level and pays attention to research ethics. As a result, students in the RMA are educated in a stimulating, welcoming and high-level research environment. The programme allows students many options and possibilities of specialization, but remains coherent due to solid, and often one-on-one, guidance and tutoring. The panel considers this crucial both in retaining coherence in all individual study paths, and in allowing for a feasible, if intensive, programme. It learnt that the current increase in student numbers will lead to staff increase, which it supports.

The teaching methods are fitting and varied, facilities are good, and Covid-19 adaptations have been well-executed. The panel appreciates the co-teaching setup of various courses, which brings out the interdisciplinarity of the programme, and the intensive teaching made possible by the small groups and limited number of students. The programme combines a clearly academic focus with a strong professional and job-market orientation. All in all, the panel is pleased with the new curriculum and hopes that the integration of communication and linguistics will continue to deepen in future years.

Conclusion
The panel concludes that the programme meets standard 2.

Standard 3. Student assessment

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

Assessment

Assessment in the RMA Linguistics takes place according to the University Assessment Policy Framework, in line with faculty regulations. This means that assessment is aligned with the intended learning outcomes of the RMA and the learning goals of the various courses; that the evaluation criteria are communicated transparently and in advance; that assessment types are varied and conducive to the programme's feasibility; and that examinations are valid and reliable.

The panel appreciates this policy and recognises it in the RMA. It looked at the programme's assessment matrix and found that constructive alignment of assessment with the learning goals of the programme is in place. Communication about assessment takes place through Canvas and in the online study guide, and students and alumni told the panel they are satisfied with this. Assessment types are varied and fitting for a research master's programme, ranging from writing a paper or journal article to portfolio and poster presentations or a reflection on a mock job interview. In the core courses, exams are usually designed in teams (by the two lecturers of each core course) and peer reviewed. For each course, the lecturers create a file that includes assessment forms, assessment criteria, and an overview of the given grades.

The panel learnt from the student chapter and its interview with students that students sometimes struggle with the choice for multiple smaller assessments in the courses, which create multiple deadlines as well. At the same time, they appreciate that this spreads the workload more evenly throughout the courses and stimulates them to work consistently without falling behind. The programme adapted the deadlines for a number of assignments and moved them from Fridays to Mondays, so that students with irregular schedules and side jobs have the option of working on them in the weekend as well. The panel is pleased with this flexibility.

The two tutorials are assessed via written papers. For the second tutorial, this takes the form of a journal article. For the internship, the student has to fill in an internship plan and internship agreement before starting. Both have to be approved by the supervisor at the internship location, the student, and the RMA internship coordinator. At the end of the placement, an internship report needs to be written and approved by the internship coordinator. The internship and the report are then assessed by the supervisor at the internship location via the Faculty-wide evaluation form. The panel looked at the tutorials and internship assessment forms and discussed their assessment with students and staff. It is satisfied with the way these programme elements are assessed.

COVID-19 had little impact on the assessment of courses via written papers, research proposals, homework assignments and presentations. For the core course Statistics in Linguistics, with a midterm and a final test that are used repeatedly in only slightly modified form, the creation of new tests that could be implemented online meant considerable extra work for the lecturers. Students mentioned that the move from offline to online assessment created some communication issues, but this has since been dealt with. There was no noticeable delay in thesis completion at the beginning of the summer of 2021.

Research project and thesis assessment

The research project and thesis assessment are two connected parts of the same final project, where the student completes the entire research cycle, and have been separated for administrative reasons. The research project of the RMA Linguistics is assessed separately via two presentations. The first one takes place in the second month and addresses the research questions, the methodology to be used, and the expected

results. The second one is held during the Thesis Seminar in the final month and deals with the results. Both presentations are assessed as pass or fail.

The thesis of the RMA is assessed by the supervisor and a second reader (both examiners in the programme) with the help of an assessment form, which both readers fill out. They combine their findings in a form which they then share with the student. The panel considers this a good practice and noticed to it satisfaction that many forms contained extensive feedback for the students. It recommends making sure that the separate forms filled out by each assessor should be stored for quality assurance purposes, even if only the final version with the judgements combined is sent to the students.

Examinations Board

The Examinations Board of the Graduate School of Humanities is responsible for quality of assessment of the circa 80 MA and RMA tracks organized in the Faculty, including the RMA Linguistics. The Board appoints examiners and evaluates assessment quality in the programmes. It consists of 6 members and is supported by various secretaries. In order to be able to guarantee assessment quality in all programmes, the Board makes use of delegated members, usually teaching staff members who represent a programme and who flag issues concerning this programme if these arise. The Examinations Board performs a yearly check on the final theses through sampling, and also advises the Faculty on issues it raises. For instance, the board investigated the assessment of tutorials in the Faculty and concluded for the RMA Linguistics that they usually proceed well and occasionally give rise to creative forms of written assessment.

The panel finds that the Examinations Board works hard to fulfil its legal tasks, and it is generally pleased with the standard thesis check to safeguard graduate quality. At the same time, it points out that more could be done. The Examinations Board functions Faculty-wide, but there is a delegate member for the RMA programme to ensure that issues in the specific RMA programme come to the Board's attention. The delegate member can make personal observations or report issues that are brought to their attention by staff or students. Issues concerning assessment are also flagged through regular course evaluations. However, the evaluations are often filled out by a low number of students, so that they do not yield representative results. The panel applauds the initiatives to evaluate courses jointly in class, for instance after the exam, so that the response rate is higher. Written evaluations are complemented with 'panel discussions' among programme committee and students, which the panel appreciates as a valuable source of additional information. Still, the panel finds that a lot of responsibility is placed with one person, the delegate member, which it finds vulnerable. It also points out that more subtle problematic issues might escape the Examinations Board's attention, such as courses where relatively high grades are given. It advises looking into ways to produce statistical analyses of the exams, so that irregularities are automatically and quickly made apparent.

The panel learnt that the Examinations Board is planning to conduct regular checks of individual courses in all programmes. At the moment, the Board is not large enough to manage this yet. A separate assessment panel (toetscommissie) is to be appointed to execute this task. In its interview with programme and faculty management, the panel learnt that an assessment panel will be implemented at the start of the new academic year 2022-2023. It considers this an important step towards further improving quality of assessment in the faculty and the RMA Linguistics.

Considerations

The panel considers assessment and assessment practises to be up to standard in the RMA Linguistics. Assessment is aligned with programme and course objectives, and transparent, valid and reliable. Assessment types are varied and fitting for a research master's programme, and the students complete the

entire research cycle. The impact of covid on assessment has been limited. The panel recommends storing the separate forms of both thesis supervisors for quality assurance purposes.

The panel considers the current working method of the Examination Board to be adequate, but is of the opinion that that it should be expanded. The Board is responsible for many programmes and the delegates for the separate programmes carry a lot of responsibility in signalling programme-specific issues to the Board. The panel advises looking into ways to provide solid input, for instance by scheduling evaluation after the assessment for a higher response rate or producing statistical analyses of the exams, so that irregularities are automatically and quickly made apparent. It considers the planned addition of an assessment panel charged with regularly checking individual courses an important step towards further improving quality of assessment.

Conclusion
The panel concludes that the programme meets standard 3.

Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes

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

Findings

Theses
The panel studied 15 theses from the RMA Linguistics. It concluded that they all demonstrate the research master's level, that the programme ensures that the intended learning outcomes are achieved by all graduates, and that the entire research cycle is completed.

The theses looked at by the panel do not yet reflect the curriculum innovation and are therefore relatively monodisciplinary. The panel is hopeful that final theses from the programme will start reflecting the addition of the fields of argumentation and communication to the curriculum more clearly, and was told that this is becoming visible in the current tutorials already. In combining both fields, RMA students may contribute to the further growth and development of the programme's content as well as to innovative interdisciplinary research.

Alumni
The panel was informed that around half of the RMA graduates obtain a PhD position either in the Netherlands or abroad, which it considers impressive. The other half of alumni end up in suitable positions in the working field (e.g. education, IT, medical technology). Through its interview with alumni as well as an alumni survey provided by the programme, the panel learnt that students usually look back on the RMA with satisfaction. They feel it prepared them well for these positions. They appreciated the preparation they received through fairs, career events, and other elements in the old curriculum, and applaud the extra attention to and credits for life after graduation in the new one. The panel concludes that the programme prepares its alumni well for positions inside and outside academia.

Considerations
The panel finds that the final theses of the RMA Linguistics demonstrate the research master's level and make clear that intended learning outcomes are achieved by the graduates. Because of the recent change to linguistics and communication, the theses do not yet reflect the addition of the fields of argumentation and communication to the RMA, but the panel is hopeful that this will be different in the near future. Alumni are well prepared for both academia and the working field, and an impressive 50% end up in PhD positions.

Conclusion
The panel concludes that the programme meets standard 4.

General conclusion
The panel's assessment of the research master's programme Linguistics is positive.

Rrecommendations by the panel
1. Include the programme's vision on the combination of linguistics and communication, including the minimum requirements in each discipline, in the ILOs.
2. Match the increase in student numbers with staff increase, to ensure the intensive student support and tutoring system can be maintained.
3. Make sure that the separate thesis assessment forms filled out by each assessor are stored for quality assurance purposes.
4. Introduce the planned assessment panel, charged with regularly checking individual courses, as soon as possible to enable the Examinations Board with additional means to proactively signal programme-specific issues.

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Appendix 1. Intended learning outcomes

Exit qualifications

a. Academic ability

The student who has completed the Master's degree programme:

1. should have insight into the key research methods in the field;

2. should be able to interpret, assess and take an individual position on academic practice – and the results thereof – within the field of study;

3. should be able to assess the academic practice in line with the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Academic Practice (see the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity on the website of the UvA: Academic Integrity);

4. should be able to assess relevant academic literature;

5. should be able to independently formulate questions with regard to the field of study, to operationalise those questions and represent them in a research plan;

6. should be able to independently carry out research in the field of study and report on that research orally and in writing in a way that complies with the common academic conventions in the field of study;

7. should be able to present any scientific knowledge and insights gained during the degree programme and transfer them to a broader audience than the academic community;

8. should be able to answer scientific questions using knowledge of a specialism within the degree programme;

9. should be able to work in a team and give and incorporate feedback in a constructive way.

b. Programme -specific exit qualifications

The student who has completed the Research Master's degree programme:

1. should be able to apply the insights gained in their own field of study or discipline to adjoining scientific domains;

2. should be able to link topics from their field of study to current social debates and identify potential contributions;

3. should be able to reflect on their own position and the knowledge they have gained and identify areas of development;

4. should be able to formulate a concise individual research approach that is embedded in current scientific research questions;

5. should have gained practical experience with ongoing (international) research.

c Track-specific exit qualifications

The student who has completed the Research Master's degree programme:

1. has a thorough knowledge of one or several research specialisms within the discipline of Linguistics;

2. is skilled in independently detecting, formulating, analysing and proposing possible solutions for research problems in the field of Language and Communication. The student is also able to formulate targeted research questions and present these in a plan for a scientific research project of wider scope (such as a PhD research plan);

3. possesses thorough knowledge of methodology and statistics;

4. has a good understanding of the pursuit of scholarship both in the Netherlands and abroad in the field of Language and Communication.

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Appendix 2. Programme curriculum

The programme presented in the table below was revised in the academic year 2020/21, with its Linguistics and Communication track; core courses are in black, and the elective space in orange. The courses that are exclusive to RMA students are given in bold (90 of 120 EC, i.e. 75%).

semester	block 1	block 2	block 3
1	elective (6 EC)	elective (6 EC)	LOT winter school (5 + 1 EC poster)
	Perspectives on Language & Communication 1 (12 EC)		
2	Statistics in Linguistics (6 EC)	Tutorial / Internship (6–9 EC)	
	Perspectives on Language & Communication 2 (12 EC)		LOT summer school (3–6 EC)
3	Life after Graduation (6 EC)	Tutorial / Internship (12 EC)	
	elective (6 EC)	elective (6 EC)	
4	Research Project (12 EC) Master Thesis (18 EC)		

Appendix 3. Programme of the site visit

Donderdag 4 november 2021	
17.00 - 18.00	Voorbereidend overleg panel en inloopspreekuur

Vrijdag 5 november 2021 (digitaal bezoek)	
09.00 - 09.15	Ontvangst, intern overleg panel en inzien documenten
09.15 - 10.00	Gesprek inhoudelijke verantwoordelijken
10.00 - 10.30	Intern overleg panel/pauze
10.30 - 11.00	Gesprek studenten en alumni RM Linguistics
11.00 - 11.30	Gesprek docenten RM Linguistics
11.30 - 12.00	Intern overleg panel/pauze
12.00 - 12.30	Gesprek studenten en alumni RM Literary Studies
12.30 - 13.00	Gesprek docenten RM Literary Studies
13.00 - 14.00	Lunch
14.00 - 14.30	Gesprek examencommissie
14.30 - 15.00	Intern overleg panel
15.00 - 15.45	Eindgesprek management
15.45 - 17.00	Opstellen voorlopige bevindingen en voorbereiden mondelinge rapportage (panel intern)
17.00 - 17.30	Mondelinge rapportage voorlopig oordeel

Appendix 4. Materials

Prior to the site visit, the panel studied 15 theses of the research master's programme Linguistics. Due to the recent addition (2020-2021) of Communication, the theses did not yet reflect the two specializations of the new curriculum. Information on the theses is available from Academion upon request.

The panel also studied other materials, which included:

General UvA documents
- Instellingsplan 2021-2026: Inspiring Generations
- Facultair Strategisch Plan 2021-2026
- Beleidsnotitie Internationalisering onderwijs FGw 2018-2023
- Notitie Taalbeleid onderwijs binnen de FGw: naar een Tweetalige Faculteit
- Toetsbeleid 2019
- Arbeidsmarktperspectief. Een onderzoek naar arbeidsmarktperspectieven onder alumni van de Faculteit
- der Geesteswetenschappen

Examination Board
- Annual report 2018-2019 & 2019-2020, Examencommissie Graduate School of Humanities
- Reactie bestuur op jaarverslagen 2018-2019 & 2019-2020

Programme Panel
- Annual report/ Jaarverslag OC Literary Studies 2018-2019 & 2019-2020
- Annual report/ Jaarverslag OC Linguistics 2018-2019 & 2019-2020

Assessment
- Scriptiereglement masteropleidingen
- Beoordelingsformulier researchmasterscriptie
- Guidelines Tutorials
- Beoordelingsformulier Tutorials
- Model studiehandleiding Tutorials

Student publications
- Selected publications in 2019-2021 by current and recent students in the RMA Literary Studies
- Publications by students of the RMA Linguistics (& Communication)

Study materials of:

RM Linguistics
- Perspectives on Language and Communication (PoLaC) 1
- Life after Graduation

RM Literary Studies
- Key Debates in Literary and Cultural Studies
- Literary Studies Lab