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Summary

Standard 1. Intended learning outcomes

The panel agrees with the chosen profile of the master's programme Literary Studies (MALS). The flexibility and student-centeredness of the programme are a great feature of the programme. The panel also appreciates the breadth of historical periods covered, the broad focus on narrative forms and the choice to teach the four language tracks in the target language. The focus of the Literature in Society specialization on the interactive relationship between literature and society is interesting and innovative. To further strengthen the programme, the panel recommends considering ways to foster a stronger collective identity. This could be achieved by following up on plans to introduce an obligatory core course, organizing a collective meeting at the beginning of the programme, or hosting a student conference. The panel also recommends all Leiden programmes in the MTL2 cluster to communicate more clearly and visibly about the continued existence, importance and profile of these programmes. And, in doing so, to also look for ways to better highlight the uniqueness and relevance of the programmes on the faculty website, so that prospective students can get a better idea of this.

The panel concludes that the intended learning outcomes are clearly articulated. The outcomes strengthen the shared goals and profile of the programme as well as the specific needs of the different specializations. According to the panel, the intended learning outcomes are of the right level and define important knowledge and skills for a graduate of an academic master's programme in literary studies. The additional intended learning outcomes for the specializations specify these general intended learning outcomes in a logical and sensible way. The intended language proficiency final levels (C1/2) for the four language specializations are also appropriate. The panel is convinced that the intended learning outcomes enable graduates pursue a career inside or outside academia. The intended learning outcomes also align well with the educational master's programme and a future career as language teacher. This career option is well-supported with a separate study path, designed in collaboration with the Linguistics master.

Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment

The panel concludes that the programme structure is clear and logical, and appreciates the three (optional) choice pathways for the language specializations. MALS offers a large number of electives. The panel studied the prospectus of the different specializations and concludes that students in the English Literature and Culture and Literature and Society specializations can choose from a substantial number of interesting and relevant courses. The elective courses of the other language tracks are interesting as well, although less numerous. Considering the size of the student population in these specializations and the fact that students are allowed to take two out of four courses from other specializations, master's programmes or the Master's language programme, the panel judges their number to be sufficient. The panel notes with satisfaction that MALS includes a number of optional courses that are jointly offered by the four language tracks. Students value these courses and find it enriching to be in such a course with other MALS students. The panel found that the teaching methods used by MALS are diverse. Teaching in the programme focuses on seminars in small groups, with active participation and in-depth discussion, which aligns with the research-based education aspired by MALS.

The panel found that thesis requirements are clear and that the thesis trajectory is well organized with sufficient supervision. The panel appreciates the addition of the thesis seminar after the previous assessment. During the visit, teachers mentioned that students sometimes fall behind in their thesis work for various reasons, which results in an increased workload for supervisors. The panel found that MALS acted on this by taking appropriate measures.

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According to the panel, the admission requirements of MALS are appropriate and clearly formulated. The panel also has a positive impression about the feasibility of the programme. The language of instruction in MALS is English. Within the specializations in French, German, and Italian Literature and Culture at least 40 EC of the curriculum is also taught in these target languages. The panel agrees with this choice and the language expertise of the teachers is in line with it. The panel also concludes that the staff of MALS are sufficiently qualified in core areas of the programme. At Leiden University, academic staff are employed by research institutes. The deployment of lecturers in courses usually takes place in good consultation between the research institutes and the programme chair although sometimes bottlenecks occur for individual lecturers. The panel therefore recommends that the MTL2 programmes actively consider optimizing the matching of lecturers with curriculum components, and that they enter into continuous dialogue with research institutes on this matter. This is to ensure timely and well-coordinated deployment within programmes, and also to promote the well-being of lecturers who are the bearers of the programmes. The panel also encourages the programmes to invest in good communication and collaboration between faculty administration, programme management, lecturers and institutes regarding faculty deployment and the financial challenges that call for reduction in programmes.

The panel concludes that MALS has a good system of study advice in place, also for part-time students, which is appropriately supported at the university and faculty level with officers for special circumstances, such as student psychologists and a Student Counsellor Disability. Programme-specific facilities and information provision are also in order. Students confirm that the environment of the programme is positive and welcoming. At the same time, the highly individualized nature of the MALS programme sometimes makes it difficult to establish lasting contact with fellow students. Therefore, the panel suggests combining actions to create greater social cohesion with the measures recommended in standard 1 to strengthen the collective identity of the programme.

Standard 3. Student assessment

The assessment system of the programme is well-designed. Assessment methods are varied. The assessment plans of MALS have a transparent structure and the relationship between courses and final qualifications is clear. However, the panel also noticed that the assessment plans differed on generic learning outcomes, and that some assessment plans were difficult to read due to the high number of ticked boxes for every course. Therefore, the panel sees room to further improve the current assessment plans and make them more usable. According to the panel, more control of, and insight in, assessment at curriculum level can contribute to greater clarity on what can and cannot be changed within the programme. The panel therefore recommends that assessment plans in the Leiden MTL2 assessment cluster be improved in a number of respects, by: using a format that provides more insight into the main curriculum and assessment choices and when the final level for a particular final qualification is achieved; making constructive alignment and gradual build-up to the intended final level in the curricula more transparent; including academic skills as a curricular line; and by aligning generic components in the assessment plans of the different MTL2 bachelor's programmes.

The panel concludes that the programme has taken seriously the recommendation of the previous review panel to improve the clarity of the thesis grading process. The faculty procedures for thesis assessments are clearly described. The prescribed thesis grading procedure is followed carefully (by all Leiden programmes in the cluster Modern Language and Literature 2). Grades given are clearly substantiated with nuanced comments. In addition, the forms contain extensive feedback for the student. Notable here is the consistency in the good quality of feedback between different assessors. The panel also noted positively that the programme is aware of arising bottlenecks in the thesis grading process and follows up on advices it receives

from the Board of Examiners (BoE) in this regard. The panel compliments the programme and BoE with their effective efforts to fight grade inflation by introducing a programme-wide thesis grading rubric and grade calibration sessions, and encourages MALS to continue using these instruments in the future. Finally, the panel concludes that the BoE is adequately equipped to carry out its duties and functions satisfactorily.

Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes

The panel concludes that students achieve the intended learning outcomes of the programme. The theses from the sample were interesting, with a high diversity among thesis topics that represent the different tracks of the programme. Theses with higher grades clearly go above and beyond the intended learning outcomes, yet even students with lesser grades produced work at master's level. In the panel's view, this achieved thesis level prepares students well for a position where advanced graduate-level academic knowledge and skills in the field of language and culture are required, including a PhD trajectory. Graduates generally enter well into a diversity of professional fields.

Score table

The panel assesses the programme as follows:

Master's programme Literary Studies

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

Prof. dr. Sascha Bru, panel chair

Adrienne Huijzer MA, panel secretary

Date: 30 September 2025

Introduction

Procedure

Assessment

On 7, 8 and 9 May 2025, the master's programme Literary Studies of Leiden University was assessed by an independent peer review panel as part of the cluster assessment WO Moderne Taal- en Letterkunde 2. The assessment cluster consisted of 25 programmes, offered by the University of Amsterdam, University of Groningen, Leiden University, Radboud University and Utrecht University. The assessment followed the procedure and standards of the NVAO Assessment Framework for the Higher Education Accreditation System of the Netherlands (April 2024).

Quality assurance agency Academion coordinated the assessment upon request of the cluster WO Moderne Taal- en Letterkunde 2. For the site visit to Leiden University, Fiona Schouten acted as coordinator and Adrienne Wieldraaijer-Huijzer as panel secretary. They have been certified and registered by the NVAO.

Preparation

Academion 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 31 January 2025, the NVAO approved the composition of the panel. The coordinator instructed the panel chair on his role in the site visit according to the Panel chair profile (NVAO 2016) on 9 December 2024.

The programme composed a site visit schedule in consultation with the coordinator (see appendix 3). The programme selected representative partners for the various interviews. It also determined that the development dialogue would be made part of the site visit. A separate development report was made based on this dialogue.

The programme provided the coordinator with a list of graduates over the academic years 2022-2023 and 2023-2024. In consultation with the coordinator, the panel chair selected 15 theses of the programme. They took the diversity of final grades and examiners into account, as well as the various specializations. From the specialization English Literature and Culture 9 theses were selected from the specialization French Literature and Culture 1 thesis was selected, from the specialization German Literature and Culture 1 thesis was selected, from the specialization Italian Literature and Culture 1 thesis was selected, and from the specialization Literature in Society. Europe and Beyond 3 theses were selected. Of the 15 theses, 12 were of fulltime students and 3 of parttime students. This selection reflected the number of graduates in each particular specialization and variant proportionally. Prior to the site visit, the programme provided the panel with the theses and the accompanying assessment forms. It also provided the panel with the self-evaluation report 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 report 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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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 publicly presented the preliminary findings.

Report

The secretary wrote a draft report based on the panel's findings and submitted it to the coordinator for peer assessment. 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 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 finalized the report, and the coordinator sent it to the Faculty of Humanities and Leiden University.

Panel

The panel assessing the master's programme Literary Studies at Leiden University consisted of the following members:

- Prof. dr. S. (Sascha) Bru, professor in General and Comparative Literature at the Faculty of Arts of the KU Leuven (Belgium) [panel chair];
- Prof. dr. H.E. (Henriette) de Swart, professor in French linguistics at the Faculty of Humanities of Utrecht University;
- Prof. dr. M.E. (Esther) Ruigendijk, professor in Dutch Linguistics and vice-dean of the Faculty of Linguistics and Cultural Studies of the Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg (Germany);
- Prof. dr. C.C.M. (Costantino) Maeder, professor in Italian linguistics and literature and French linguistics at the Faculty of Philosophy, Arts and Letters of the Université Catholique de Louvain (Belgium);
- J.E (Jeanne) Le Gallic BSc., bachelor's student Slavic Languages and Cultures at the University of Amsterdam [student member];
- Prof. dr. C. (Claudia) Crocco, professor of Italian Linguistics at the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy of Ghent University (Belgium) [referent Italian];
- Dr. P.J. (Patrick) Outhwaite, assistant professor in Medieval and Renaissance studies at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Groningen [referent English].

Each panel member and the panel secretary has filled out the Statement of Impartiality and non disclosure agreement, as required by the NVAO.

Information on the programme

Name of the institution:	Leiden University
Status of the institution:	Publicly funded institution
Result institutional quality assurance assessment:	Positive
Programme name:	M Literary Studies
CROHO number:	60813
Level:	Master (NLQF 7)
Orientation:	Academic
Number of credits:	60 EC
Specializations or tracks:	English Literature and Culture
	French Literature and Culture
	German Literature and Culture
	Italian Literature and Culture
	Literature in Society. Europe and Beyond
Location:	Leiden
Mode(s) of study:	Fulltime, parttime
Language of instruction:	English
Awarded degree:	MA
Submission date NVAO:	1 November 2025

Description of the assessment

Educational vision

The master's programme Literary Studies (MALS) is part of the Faculty of Humanities at Leiden University. This faculty offers 24 bachelor's programmes, 19 master's programmes and 8 research master's programmes. The educational vision of the faculty is based on the university's educational vision (Learning@LeidenUniversity) which has a number of pillars: intertwining education and research, orientation towards the labour market and transferable skills. For students within the faculty, this means that they are participants in devising and implementing education and that research skills and research-based learning are offered explicitly and systematically. Also, students actively orient themselves to the labour market and are made aware of the skills they are developing and how these can be used in future career paths, for example through the Humanities Career Centre, labour market workshops, internships and the online toolkit 'Asset-H'. Other features of education at the Faculty of Humanities include a wide range of electives and graduate courses and (where possible) small-scale teaching. Diversity and inclusion are encouraged through initiatives from the Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Fund. There is also a Student Wellbeing Officer who coordinates student welfare activities and promotes professionalization in this area.

Work is underway to update and recalibrate the university's educational vision. In addition, both university and faculty have undertaken initiatives in the area of digitization. Within the faculty, a vision document on Digital Humanities and Artificial Intelligence (AI) was drafted in 2020. Since then, six new faculty courses have been developed in this area. In 2024, the Digital Humanities Hub for Digital Research Skills and Media was opened. Here, lecturers and students receive training in the use of digital tools and methods.

Organization

MALS is managed by a programme board consisting of a programme chairman from the academic staff and a student member. The programme management is responsible for the content, organization, coordination and quality assurance of the programme, and falls under the direct responsibility of the faculty board. Participation at study programme level is vested in the Programme Committee (OC). The Programme Committee of MALS consists of three student members and three staff members from different specializations in the programme. MALS shares its Board of Examiners (BoE) with the research master's programme Arts, Literature and Media and the master's programme North American Studies. It consists of four members (three from the aforementioned programmes and an external member with assessment expertise) and is supported by a secretary.

Recommendations previous panel

In 2019, MALS received a positive final assessment without conditions. The panel identified several areas of concern, providing advice for further improvement. The programme reflected on these in a self-evaluation report and during the site visit, indicating which actions were taken. On this basis, the 2025 panel judges that follow-up has been given on most of the identified points of attention and recommendations, leading to improvement. A few areas of concern currently remain for various reasons. The follow-up of given recommendations is addressed in this assessment report. Below, the 2025 panel also separately explains the findings for a number of key recommendations.

The 2019 panel expressed concerns about the high teaching workload in comparison to the time spent on research. The 2025 panel found that several measures have been taken to improve this. Research time at LUCAS, which employs all lecturers from the programme, has increased from 20 to 25%, with the aim of bringing it up to 30% in the future. In addition, employees are now granted a new 'administration and

professional development' component of 5%. During the site visit, the panel heard that lecturers experience slight improvement in workload, although it is still perceived as high. It also found that lecturers can consult an online system with a quantification of their tasks and that consideration is being given by management to the improvement of bottlenecks that lead to increased workload (e.g. extension in the thesis supervision period due to study delays during the thesis trajectory). Workload will remain a concern for the future for various reasons, as is addressed in this assessment report.

Other concerns in 2019 were the uniformity of information in course manuals, the transparency of grading of the final work and the choice of many students to take more courses than prescribed, resulting in study delays as well as issues with the deployment of staff. The panel concludes that these issues have been addressed. The course manuals seen by the current panel contain clear information. The panel also learned that the programme now strongly advises students not to take more than three courses in a semester. The 2025 panel is very pleased with the introduction of an obligatory thesis seminar, the careful execution of thesis assessment procedures and the level of the final works.

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 and intended learning outcomes
MALS offers a comparative perspective on literature and culture, while allowing space for disparate views on what literature study should be. It consists of five specializations: 1. English-language literature and culture; 2. German-language literature and culture; 3. French-language literature and culture; 4. Italian-language literature and culture; and, 5. Literature in Society. Europe and Beyond. The first four specializations build on the language-specific MTL2 bachelor's programmes in Leiden. The fifth one concentrates on the interactive relationship between literature and society, focusing on key political and social issues from a transnational perspective. With the chosen specializations, MALS aims to maintain opportunities in individual languages while also targeting for integration and cross-language cooperation. The self-evaluation report describes several shared defining features of MALS. These include: maximum flexibility for individual customisation within clear boundaries; focus on primary literary sources in their original language; teaching in the target language; openness to narrative forms beyond the written word; and a global perspective and focus on English, French, German and Italian as world languages.

The panel studied the profile of MALS and agrees with it. It appreciates the breadth of historical periods covered by the programme. Courses on offer reveal a strong expertise in the Medieval and Early Modern period, as well as strengths in Modern and Contemporary Literature. The panel also values the broad focus on narrative forms and the choice to teach the four language tracks in the target language, allowing students to reach a high final level in the language of their choice. The focus of the fifth specialization Literature in Society (which is taught in English) is interesting and innovative.

After studying the design of MALS, the panel agrees that MALS indeed places great emphasis on flexibility and student-centredness of the curriculum. Students can choose their own courses from an interesting range of offerings, while being bound to minimum requirements to ensure internal coherence and alignment with the intended learning outcomes. This is organized with so-called optional study paths focussing on a historical period and/or target language (see Standard 2). During the site visit, the panel learned that the

flexibility and student-centeredness of the programme is highly appreciated by students and an important reason for many in choosing the master's programme in Leiden instead of, for example, more specialized master's programmes abroad. While the flexibility and student-centered approach of MALS are wonderful characteristics and unique selling points, they also have a downside. The programme has clear shared defining features but currently lacks a shared course. Consequently, students may complete the programme without meeting or learning from peers in other specializations. The panel believes that strengthening the collective identity and face of MALS would be of added value for the learning experience of students. In addition, it would also contribute to improvement of social cohesion, as desired by students (see Standard 2: study advice and studying with a disability). During the site visit, the panel learned that the programme is considering introducing a shared new core course (provisionally titled 'Ways of Reading'). The panel encourages the programme to carry on with this. It also recommends considering other ways to strengthen the identity of the programme, for example by organizing a collective meeting in the beginning of the programme or a student conference.

The intended learning outcomes of MALS are described at two levels. First, MALS has formulated general intended learning outcomes for all students in the programme. Second, MALS has formulated intended learning outcomes for the four language specializations, and a separate set of intended learning outcomes for the Literature in Society specialization (see appendix 1). The panel examined the intended learning outcomes. It concludes that they are clearly articulated to meet the shared goals of the programme, as well as the specific needs of the different specializations. Both the general and specialization-specific intended learning outcomes follow the classification of the Dublin descriptors (knowledge, insight, judgment, communication, learning skills and language proficiency) and are thus related to the appropriate level of the Dutch Higher Education Qualifications Framework (NLQF 7).

The panel concludes that the general intended learning outcomes define important skills for a graduate of an academic master's programme in literary studies, such as the ability to critically apply theoretical, analytical and descriptive research methods to literature and culture and the ability to provide a critical synthesis of scholarly arguments. Befitting a master's programme in this field, students also develop advanced knowledge in literary studies. In the panel's view, the additional intended learning outcomes for the specializations specify these general intended learning outcomes in a logical and sensible way. The intended learning outcomes for the four language specializations also describe final levels of language proficiency in the target languages. These are defined on the basis of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), as is common in language studies. The level varies for the different languages: B2/C1 (productive) and C1 (receptive) for Italian; C1/C2 (productive) and C2 (receptive) for German; C1 (productive) and C1/C2 (receptive) for French; and C2 (receptive and productive) for English. According to the panel, these intended language proficiency final levels are appropriate.

Alignment of profile and intended learning outcomes with the academic and professional field
MALS aims to train students to become experts in language and culture. Graduates are prepared for positions where academic master's level in this field is required or relevant, for example in education, communication and marketing, government and cultural institutions. MALS also intends to offer a solid basis for students pursuing an academic career.

In the panel's view, the intended learning outcomes of the programme indeed provide a solid academic foundation at master's level. They include clear descriptions of important transferable and advanced academic skills, such as argumentation, written reporting, and learning skills, and are a good basis for a career in language and culture inside and outside academics, for example as an author, content marketeer, speech writer or PhD student. The flexibility of the programme aligns well to the ambition of preparing

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students for a broad range of relevant careers, by enabling students to choose courses that best fit with their own interests and future ambitions. MALS also provides access to the one- or two-year educational master's programme that prepares students for a career as a language teacher in English, French, German or Italian. MALS offers a specific study path for students who want to pursue this option. This study path is offered in collaboration with the master's programme Linguistics. The panel studied this study path and the intended learning outcomes. It concludes that both are well-considered, thus guaranteeing that graduates have the solid basis in language, culture and linguistics that they need for this career option. The panel recommends all Leiden programmes in the MTL2 cluster to communicate more clearly and visibly about the continued existence, importance and profile of these programmes. And, in doing so, to also look for ways to better highlight the uniqueness and relevance of the programmes on the faculty website, so that prospective students can get a better idea of this.

Considerations

The panel agrees with the chosen profile of MALS. The flexibility and student-centeredness of the programme are a great feature of the programme. The panel also appreciates the breadth of historical periods covered, the broad focus on narrative forms and the choice to teach the four language tracks in the target language. The focus of the Literature in Society specialization on the interactive relationship between literature and society is interesting and innovative. To further strengthen the programme, the panel recommends considering ways to foster a stronger collective identity. This could be achieved by following up on plans to introduce an obligatory core course, organizing a collective meeting at the beginning of the programme, or hosting a student conference.

The panel concludes that the intended learning outcomes are clearly articulated. The outcomes strengthen the shared goals and profile of the programme as well as the specific needs of the different specializations. According to the panel, the intended learning outcomes are of the right level and define important knowledge and skills for a graduate of an academic master's programme in literary studies. The additional intended learning outcomes for the specializations specify these general intended learning outcomes in a logical and sensible way. The intended language proficiency final levels (C1/2) for the four language specializations are also appropriate. The panel is convinced that the intended learning outcomes enable graduates pursue a career inside or outside academia. The intended learning outcomes also align well with the educational master's programme and a future career as language teacher. This career option is well-supported with a separate study path, designed in collaboration with the Linguistics master.

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 and modes of instruction
MALS (60 EC) offers a full-time and part-time variant. The part-time variant does not involve separate courses or programming. Part-time students simply take fewer courses and draw up a personal study plan in consultation with the study advisor (see: Study advice and studying with a disability).

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The structure of the programme is identical for all five specializations: students take four courses (10 EC each), at least two of which are in the chosen specialization, and conclude the programme with a thesis seminar and their final thesis (20 EC). Within this programme structure, the choice range differs between the four language specializations on the one hand, and the Literature in Society specialization on the other. Language track students take two specialization courses in the target language. The other two courses can be taken within the specialization, from other MALS specializations, from an adjacent master's programme or from the national Masterlanguage programme (a programme organized jointly by the Dutch universities, offering shared courses in the languages). It is also possible to do an internship. Students in the Literature in Society specialization take the obligatory course Literature in Society: Narrative, Fiction, and then choose two other specialization courses. For the final course, these students may opt for another course within their specialization, but they can also take a course from a related master's programme or do an internship. The panel concludes that the programme structure is clear (see appendix 2 for an overview). To help students choose their courses, the programme has designed three (optional) choice pathways for the language specializations: 1. Medieval and Early Modern Literature and Culture; 2. Modern and Contemporary Literature and Culture; and 3. a pathway for students who want to follow the entire programme in the target language and/or aim to continue their studies with an educational master's programme. The panel appreciates these pathways and believes that they are helpful in ensuring the necessary coherence in the study programme.

Flexibility and freedom of choice are key components of MALS' profile (see standard 1). As a result, the programme offers a large number of electives. The panel studied the prospectus of the different specializations and concludes that students in the English Literature and Culture and Literature and Society specializations can choose from a substantial number of interesting and relevant courses. The elective courses for the other language tracks are interesting as well, although less numerous. Considering the size of the student population in these tracks and the fact that students are allowed to take two out of four courses from other specializations, master's programmes or the Masterlanguage programme, the panel judges their number to be sufficient. The panel noted that MALS also has a number of optional courses that are jointly offered by the four language tracks. Examples include: European Modernism and The Epic Course: A Pre-Modern Genre and Its Digital Disclosure. During the site visit, the panel learned that students value these courses and find it enriching to be in a course with other MALS students. The panel agrees with this. At the same time, students also emphasised how much they appreciate the programme's current flexibility.
The panel agrees that this flexibility is a clear strength of the programme and should be maintained, but – as said in standard 1 – also believes that learning experience of students and social cohesion can further benefit from more cross-fertilisation between different specializations in, for example, a new joint core course.

MALS concludes with a master's thesis (20 EC), consisting of 15.000-20.000 words. Students are encouraged to select the topic of their thesis themselves. Students in one of the four language tracks write their thesis in the target language. Students in the specialization Literature in Society write their thesis in English. The thesis is written under the supervision of a lecturer. After the previous assessment, a thesis seminar was added for all students at the Leiden Faculty of Humanities. This seminar consists of a series of meetings where students are guided through the research and writing process. In addition, MALS offers twice-yearly information sessions and a Brightspace website with detailed thesis guidelines and timelines. The panel concludes that the thesis requirements are clear, and that the thesis trajectory is well organized with sufficient supervision. During the site visit, teachers mentioned that students sometimes fall behind in their thesis work for various reasons, which also results in an increased workload for supervisors. The panel found that MALS anticipated on this by taking appropriate measures, including the introduction of a thesis agreement, making adjustments to the thesis seminar and booking study rooms where students can work on their theses together.

The panel found that the programme also made improvements in labour market orientation, an area in which students have been more critical of in the national student survey. At the moment, students have several curricular and extracurricular opportunities in this respect, including an internship, activities of the Humanities Career Service, an annual alumni afternoon and a student-led careers day. During the site visit, MALS students confirmed that there are a lot of options for career preparation. They appreciate the opportunity to do an internship as part of the curriculum. From course prospectuses and the assessment plans, the panel concludes that the teaching methods used are diverse. In line with the ambition of the faculty and programme to offer research-based teaching, all teaching in the programme focuses on seminars in small groups, with active participation and in-depth discussion.

Language of instruction
The language of instruction in MALS is English. Within the specializations in French, German, and Italian Literature and Culture at least 40 EC of the curriculum is taught in the respective target languages. The choice for English as language of instruction was made for multiple reasons: all master's programmes at the university are taught in English; English is the lingua franca of the international research community; English is the target language of one of the largest specializations in the programme; and MALS' graduates are active on the international labour market. The panel agrees with these arguments. It established that the English language expertise of the teachers is in line with the choice for English as language of instruction, supplemented with the target language in the specializations in French, German, and Italian Literature and Culture. The lecturers speak English at a high level (see: Teaching team). The same holds for French, German and Italian in the language and culture specializations. As a general rule, all Leiden University teachers who teach in English must demonstrate that they have sufficient command of the English language, for example by obtaining the Basic Qualification in English (BKE).

Admissions, intake and feasibility of the programme
Admissions are carried out under the responsibility of a Board of Admissions shared with the research master's programme Arts, Literature and Media and the master's programme American Studies. The Course and Examination regulations specify which bachelor's programmes give direct access to each MALS specialization. These include the Leiden bachelor's programmes in the Modern Languages and Culture (MTL2) assessment cluster. For students from other programmes, the requirements for prior education are listed in more detail. The panel studied the admission requirements and concludes that they are appropriate and clearly formulated.

The student intake of MALS fluctuates around 50 per year, with on average 4 of whom follow the part-time variant. The majority of students is Dutch; about one third of all students come from other (EEA and non-EEA) countries. Most students enrol in the English Literature and Culture and the Literature in Society specializations. The other specializations each have an average intake of 3-5 students per year. The panel learned that the programme is trying to increase intake in these specializations, but understands why this is difficult: the supplying undergraduate programmes are also struggling with low intake numbers. The panel has a positive impression about the feasibility of the programme. 60% of the cohorts between 2020-2024 complete the programme within one year and the average study duration in 2023-2024 was 1.4 year. During the site visit, students confirmed the feasibility of the programme. When study delays occur, there are various reasons for this, including the decision to take an additional course or internship.

Study advice and studying with a disability
MALS has its own study adviser. She is responsible for providing information to students and to help them make choices in the programme. The study adviser also monitors study progress, contacts students who are in danger of being delayed, and refers students to the student psychologist. For students with a disability,

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customization is offered as much as possible. If necessary, the faculty's Student Counsellor of Leiden's Disability Centre is called in, whose task is to assist students with a disability to continue and/or complete their studies and to help design a learning environment that is as inclusive as possible. In addition to the student advisor, the programme has an education coordinator who is responsible for the scheduling of courses and exams, the annual preparation of the programme and the coordination of course descriptions. Students are satisfied with study advise and scheduling.

The panel concludes that the programme has a good system of study advice in place, which is appropriately supported at the university and faculty level with officers for special circumstances, such as student psychologists and a Student Counsellor Disability. Study progress is actively monitored and appropriate action is taken when needed. In the student chapter and during the site visit, students confirmed that the environment of the programme is positive and welcoming. At the same time, the highly individualised nature MALS programme sometimes makes it difficult to establish lasting contact with fellow students. MALS has already taken several actions to improve this, such as facilitating a group chat for students. Nevertheless, the need for strengthened social cohesion remains. The panel suggests combining actions to create greater social cohesion with the measures recommended in standard 1 to strengthen the collective identity of the programme (see standard 1 and recommendations).

Method of employing teachers
At Leiden University, academic staff are employed by research institutes. Lecturers in the Leiden MTL2 programmes are employed either by the Leiden University Centre for Linguistics (LUCL) or the Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society (LUCAS). The institutes assign lecturers to courses of the MTL2 programmes. As a result, many lecturers teach in more than one programme. In addition to teaching time, academic staff have research time and time for administrative tasks. The exact amount of time for the various tasks differs between the institutes. At LUCL, lecturers spend 65% of their time on teaching, 30% on research and 5% on organization and development. At LUCAS, this was 65%, 25% and 10% respectively in the past two academic years. The faculty's goal is to reach a ratio of 65%, 30% and 5% in its institutes. The panel endorses the plans to arrive at uniform standards that apply to all academic staff and understands the practical challenges that such a unification effort now bring.

During the site visit, the panel reflected in several conversations on the practice of bestowal within the MTL2 programmes. The panel concludes that in practice, the deployment of lecturers in a programme usually takes place in good collaboration between the research institutes and the programme chair, who is responsible for the content, organization, coordination and quality assurance of the programme. At the same time, the panel notes that bottlenecks sometimes arise, which can have a negative impact on individual lecturers. For example, it may happen that a lecturer is called upon from different programmes. As a complicating factor, the programme chairs have formal responsibility for the quality of their programme's programme but have no formal say in the deployment of lecturers. For individual staff members, the current method of assigning teachers to courses sometimes leads to difficult situations. For example, when courses that they are required to teach change very often, or when courses do not fully match their area of expertise without being granted additional development hours. Moreover, lecturers with specific expertise sometimes experience that there is little time for deployment on another, new course that they would like to teach. The workload experienced by lecturers – as revealed by the panel's discussions with teachers – has various causes, but is sometimes also linked to the way in which they are deployed and the questions and uncertainties lecturers have about this. The panel therefore recommends that the MTL2 programmes actively consider optimizing the matching of lecturers with curriculum components, and that they enter into continuous dialogue with research institutes on this matter. This is to ensure timely and well-coordinated

deployment within programmes, and also to promote the well-being of lecturers who are the bearers of the programmes.

During the site visit, interviews with lecturers revealed that the need for budget cuts leads to concerns about the future quality of the Leiden MTL2 programmes. Therefore, the panel encourages the programmes to invest in good communication and collaboration between faculty administration, programme management, lecturers and institutes. As a suggestion, the panel also advises the Programme Committee and the Board of Examiners to invest in this. Although these bodies have different tasks and responsibilities, the existence of short lines of communication between them might also be useful in discussions about ways to cut costs.

Quality of the teaching staff
The panel studied an overview of the teaching staff. The lecturers of MALS are all employed by LUCAS. The panel found that the staff members are sufficiently qualified in core areas of the programme and that the expertise within the team is sufficiently varied to deliver the programme. All staff members are experienced researchers that publish regularly and are regularly awarded research projects and grants. All staff members are in the possession of a Basic Teaching Qualification (BKO) and speak English at a high level. Staff teaching in the German, French or Italian Literature and Culture specializations also speak those languages at a native level. The student chapter and conversations during the site visit show that students are very satisfied with the availability and expertise of their teachers.

Programme-specific facilities
Students in the programme use various Leiden University facilities, including the library and the online learning environment Brightspace. They newly opened Humanities Hub is also an important resource for students and staff. During the interviews, students expressed satisfaction with the programme-specific facilities and the provision of information.

Considerations
The panel concludes that the programme structure is clear and logical, and appreciates the three (optional) choice pathways for the language specializations. MALS offers a large number of electives. The panel studied the prospectus of the different specializations and concludes that students in the English Literature and Culture and Literature and Society specializations can choose from a substantial number of interesting and relevant courses. The elective courses of the other language tracks are interesting as well, although less numerous. Considering the size of the student population in these specializations and the fact that students are allowed to take two out of four courses from other specializations, master's programmes or the Master's language programme, the panel judges their number to be sufficient. The panel notes with satisfaction that MALS includes a number of optional courses that are jointly offered by the four language tracks. Students value these courses and find it enriching to be in such a course with other MALS students. The panel found that the teaching methods used by MALS are diverse. Teaching in the programme focuses on seminars in small groups, with active participation and in-depth discussion, which aligns with the research-based education aspired by MALS.

The panel found that thesis requirements are clear and that the thesis trajectory is well organized with sufficient supervision. The panel appreciates the addition of the thesis seminar after the previous assessment. During the visit, teachers mentioned that students sometimes fall behind in their thesis work for various reasons, which results in an increased workload for supervisors. The panel found that MALS acted on this by taking appropriate measures.

According to the panel, the admission requirements of MALS are appropriate and clearly formulated. The panel also has a positive impression about the feasibility of the programme. The language of instruction in MALS is English. Within the specializations in French, German, and Italian Literature and Culture at least 40 EC of the curriculum is also taught in these target languages. The panel agrees with this choice and the language expertise of the teachers is in line with it. The panel also concludes that the staff of MALS are sufficiently qualified in core areas of the programme. At Leiden University, academic staff are employed by research institutes. The deployment of lecturers in courses usually takes place in good consultation between the research institutes and the programme chair although sometimes bottlenecks occur for individual lecturers. The panel therefore recommends that the MTL2 programmes actively consider optimizing the matching of lecturers with curriculum components, and that they enter into dialogue with research institutes on this matter. This is to ensure timely and well-coordinated deployment within programmes, and to promote the well-being of lecturers who are the bearers of the programmes. The panel also encourages the programmes to invest in good communication and collaboration between faculty administration, programme management, lecturers and institutes regarding faculty deployment and the financial challenges that call for reduction in programmes.

The panel concludes that MALS has a good system of study advice in place, also for part-time students, which is appropriately supported at the university and faculty level with officers for special circumstances, such as student psychologists and a Student Counsellor Disability. Programme-specific facilities and information provision are also in order. Students confirm that the environment of the programme is positive and welcoming. At the same time, the highly individualized nature of the MALS programme sometimes makes it difficult to establish lasting contact with fellow students. Therefore, the panel suggests combining actions to create greater social cohesion with the measures recommended in standard 1 to strengthen the collective identity of the programme.

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.

Findings

Assessment policy and methods of assessment
The assessment policy of MALS follows instructions and guidelines of the Faculty of Humanities. For example, each programme within the Faculty of Humanities must develop an assessment plan in which the relationship between final qualifications and courses, and between courses and assessment is described. All programmes also apply the four-eye principle when developing assessments and faculty-wide tips are available for the design, composition, administration and evaluation of assessment.

The assessment of MALS is described in five separate assessment plans 2024-2025, one for each of the specializations. The panel studied these plans. It concludes that the plans have a transparent structure. The relationship between courses and intended learning outcomes is clear. However, the panel also noticed that the five assessment plans differed on generic learning outcomes, and that some assessment plans were difficult to read due to the high number of ticked boxes for every course. Therefore, the panel sees room to improve the assessment plans to make them more useful for the quality assurance process of the Board of Examiners (BoE), but also for future development of programme. More guidance on, and insight into,

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assessments at the curriculum level can, according to the panel, contribute to greater clarity on constructive alignment and what can and cannot be changed within the programme in the future. The panel recommends that assessment plans in all MTL2 programmes, including MALS, be improved in the a number of ways, namely: 1. Use a format that provides greater insight into key curriculum and assessment choices and when the final level for a particular final qualification is achieved (not everything needs to be tested everywhere), 2. Make the constructive alignment and gradual build up to the intended final level in the curricula more transparent, include academic skills as a learning line so that its integration into other curriculum components becomes more visible 3. Ensure alignment and consistency between the assessment plans of the programmes on generic components, such as core curriculum subjects and the thesis. 4. Show what is (already) being done in terms of new and creative forms of assessment, so that teachers and programmes can learn from each other.

The panel studied the assessment plans and a sample of assessments. It concludes that the programme's assessment system is coherent. The programme effectively utilizes a wide array of assessment methods tailored to the specific learning pathways. Each course has at least two forms of assessment, often a final paper and a range of sub-assessments, including oral presentations, book or film reviews, making a podcast or writing a blog text. During the site visit, students expressed that they are satisfied with assessment and feedback provided by the programme.

The panel met with faculty and management during the site visit to discuss the implications of the emergence of GenAI for teaching and assessment. The panel concludes that at the university and faculty level, uniform policies are being developed regarding the opportunities and risks of GenAI. The premise here is that students may use GenAI in teaching as a tool, but that GenAI is not allowed in graded assignments where it is classified as fraud. The panel recommends that this premise be more clearly communicated, as lecturers have expressed a need for more clarity during the site visit. The panel also discussed GenAI with the Board of Examiners (BoE). It concludes that the BoE is well aware of the risks of GenAI, proactive and conscious that in the future it will become increasingly difficult to detect the use of GenAI. The BoE emphasizes to management the importance of clarity in course manuals about whether or not students should be allowed to use GenAI. In addition, the BoE stresses the importance of an oral defence and a good link between the thesis topic and the expertise of the thesis supervisor.

Review and assessment of the thesis
The thesis grading process is defined in a faculty-wide manual. Theses are graded by two readers, one of whom is the thesis supervisor. Both reviewers complete the grading form independently. They use a faculty-wide online grading form with grading criteria that follow the Dublin descriptors. After assessment, both forms are merged, and the grade is determined by the first assessor and sent to the second assessor for signature. In principle, the final grade is the average of the two grades given. In some cases, a third evaluator is assigned, for example, if the thesis is assessed as unsatisfactory, the final grade is assigned 6.0, or the difference between the grades of the first and second evaluator is 2 or more points. Students receive all completed assessment forms. The panel concludes that the thesis assessment procedure is carefully designed and clearly described.

The panel reviewed a selection of theses with accompanying assessment forms. On this basis, the panel concludes that the prescribed assessment procedure is followed and works, even when there is reason to involve a third assessor. In addition, the panel concludes that the programme has taken seriously the advice of the previous review panel to improve the clarity of the formation of the grade. Assessment forms are generally completed accurately (by all Leiden programmes in the Modern Language and Literature 2 cluster). Grades given are clearly substantiated with nuanced comments. In addition, the forms contain extensive

feedback for the student. Notable here is the consistency in the good quality of feedback between different assessors.

The panel noted positively that the programme is aware of arising bottlenecks in the thesis grading process and follows up on advices it receives from the Board of Examiners (BoE) in this regard. In response to concerns of the BoE about possible grade inflation, MASL introduced a programme-wide thesis grading rubric and instituted grade calibration sessions, chaired by the Board of Examiners. Data on cum laude graduation suggest that these measures have had some effect. The panel did not encounter any structural overvaluation in the selection of final projects it examined. The panel commends the programme and the BoE for the self-reflective and self-improving attitude that is demonstrated by this example, and encourages MALS to continue using the thesis grading rubric and organizing calibration sessions in the future.

Board of Examiners
The programme shares its Board of Examiners (BoE) with the research master Arts, Literature and Media and the master North American Studies. The BoE follows the faculty manual for Boards of Examiners, which describes tasks, responsibilities and roles. Among other things, the BoE deals with appointing examiners, granting exemptions and replacement subjects, approval of internship applications, special circumstances and deviating programmes, assessing fraud and plagiarism and ensuring the quality of exams and final papers. The BoE reports annually on its work. The panel concludes that the work of the BoE is clearly described and appropriate to the legal duties and responsibilities of Board of Examiners. Annual reports show that the BoE performs these duties and responsibilities properly.

The panel met with members of the BoE during the site visit and found that the BoE is adequately equipped to perform its duties through professionalization, workshops and calibration sessions. For example, new members attend a two-day course for Board of Examiners members and Board of Examiners and official secretaries meet regularly in a university context to discuss new developments such as GenAI (see below). Quality assurance of assessments and final papers is done systematically. Findings are communicated to the programme board and included in the annual report of the BoE. The panel observed a Board of Examiners that proactively fulfils its duties, and whose advice is taken seriously and leads to adjustments.

Considerations

The assessment system of the programme is well-designed. Assessment methods are varied. The assessment plans of MALS have a transparent structure and the relationship between courses and final qualifications is clear. However, the panel also noticed that the assessment plans differed on generic learning outcomes, and that some assessment plans were difficult to read due to the high number of ticked boxes for every course. Therefore, the panel sees room to further improve the current assessment plans and make them more usable. According to the panel, more control on, and insight in, assessment at curriculum level can contribute to greater clarity on what can and cannot be changed within the programme. The panel therefore recommends that assessment plans in the Leiden MTL2 assessment cluster be improved in a number of respects, by: using a format that provides more insight into the main curriculum and assessment choices and when the final level for a particular final qualification is achieved; making constructive alignment and gradual build-up to the intended final level in the curricula more transparent; including academic skills as a curricular line; and by aligning generic components in the assessment plans of the different MTL2 bachelor's programmes.

The panel concludes that the programme has taken seriously the recommendation of the previous review panel to improve the clarity of the thesis grading process. The faculty procedures for thesis assessments are clearly described. The prescribed thesis grading procedure is followed carefully (by all Leiden programmes in

the cluster Modern Language and Literature 2). Grades given are clearly substantiated with nuanced comments. In addition, the forms contain extensive feedback for the student. Notable here is the consistency in the good quality of feedback between different assessors. The panel also noted positively that the programme is aware of arising bottlenecks in the thesis grading process and follows up on advices it receives from the Board of Examiners (BoE) in this regard. The panel compliments the programme and BoE with their effective efforts to fight grade inflation by introducing a programme-wide thesis grading rubric and grade calibration sessions, and encourages MALS to continue using these instruments in the future. Finally, the panel concludes that the BoE is adequately equipped to carry out its duties and functions satisfactorily.

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
The panel studied 15 theses from MALS graduates. Based on this sample, the panel concludes that the intended learning outcomes are achieved. The theses from the sample were interesting, with a high diversity among thesis topics that represent the different tracks of the programme. Theses with higher grades clearly go above and beyond the intended learning outcomes, yet even students with lower passing grades produced work at master's level. In the panel's view, this achieved thesis level prepares students well for a position where advanced graduate-level academic knowledge and skills in the field of language and culture are required or relevant, including a PhD trajectory. The achieved language level in the theses also meets the intended learning outcomes, although it should be noted that the English language level in the Literature in Society specialization logically is lower than in the English Literature and Culture specialization. This is in line with the intended learning outcomes in this specialization and, for the panel, also positive proof that MALS is accessible to students with different interests and ambitions.

Based on the latest Humanities Labour Market Survey, the panel concludes that graduates of the programme generally fare well. 94% of MALS alumni found their first jobs within six months, in which 89% are at academic or Dutch vocational level. 36% of MALS alumni work in education, 14% in marketing & communication and 9% in government/administration, which is in line with the objectives of the programme.

Considerations
The panel concludes that students achieve the intended learning outcomes of the programme. The theses from the sample were interesting, with a high diversity among thesis topics that represent the different tracks of the programme. Theses with higher grades clearly go above and beyond the intended learning outcomes, yet even students with lesser grades produced work at master's level. In the panel's view, this achieved thesis level prepares students well for a position where advanced graduate-level academic knowledge and skills in the field of language and culture are required, including a PhD trajectory. Graduates generally enter well into a diversity of professional fields.

Conclusion
The panel concludes that the programme meets standard 4.

General conclusion

The panel's assessment of the master's programme Literary Studies is positive.

Recommendations

All Modern Language and Literature 2 (MTL2) programmes in Leiden:
- Communicate more clearly and visibly about the continued existence, importance and profile of the Leiden programmes in the MTL2 cluster. In doing so, also look for ways to better highlight the uniqueness and relevance of the programmes on the faculty website, so that prospective students can get a better idea of this.
- Think of ways to optimize the matching of lecturers with curriculum components and actively engage in continuous dialogue with the research institutes about this. This is to ensure timely and well-coordinated deployment within programmes, and promote the well-being of lecturers who are the bearers of the programmes.
- Continue to invest in good communication and collaboration between faculty administration, programme management, lecturers and institutes regarding faculty deployment and the financial challenges that call for reduction in programs.
- Improve assessment plans to make them more useful. More guidance on, and insight into, assessments at the curriculum level can contribute to greater clarity on what can and cannot be changed within the programme in the current situation where curriculum components and assessments might be reconsidered out of financial necessity.

Master's programme Literary Studies:
- Consider ways to strengthen the collective identity of the programme, for example by organizing a collective meeting in the beginning of the programme or a student conference. In this context, the panel encourages plans to introduce a new core course (provisionally titled 'Ways of Reading'), that would be obligatory for all students of the programme.

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Appendix 1. Intended learning outcomes

General learning outcomes:
Graduates of the programme have attained the following learning outcomes, listed according to the Dublin descriptors:

1. Knowledge and understanding
Graduates:
a. are able to demonstrate knowledge of the research methods used in the field of Literary and Cultural Studies;
b. are able to demonstrate advanced knowledge of the field of their specialisation;
c. are able to demonstrate general knowledge of the connections between the major European literatures, and the relations of Literary Studies with other fields in the Humanities.

2. Applying knowledge and understanding
Graduates:
a. have the ability to critically apply theoretical, analytical and descriptive research methods to literature and culture;
b. are able to apply their knowledge and insight in formulating a complex research problem in the field of Literary and/or Cultural Studies, and in reporting on their findings

3. Making judgements
Graduates:
a. have the ability to critically evaluate scholarly arguments and methods within the field of Literary and Cultural Studies, and to formulate an independent critical opinion on these;
b. are able to provide a critical synthesis of scholarly arguments dealing with a given issue in Literary and/or Cultural Studies, and to understand and outline the difference between the academic results acquired and the problems that remain to be solved.

4. Communication
Oral presentation skills: graduates are able
1. to present clear and substantiated research results;
2. to provide an answer to questions relevant to the subject matter covered by a course
   a. in the form of a clear and well-structured oral presentation;
   b. in agreement with the appropriate disciplinary criteria;
   c. using up-to-date presentation techniques;
   d. aimed at a specific audience;
3. to actively participate in group discussions following presentations, and during seminars more broadly.

Written presentation skills: graduates are able
1. to present clear and substantiated research results;
2. to provide a provisional answer to their research question:
   a. in the form of a clear and well-structured paper or thesis;
   b. in agreement with the appropriate disciplinary criteria;
   c. using relevant illustration or multimedia techniques if this is relevant to the research topic;
   d. aimed at a specific audience.

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5. Learning skills

Graduates are able:

- to acquire knowledge and understanding independently and efficiently for the purpose of individual work/research;
- to independently identify and fill knowledge and skill gaps in the field of Literary Studies;
- Collaboration skills: graduates are able to carry out teamwork. That is to say that they are able to:
  1. be socially communicative in collaborative situations;
  2. offer and receive constructive criticism and incorporate justified criticism by revising their position;
- to plan, monitor and adjust their own activities or projects.

Learning outcomes specific to English/French/German/Italian Literary Studies:

Graduates of the programme have attained the following learning outcomes, listed according to the Dublin descriptors:

1. Knowledge and understanding

Graduates:

a. are able to demonstrate knowledge of research methods specific to the field of English/French/ German/Italian Literary and/or Cultural Studies;

b. are able to demonstrate advanced knowledge and understanding of the literature and culture of their specialisation;

2. Applying knowledge and understanding

Graduates:

a. have the ability to critically apply theoretical, analytical and descriptive research methods to literature in English/ French/German/Italian;

 b. Are able to apply their knowledge and insight in formulating a complex research problem in the field of their specialisation, and in reporting on their findings.

3. Making judgements

Graduates:

a. have the ability to critically evaluate scholarly arguments and methods current within their specialisation, and to formulate an independent critical assessment of these arguments;

b. are able to provide a critical synthesis of scholarly arguments dealing with a given issue in the field of their specialisation, and to understand and outline the difference between the scholarly results acquired and the problems that remain to be solved.

4. Communication

Graduates:

a. are able to give an oral presentation in English/French/German/Italian (CEFR levels specified in the table below), reporting on the work outlined in (2a) and (3a-b);

b. are able to write a Master thesis in English/French/German/Italian (CEFR levels specified in the table below), on the work outlined in (2b) and (3a-b):

English:		French:		German:		Italian:	
Listening	C2	Listening	C1/2	Listening	C2	Listening	C1
Reading	C2	Reading	C2	Reading	C2	Reading	C1
Spoken interaction	C2	Spoken interaction	C1	Spoken interaction	C1	Spoken interaction	B2/C1
Spoken production	C2	Spoken production	C1	Spoken production	C2	Spoken production	B2/C1
Writing	C2	Writing	C1	Writing	C1	Writing	B2/C1

5. Learning skills

Graduates:

a. have the learning skills required to be able to follow post-master's professional training or PhD training of a largely self-determined or autonomous nature

b. have intercultural skills enabling them to efficiently communicate with/in the countries of their specialisation.

Learning outcomes specific to Literature in Society: Europe and Beyond:

Graduates of the programme have attained the following learning outcomes, listed according to the Dublin descriptors:

1. Knowledge and understanding

Graduates:

a. are able to demonstrate knowledge of and insight into the interactions between literature and society, and to do so from a transnational perspective;

b. are able to demonstrate advanced knowledge of at least one specific field of Literary Studies in its relationship to one or several political and/or social issues;

c. are able to demonstrate knowledge of modern and contemporary literatures in their interconnectedness and their embeddedness in cultural and literary history.

d. are able to demonstrate knowledge of research methods used in the field of Literary Studies.

2. Applying knowledge and understanding

Graduates:

a. have the ability to critically apply theoretical, analytical and descriptive research methods to literature in its connection to political and social issues;

b. are able to apply their knowledge and insight in formulating a complex research problem in the field of Literary Studies, and in reporting on their findings.

3. Making judgements

Graduates:

a. have the ability to critically evaluate scholarly arguments and methods within the field of Literary Studies and to formulate an independent critical thesis on these;

b. are able to provide a critical synthesis of scholarly arguments dealing with a given issue in the field of Literary Studies, and to understand and outline the difference between the academic results obtained and the questions that remain to be solved.

4. Communication

Graduates:

a. are able to give an oral presentation in correct English reporting on the academic work outlined in (1),

b. (2) and (3).

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c. are able to write a Master's thesis, in correct academic English, on the academic work outlined in (1), (2) and (3).

5. Learning skills
Graduates:
have the oral and written learning skills required to be able to follow post-master's professional training or PhD training of a largely self-determined and autonomous nature.

Appendix 2. Programme curriculum

Semester	Courses		
Sem. 1	Course within specialisation (10 EC)	Course within specialisation (10 EC)	Elective (10 EC)
Sem. 2	Elective (10 EC)	MA-Thesis and thesis seminar (20 EC)	

🟩 Course / thesis within specialisation

🟦 - Extra course(s) within specialisation
- Course European Modernism
- Course from the other specialisations of Literary Studies
- Courses from the national Masterlanguage programme
- Course from the MA Linguistics in target language (language specializations only)
- Internship (approval Board of Examiners needed)
- Course from a related master's programme (approval Board of Examiners needed)

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Appendix 3. Programme of the site visit

Day 1: May 7, 2025

11.00	11.15	**Welcome**
11.15	11.45	Internal panel session
11.45	12.30	**Interview faculty management** - Vice Dean BA - Vice Dean MA
12.30	13.30	Lunch
13.30	14.00	**Interview management B English Language and Culture** - President - Staff Member - Student member management - Education Coordinator - Student Advisor
14.00	14.15	Break
14.15	14.45	**Interview exam board English** - President - 2 internal members - External member - Official Secretary
14.45	15.30	**Interview students & alumni B English** - Student Year 1 - Student year 2 and OLC member - Student Year 2 - Student Year 2 - 2 alumni
15.30	16.00	Break
16.00	16.45	**Interview teachers B English** - Teacher of Early Modern English - Teacher of Old English and Middle English) - Teacher of Literary Studies - 2 Linguistics teachers
16.45	17.45	Internal session panel / drafting findings
17.15	17.45	**Possibility additional questions training management English**

Day 2: May 8, 2025

09.00	10.00	**Interview management B French Language and Culture, B German Language and Culture and B Italian Language and Culture** - Programme Chair German Language and Culture - Student member training management German Language and Culture - Programme Chair of French Language and Culture - Student member programme management French Language and Culture - Programme Chair Italian Language and Culture - Student member training management Italian Language and Culture - Study Advisor German Language and Culture - Student advisor French Language and Culture and Italian Language and Culture
10.00	10.30	Break
10.30	11.15	**Interview students & alumni French** - Student Year 1 - Student year 2 and OLC member - Student year 3 and OLC member - Student Year 3 - 2 alumni
11.15	12.00	**Interview teachers of French** - 4 teachers, including 1 OLC chairman and 1 OLC member
12.00	12.30	**Conversation exam board German, French, Italian** - Chairman of Board of Examiners - 2 members of Board of Examiners - Official Secretary
12.30	13.30	Lunch
13.30	14.15	**Interview students & alumni Italian** - 4 students from different years, including 1 OLC member - 3 alumni
14.15	15.00	**Conversation teachers of Italian** - 5 teachers, including 1 chairman OLC
15.00	15.30	Break
15.30	16.15	**Interview students & alumni B German** - Student Year 1 - Student Year 2 - Student Year 3 - 2 alumni
16.15	17.00	**Interview teachers B German** - 3 teachers, 1 of whom is OLC chairperson
17.00	18.00	Internal session panel / drafting findings
17.30	18.00	**Possibility of additional questions training management French, Italian and German**

Day 3: May 9, 2025

09.00	09.30	**Interview programme management M Literary Studies** - Training Chair - Student member training board - Education Coordinator - Student Advisor
09.30	10.00	Internal session panel
10.00	10.45	**Interview students & alumni M Literary Studies** - 3 students - 2 alumni
10.45	11.30	**Interview teachers M Literary Studies** - 2 teachers track English Literature - Teacher of Italian Literature, OLC member - Lecturer in Literature in Society, OLC member - Teacher of German Literature - Teacher of French Literature, chair of OLC
11.30	11.45	Break
11.45	12.15	**Interview Board of Examiners on Literature (Arts, Literature and North American Studies).** - President - Member - 2 official secretaries
12.15	13.15	Lunch
13.15	15.00	Internal session panel / drafting findings
14.30	15.00	**Possibility of additional questions training management M Literature**
15.00	15.45	**Final interview management all courses** - Vice dean BA - Vice Dean MA - Training Chairs
15.45	16.15	Internal session panel
16.15	17.15	**Development dialogue (parallel)** 1. English Language and Culture and Literary Studies 2. German, French and Italian Language and Culture
17.15	17.30	**Oral feedback moment**

Appendix 4. Materials

Prior to the site visit, the panel studied 15 theses of the master's programme Literary Studies. Information on the theses is available from Academion upon request.

The panel also studied other materials, which included:

All programmes:
- Note for the review panel Modern Language and Literature on the sector plan SSH University of Amsterdam, Leiden University, Radboud University, Utrecht University November 2024
- Description Faculty of Humanities, Leiden University
- Educational vision Faculty of Humanities, Leiden University
- Overview of appointments of teachers in Modern Language and Literature programs 2
- Teaching and Examination Regulations Bachelor's Programmes Faculty of Humanities Leiden University valid from 1 September 2024
- Thesis assessment in the Faculty of Humanities, Leiden University
- Handbook Board of Examiners Faculty of Humanities, Leiden University (Last revised version: August 2024)
- Faculty rules and guidelines of Board of Examiners of BA programs Faculty of Humanities, Leiden University
- Tips on Testing, Faculty of Humanities, Leiden University
- Guide to Teaching Quality Assurance Faculty of Humanities (Jan. 2025)
- Handbook of Programme Committees Faculty of Humanities, Leiden University (Last revised August 2024)
- Education Dashboard Faculty of Humanities, Leiden University (intake, throughput, outflow, NSE etcetera)
- Programme websites

Master's programme Literary Studies
- Self-Evaluation Report MA Literaty Studies 2025
- Prospectus MA Literary Studies: English Literature and Culture
- Prospectus MA Literary Studies: French Literature and Culture
- Prospectus MA Literary Studies: German Literature and Culture
- Prospectus MA Literary Studies: Italian Literature and Culture
- Prospectus MA Literary Studies: Literature in Society. Europe and Beyond
- Course and Examination Regulations valid from 1 September 2024, Programme-specific part: Bachelor's programme: English Language and Culture
- Staff overview English Language and Culture 2025
- Webpage LUCAS Prospectus MA Literary Studies: French Literature and Culture
- Assessment plan Literary Studies: English Literature and Culture
- Assessment plan Literary Studies: French Literature and Culture
- Assessment plan Literary Studies: German Literature and Culture
- Assessment plan Literary Studies: Italian Literature and Culture
- Assessment plan Literary Studies: Literature in Society. Europe and Beyond
- Oplegger Masterlanguage-informatie ten behoeve van onderwijsvisitaties 2025
- 15 final works selected by the panel including completed assessment forms

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- Selected courses in Brightspace
- Annual reports Board of Examiners Arts and Literature and American Studies 2022-2023 and 2023-2024
- Annual programme report 2022-2023 MA Literary Studies