

Assessment report
Limited Framework Programme Assessment

Bachelor Communication Science

University of Amsterdam

Contents of the report

1. Executive summary	2
2. Assessment process	4
3. Programme administrative information.....	7
4. Findings, considerations and assessments per standard	8
4.1 Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes	8
4.2 Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment	10
4.3 Standard 3: Student assessment.....	13
4.4 Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes	15
5. Overview of assessments.....	17
6. Recommendations	18

1. Executive summary

In this executive summary, the panel presents the main considerations which led to the assessment of the quality of the Bachelor Communication Science programme of University of Amsterdam, which has been assessed according to the standards of the limited framework, as laid down in the NVAO Assessment framework for the higher education accreditation system of the Netherlands, as published on 20 December 2016.

The programme objectives are sound and relevant. The programme profile is clear. The panel welcomes the programme objectives to educate students broadly in the communication science field. The programme is strongly research-based. The panel welcomes the programme training students in analytical-empirical research and in academic skills. The panel is positive about the programme being offered both in Dutch and in English. The panel welcomes the benchmark of the programme against international programmes in this field, as the benchmark leads to further clarification of the programme profile. The panel approves of the students being primarily educated to proceed to master programmes in this domain, but also being trained to enter the labour market.

The panel appreciates the Joint Disciplinary Framework for Communication Science, which has been drafted by the joint programmes in the Netherlands. The panel considers this framework to be a sound and up-to-date description of the Communication Science domain and of the attainment levels of Bachelor and Master programmes in this domain. The panel regards the objectives of this programme to be clearly aligned with this framework.

The intended learning outcomes are comprehensive, match programme objectives, and meet the bachelor level. The panel proposes to state international, interdisciplinary and broader social sciences' perspectives more explicitly in the intended learning outcomes to align these to the programme curriculum.

The admission requirements and admission procedures of the programme are up to standard. The panel appreciates the matching days for applicants. The panel approves of higher professional education bachelor students being allowed to complete the programme in 90 EC.

The curriculum matches the intended learning outcomes. The panel very much appreciates the curriculum contents, courses addressing theory, methodology, research skills and academic skills comprehensively and at appropriate levels. The curriculum is strongly research-oriented. The panel regards the curriculum to be very well organised and to be coherent. The fourth and the fifth semester could be aligned more clearly with the intended learning outcomes. As the learning goals of some courses may not be very specific and rather extensive, the panel suggests to update the course learning goals in this respect.

The panel considers the lecturers to be highly-qualified instructors. The panel is very positive about the expertise and research track records of the lecturers in the programme. The proportions of lecturers having PhD degrees or being BKO-certified are up to standard. Within the courses, junior lecturers and PhD candidates are well-guided by senior staff members. The panel is positive about the lecturers meeting regularly to discuss the programme.

The panel strongly appreciates the programme offering small-scale education and fostering community building among students in the face of large student numbers. The panel is pleased to see the wide range of study methods offered, these meeting the course contents. The panel is positive about initiatives taken to foster blended learning. The number of hours of face-to-face education and the students-to-staff ratio are adequate. Study guidance is up to standard. Drop-out rates and student success rates are satisfactory.

The programme examinations and assessment rules and regulations are adequate. The Examinations Board monitors the examination and assessment processes appropriately. The panel regards the measures ensuring the validity, reliability and transparency of examinations and assessments to be up to standard.

The programme examination methods match the course goals and contents. The panel welcomes the wide range of examination methods. The measures taken to counter the effects of free-riding, are effective.

Students are provided with well-organised supervision in the Graduation Projects. Although the assessment procedures are adequate, the panel would like to make some suggestions for improvement. The panel suggests to better explain the relationship between the literature review and the empirical research. The panel also advises to clarify students' individual performances in the group processes. In addition, the panel recommends to have two examiners assess the projects. Lastly, the panel proposes to add more elaborate written comments to substantiate the projects' assessments.

The Graduation Projects match the intended learning outcomes and are regarded by the panel to be up to standard. The panel fully agrees to the grades given by the programme examiners. As the degree of students' self-reliance, which is one of the main elements to distinguish between bachelor and master level, cannot be clearly deduced from the assessment forms, the panel suggests to make this more explicit.

The panel considers programme graduates definitely to have reached the intended learning outcomes of the programme. Students' competencies are received very positively by internship organisations. The panel greatly appreciates the range of master programmes programme graduates are admitted to and their performances in the master programmes. The panel is impressed with the proportion of programme graduates entering the labour market and with the positions they secure. The panel suggests to further strengthen the professional field relations.

The panel that conducted the assessment of the Bachelor Communication Science programme of University of Amsterdam assesses this programme to meet the standards of the limited framework, as laid down in the NVAO Assessment framework for the higher education accreditation system of the Netherlands, judging the programme to be good. Therefore, the panel advises NVAO to accredit the programme.

Rotterdam, 12 April 2019

Prof. dr. H. Vandebosch
(panel chair)

drs. W. Vercouteren
(panel secretary)

2. Assessment process

The evaluation agency Certiked VBI received the request by University of Amsterdam to coordinate the limited framework programme assessment process for the Bachelor Communication Science programme of this University. This objective of the programme assessment process was to assess whether the programme would conform to the standards of the limited framework, as laid down in the NVAO Assessment framework for the higher education accreditation system of the Netherlands, published on 20 December 2016 (Staatscourant nr. 69458).

Management of the programmes in the assessment cluster Communication Sciences convened to discuss the composition of the assessment panel and to draft the list of candidates.

Having conferred with management of the University of Amsterdam programme, Certiked invited candidate panel members to sit on the assessment panel. The panel members agreed to do so. The panel composition was as follows:

- Prof. dr. H. Vandebosch, professor Department of Communication Sciences, University of Antwerp (panel chair);
- Prof. dr. A.A. Maes, professor Communication and Cognition, Tilburg University (panel member);
- Prof. dr. T. Smits, professor Faculty of Social Sciences, Leuven University (panel member);
- C.H.W. Buurman, chair Logeion, Netherlands Association for Communication Professionals (panel member);
- E. Bulten MSc, alumna Master Communication, Health and Life Sciences, Wageningen University (student member).

On behalf of Certiked, drs. W. Vercouteren served as the process coordinator and secretary in the assessment process.

All panel members and the secretary confirmed in writing being impartial with regard to the programme to be assessed and observing the rules of confidentiality. Having obtained the authorisation by the University, Certiked requested the approval of NVAO of the proposed panel to conduct the assessment. NVAO has given the approval.

To prepare the assessment process, the process coordinator convened with management of the programme to discuss the outline of the self-assessment report, the subjects to be addressed in this report and the site visit schedule. In addition, the planning of the activities in preparation of the site visit were discussed. In the course of the process preparing for the site visit, programme management and the process coordinator regularly had contact to fine-tune the process. The activities prior to the site visit have been performed as planned. Programme management approved of the site visit schedule.

Well in advance of the site visit date, programme management sent the list of final projects of graduates of the programme of the most recent years. Acting on behalf of the assessment panel, the process coordinator selected fifteen final projects. The grade distribution in the selection was ensured to conform to the grade distribution in the list, sent by programme management.

The panel chair and the panel members were sent the self-assessment report of the programme, including appendices. In the self-assessment report, the student chapter was included. In addition, the expert panel members were forwarded a number of final projects of the programme graduates, these final projects being part of the selection made by the process coordinator.

A number of weeks before the site visit date, the assessment panel chair and the process coordinator met to discuss the self-assessment report provided by programme management, the procedures regarding the assessment process and the site visit schedule. In this meeting, the profile of panel chairs of NVAO was discussed as well. The panel chair was informed about the competencies, listed in the profile. Documents pertaining to a number of these competencies were presented to the panel chair. The meeting between the panel chair and the process coordinator served as the briefing for panel chairs, as meant in the NVAO profile of panel chairs.

Prior to the date of the site visit, all panel members sent in their preliminary findings, based on the self-assessment report and the final projects studied, and a number of questions to be put to the programme representatives on the day of the site visit. The panel secretary summarised this information, compiling a list of questions, which served as a starting point for the discussions with the programme representatives during the site visit.

Shortly before the site visit date, the complete panel met to go over the preliminary findings concerning the quality of the programme. During this preliminary meeting, the preliminary findings of the panel members, including those about the final projects were discussed. The procedures to be adopted during the site visit, including the questions to be put to the programme representatives on the basis of the list compiled, were discussed as well.

On 12 November 2018, the panel conducted the site visit on the University of Amsterdam campus. The site visit schedule was in accordance with the schedule as planned. In a number of separate sessions, panel members were given the opportunity to meet with Faculty representatives, programme management, Examinations Board representatives, lecturers and final projects examiners, and students and alumni.

In a closed session at the end of the site visit, the panel considered every one of the findings, weighed the considerations and arrived at conclusions with regard to the quality of the programme. At the end of the site visit, the panel chair presented a broad outline of the considerations and conclusions to programme representatives.

Clearly separated from the process of the programme assessment, the assessment panel members and programme representatives met to conduct the development dialogue, with the objective to discuss future developments of the programme.

The assessment draft report was finalised by the secretary, having taken into account the findings and considerations of the panel. The draft report was sent to the panel members, who studied it and made a number of changes. Thereupon, the secretary edited the final report. This report was presented to programme management to be corrected for factual inaccuracies. Programme management was given two weeks to respond. Having been corrected for these factual inaccuracies, the Certiked bureau sent the report to the University Board to accompany their request for re-accreditation of this programme.

3. Programme administrative information

Name programme in CROHO: B Communication Science (B Communicatiewetenschap)
Orientation, level programme: Academic Bachelor
Grade: BSc
Number of credits: 180 EC
Specialisations: None
Location: Amsterdam
Mode of study: Full-time (instruction language Dutch/English)
Registration in CROHO: 56615

Name of institution: University of Amsterdam
Status of institution: Government-funded University
Institution's quality assurance: Approved

4. Findings, considerations and assessments per standard

4.1 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

The Bachelor Communication Science programme is offered by the Department of Communication Science of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences of University of Amsterdam. The Dean of the Faculty has the responsibility for all programmes of the Faculty. Within the Department of Communication Science, the director of the College of Communication is responsible for the organisation, delivery and quality assurance of the Bachelor Communication Science programme. The Programme Committee for the programme, being composed of equal numbers of lecturers and students, advises programme management on quality issues regarding these programmes. The Examinations Board for both the Bachelor and Master Communication Science programmes has the authority to assure the quality of examinations and assessments of these programmes.

The objectives of the Bachelor Communication Science programme of University of Amsterdam are to study the production, contents, reception and effects of public and semi-public mediated communication in the societal context. The programme aims to train students at bachelor level as communication science professionals. The programme intends to educate students broadly in the communication science field, being in particular directed towards the study of the corporate communication, entertainment communication, persuasive communication, and political communication and journalism domains. The programme is research-driven. The domains mentioned correspond to the research interests of staff lecturing in the programme. Students are trained in analysing processes in these domains through empirical-analytical research methods.

From the academic year 2016/2017 onwards, the English-taught programme is offered in addition to the existing Dutch-taught programme. The intended learning outcomes and the curricula of both programmes are identical. Only the language of instruction differs.

The programme objectives are aligned with the requirements of the Joint Disciplinary Framework for Communication Science. This framework has been drafted by the joint Communication Science programmes in the Netherlands. In this framework, the position of the discipline internationally and in the Netherlands, the joint principles of Dutch Communication Science programmes as well as the general objectives and the final attainment levels for Bachelor and Master Communication Science programmes in the Netherlands have been outlined.

The programme has been benchmarked against programmes abroad, both in Europe and the United States. The results of this benchmark show important similarities between the University of Amsterdam programme and the other programmes in terms of programme breadth and social-scientific and empirical-analytical orientations. The distinctive features of the University of Amsterdam programme are the focus

on the study of media effects, training in social sciences research methods and emphasis on application of academic knowledge and skills in professional settings.

Students are primarily prepared to continue their studies in master programmes in the programme domain or related domains. They may, however, also enter the labour market. The programme monitors trends in the professional field.

The objectives of the programme have been translated into the programme intended learning outcomes. These intended learning outcomes specify, as main points, knowledge and understanding of the main theories of communication science; knowledge and skills to analyse mediated communication processes; knowledge and skills to do empirical research on processes of mediated communication; academic skills, among which analytical and communication skills; knowing to address societal or social sciences problems; and analytical, critical, professional and reflective attitude.

Programme management compared the intended learning outcomes to the Dublin descriptors for bachelor programmes, to demonstrate these to meet bachelor level requirements.

Considerations

The panel regards the programme objectives to be sound and relevant. The programme profile is clear. The panel welcomes the programme objectives to educate students broadly in the communication science field. The programme is strongly research-based. The panel welcomes the programme training students in analytical-empirical research and in academic skills. The panel is positive about the programme being offered both in Dutch and in English.

The panel appreciates the Joint Disciplinary Framework for Communication Science, which has been drafted by the joint programmes in the Netherlands. The panel considers this framework to be a sound and up-to-date description of the Communication Science domain and of the attainment levels of Bachelor and Master programmes in this domain. The panel regards the objectives of this programme to be clearly aligned with this framework.

The panel welcomes the benchmark of the programme against international programmes in this field, as the benchmark leads to further clarification of the programme profile.

The panel approves of the students being primarily educated to proceed to master programmes in this domain, but also being trained to enter the labour market.

The intended learning outcomes are comprehensive and match the programme objectives. The panel proposes to state international, interdisciplinary and broader social sciences' perspectives more explicitly in the intended learning outcomes to align these better to the programme curriculum. The panel regards the intended learning outcomes to meet the bachelor level.

Assessment of this standard

These considerations have led the assessment panel to assess standard 1, Intended learning outcomes, to be satisfactory.

4.2 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

The student influx between 2012 and 2015 decreased from about 300 incoming students in 2012 to about 200 students in 2015. From 2016 onwards, the inflow of students rose very substantially on account of the English-taught programme having been introduced. The intake numbers in 2016 and 2017 were 420 and 460 incoming students, about 180 students entering the Dutch-taught programme and about 240 to 270 students enrolling in the English-taught programme. The programme expects student numbers to stabilise at 450 to 500 students in the years to come. The admission criteria for the programme are the Dutch pre-university diploma (vwo) or the completed first year of higher professional education (hbo). Non-Dutch students are admitted, if they report equivalent prior education. All non-native speakers are to demonstrate adequate command of the programme instruction language. The College of Communication extensively informs prospective students about the programme. In addition, applicants are invited for matching days, allowing them to attend lectures, to do assignments, and to complete tests. On the basis of matching days' results, all participants are given personal advice on enrolling. Incoming students with higher professional education bachelor degrees (hbo) in communication studies or in related fields may take the short track (90 EC) to complete the curriculum. If they take the Follow-on Minor in the fourth year of their hbo-studies, they may complete this programme in one year (60 EC).

The programme takes three years to complete and carries 180 EC of study load. The curriculum learning paths and courses have been mapped to the intended learning outcomes to show the curriculum meeting the programme intended learning outcomes. The curriculum has been organised in three distinct learning paths, being the communication science path, the research and methods path, and the academic skills path. The courses of the first learning path offer general communication science theoretical knowledge and understanding, and theory in each of the four different domains. Courses of the research and methods path are directed towards knowledge and skills in empirical research methods and techniques. The academic skills path allows students to acquire study skills and academic skills and to prepare for their future careers. The curriculum is composed of the introductory phase (30 EC of introductory courses in the first semester), the broadening and deepening phase (90 EC of deepening courses and electives in the second, third and fourth semester), the integration phase (58 EC of more advanced courses, including the Internship and the final Graduation Project in the fifth and sixth semesters) and the Academic Skills Tutoring course (2 EC). The first three semesters consist of compulsory courses. In the fourth semester, students are offered 30 EC of elective space. In the sixth semester, they may take courses in topics of their interests. The subjects addressed in the courses are research-led. Lecturers are researchers in the programme domain and relate subjects to current research. Professional perspectives are offered as well. Lecturers participate in professional networks. Endowed professors and guest lecturers highlight these in courses. Students take the Internship and are prepared for their future careers. Extra-curricular career workshops are offered, introducing students to the professional field and to entrepreneurship opportunities. Students with the average grade of 7.5 at the end of the first year, may take the Honours

programme Communication Science (30 EC), allowing them to acquire academic and professional skills and to be trained in interdisciplinary perspectives.

A total number of 138 staff members are involved in both the Bachelor and Master Communication Science programmes. They are employees of the Department of Communication Science of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences. Most of the lecturers are researchers in the programme domain and are members of the Amsterdam School of Communication Research. Research done at this School is highly valued. Some of the lectures are only involved in education. About 75 % of the staff members have PhD degrees. More than 90 % of the lecturers are BKO-certified, testifying to their educational capabilities. Junior lecturers and PhD candidates are involved in the courses, being guided and supported by senior staff members. Lecturers meet regularly in staff meetings to discuss the programme. within courses, lecturers meet to align the teaching. The students appreciate the lecturers.

The programme educational concept is meant to promote students' study pace and active participation in class, and to foster social and academic community building. Study pace and student participation are in particular promoted by diagnostic tests and summative examinations. The students-to-staff ratio for the programme is about 30/1. The number of hours of face-to-face education is about 13 hours per week in the first year and 8 to 10 hours per week in the second year. In the third year, contact hours mostly constitute individual guidance in the Internships and the Graduation Project. In most courses, both lectures and tutorials are scheduled. Whereas lectures may be rather large-scale, tutorials comprise student groups of about 25 students. Study methods also include guest lectures, computer lab sessions, consultation hours, individual supervision and blended learning, such as online workbooks and micro-lectures. In the first year, students are counselled by tutors and academic advisers in the Academic Skills Tutoring course. Students work, among others, on their study skills. In all years of the programme, students may turn to one of the three study advisers in case of questions or study problems. The programme drop-out rates over the years amount to about 20 % to 30 % in the first year. The student success rates of the programme for the last six cohorts are on average 45 % after three years and on average 76 % after four years (proportions of students re-entering in the second year).

Considerations

The admission requirements and admission procedures of the programme are up to standard. The panel appreciates the matching days for applicants. The panel approves of higher professional education bachelor students being allowed to complete the programme in 90 EC.

The curriculum matches the intended learning outcomes. The panel very much appreciates the curriculum contents, courses addressing theory, methodology and research skills in the communication science domain as well as academic skills comprehensively and at appropriate levels. The curriculum is strongly research-oriented, which is appreciated by the panel. The panel notes the research quality of Internships to be adequately assured. The panel considers the curriculum to be very well organised and to be coherent. The fourth and the fifth semester could be aligned more clearly with the intended learning outcomes. As the learning goals of some courses may not be very specific and rather extensive, the panel suggests to update the course learning goals in this respect.

The panel considers the lecturers to be highly-qualified instructors. The panel is very positive about the expertise and research track records of the lecturers in the programme. The proportions of lecturers having PhD degrees or being BKO-certified are up to standard. Within the courses, junior lecturers and PhD candidates are well-guided by senior staff members. The panel is positive about the lecturers meeting regularly to discuss the programme.

The panel strongly appreciates the programme offering small-scale education and fostering community building among students in the face of large student numbers. The panel is pleased to see the wide range of study methods offered, these meeting the course contents. The panel is positive about initiatives taken to foster blended learning. The number of hours of face-to-face education and the students-to-staff ratio are adequate. Study guidance is up to standard. The drop-out rates and student success rates of the programme are satisfactory.

Assessment of this standard

These considerations have led the assessment panel to assess standard 2, Teaching-learning environment, to be good.

4.3 Standard 3: Student assessment

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

Findings

The programme examination and assessment rules and regulations are in line with the University of Amsterdam and the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences assessment policies. The Examinations Board has the authority to monitor the quality of examination and assessment processes and products of the programme.

The examination methods for the courses are selected to conform to the course goals and contents. The examination methods vary to allow for different course goals to be tested. In all of the courses, both intermediate and final examinations are scheduled. Especially in the first year, intermediate, diagnostic tests are scheduled to promote students' study progress. The examination methods in the programme include written examinations, written assignments, in-class tests, practical examinations, papers or research reports, and oral presentations. To assure the assessment of students' individual performances, individual examinations within courses constitute at least 70 % of the final grades for the courses.

The rules and regulations for the Graduation Project have been laid down in the Graduation Project Manual. The projects are individual research projects. In the course of these projects, students are guided by their supervisor both in weekly or bi-weekly scheduled tutorials and individually. Students have to submit three separate products, being the literature review, the empirical research report and the blog post. Students select their own topics within the broader Graduation Project themes presented. In the first stage of the process, the literature review is completed. Students then proceed to draft the empirical research report, consisting of two parts, the conceptual framework and the methodological and analysis plan and the data collection, analysis and results. The third product is the blog post, exposing the research findings to the public. For the assessment of each of these three products, assessment scoring forms are adopted. These assessment scoring forms include relevant assessment criteria. The assessments are performed by the supervisor.

Programme management and the Examinations Board have taken a number of measures to promote the validity, reliability and transparency of examinations and assessments. The Examinations Board appoints examiners. The requirements for examiners are to have relevant PhD degrees and to be BKO-certified. For all courses, course files have been compiled. These include, among others, course goals, examination methods, and assessment matrices to specify relations between course goals and all examinations. Draft examinations are peer-reviewed by fellow examiners. On the yearly assessment day, examiners meet to discuss examinations. The programme Course Catalogue and the module guides of the courses provide students with information about the examination methods and grading schemes of the courses. On behalf of the Examinations Board, the Examinations Review Committee, chaired by the assessment coordinator, inspects the course files and reviews the course examinations. For the Examinations Board, the Thesis Quality Committee Bachelor reviews samples of Graduation Projects. Rules and regulations to prevent fraud and plagiarism are in force. Students are informed. The Examinations Board handles cases adequately.

Considerations

The panel approves of the examinations and assessment rules and regulations of the programme, these being in line with University of Amsterdam and Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences assessment policies. The Examinations Board monitors the examination and assessment processes appropriately. The panel regards the examination and assessment policies to be well-organised.

The examination methods in the programme are consistent with the course goals and contents. The panel welcomes the wide range of examination methods adopted. The measures taken to counter the effects of free-riding, are effective.

The supervision and assessment processes for the Graduation Projects are satisfactory. Students are provided with well-organised supervision. Although the assessment procedures are adequate, the panel would like to make some suggestions for improvement. The panel suggests to better explain the relationship between the literature review and the empirical research. The panel also advises to clarify students' individual performances in the group processes. In addition, the panel recommends to have two examiners assess the projects. Lastly, the panel proposes to add more elaborate written comments to substantiate the projects' assessments.

The panel considers the measures ensuring the validity, reliability and transparency of examinations and assessments to be up to standard. Course files, peer review of examinations and assessment days may be mentioned as evidence. The regular review of examinations and Graduation Projects is also perceived as positive by the panel.

Assessment of this standard

The considerations have led the assessment panel to assess standard 3, Student assessment, to be satisfactory.

4.4 Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes

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

The final Graduation Projects are individual research projects, comprising three separate products. In these projects, students are to demonstrate having reached all the intended learning outcomes of the programme. In addition, students show being able to conduct individual research, covering the empirical cycle. The average grades for the Graduation Projects in the last six year were 7.0. To assess the Graduation Projects, the panel studied the literature reviews and empirical research reports of fifteen programme graduates of the most recent years.

As has been said, students are acquainted with the professional field in the programme. The Advisory Council of the programme, consisting of professional field representatives, meets on a regular basis with programme management to align the programme to professional field requirements.

Internship organisations surveyed by the programme expressed being very content with the students' competencies and performances. The programme also surveyed programme graduates' views on the programme and their careers. Graduates are generally content about the programme (score 7.3 out of 10). The majority of programme graduates continue their studies at master level. About 50 % of them proceed to master programmes of University of Amsterdam, most of them to the Master Communication Science programme. Graduates also are admitted to a wide range of master programmes in social sciences or in other disciplines, such as business economics or business studies. About 10 % of them go to master programmes of other universities. These students tend to do very well in the master programmes. A growing proportion of about 40 % of the programme graduates take other routes. Some 30 % of the graduates enter the labour market. They have found positions as, among others, communication or public relations consultants, advertising or social media strategists or comparable positions.

Considerations

The Graduation Projects match the intended learning outcomes and are regarded by the panel to be up to standard. The panel fully agrees to the grades given by the programme examiners. As the degree of students' self-reliance in the projects, which is one of the main elements to distinguish between bachelor and master level, cannot be clearly deduced from the assessment forms, the panel suggests to make this more explicit.

Although the programme prepares students for the professional field, the panel suggests to further strengthen the professional field relations, be it most students will enter the labour market after having completed master programmes.

The panel considers students completing the programme definitely to have reached the intended learning outcomes of the programme. Students' competencies are received very positively by internship organisations. The panel greatly appreciates the range of master programmes programme graduates are admitted to and their performances in the master programmes. The panel is impressed with the proportion of programme graduates entering the labour market and with the positions they secure.

Assessment of this standard

The considerations have led the assessment panel to assess standard 4, Achieved learning outcomes, to be good.

5. Overview of assessments

Standard	Assessment
Standard 1. Intended learning outcomes	Satisfactory
Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment	Good
Standard 3: Student assessment	Satisfactory
Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes	Good
Programme	Good

6. Recommendations

In this report, a number of recommendations by the panel have been listed. For the sake of clarity, these have been brought together below. These panel recommendations are the following.

- To address international, interdisciplinary and broader social sciences' perspectives in the programme intended learning outcomes more explicitly.
- To align the fourth and the fifth semester more clearly with the intended learning outcomes.
- To update the learning goals of some courses to make them less extensive and more specific.
- To explain the relations between literature study and empirical research in the Graduation Projects.
- To clarify students' individual performances in the group processes in the Graduation Projects.
- To have two examiners assess the Graduation Projects.
- To add more elaborate written comments to substantiate the Graduation Projects' assessments.
- To make more explicit students' self-reliance in the Graduation Projects' assessments.
- To further strengthen professional field relations.