

**BACHELOR'S AND MASTER'S PROGRAMME
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND
ORGANISATION SCIENCE**

FACULTY OF LAW, ECONOMICS AND GOVERNANCE

UTRECHT UNIVERSITY

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REPORT ON THE BACHELOR'S AND MASTER'S PROGRAMMES PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANISATION SCIENCE OF UTRECHT UNIVERSITY

This report takes the joint NVAO-EAPAA Accreditation Framework 2016 as a starting point.

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE PROGRAMMES

Bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science

Name of the programme:	Public Administration and Organisation Science
CROHO number:	50007
Level of the programme:	bachelor's
Orientation of the programme:	academic
Number of credits:	180 EC
Specializations or tracks:	-
Location(s):	Utrecht
Mode(s) of study:	full time
Language of instruction:	Dutch, English
Expiration of accreditation:	31/12/2018

Master's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science

Name of the programme:	Public Administration and Organisation Science
CROHO number:	60446
Level of the programme:	master's
Orientation of the programme:	academic
Number of credits:	60 EC
Specializations or tracks:	Public Governance Communication, Policy, and Management European Governance Organisation, Change, and Management Public Management Strategic Human Resource Management Sports Policy and Sports Management
Location(s):	Utrecht
Mode(s) of study:	full time, dual
Language of instruction:	Dutch, English
Expiration of accreditation:	31/12/2018

The visit of the assessment panel Public Administration to the Faculty of Law, Economics and Governance of Utrecht University took place on 11 - 13 December 2017.

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE INSTITUTION

Name of the institution:	Utrecht University
Status of the institution:	publicly funded institution
Result institutional quality assurance assessment:	positive

COMPOSITION OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

The NVAO has approved the composition of the panel on 16 October 2017. The panel that assessed the bachelor's and master's programmes Public Administration and Organisation Science consisted of:

- Prof. dr. T. (Tony) Bovaird, professor emeritus of Public Management and Policy at the University of Birmingham (United Kingdom) [chair];
- Prof. dr. M. (Marleen) Brans, professor at the Public Governance Institute of the KU Leuven (Belgium) [vice-chair];
- Prof. dr. P.B. Peter Sloep, professor emeritus in Technology-Enhanced Learning, in particular Learning in Social at the Open Universiteit Nederland;
- Prof. E. (Esther) Versluis, professor of European Regulatory Governance at Maastricht University;
- Drs. H. (Henk) de Jong, director of Strategy and Policy of the Dutch National Police. Previous positions include chair of the board of the ROC Leiden and positions in the municipalities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam;
- J.C. (Jasper) Meijering, master's student Engineering and Policy Analysis at Delft University of Technology [student member];
- Prof. mr. dr. J.E. (Jenneke) Bosch-Boesjes, professor emeritus Development and Differentiation Academic Education, former dean at the University of Groningen Honours College;
- Prof. dr. J.J.A. (Jacques) Thomassen, emeritus professor of Political Science at the University of Twente.

The panel was supported by Mark Delmartino MA, who acted as secretary.

Appendix 1 contains the curricula vitae of the panel members.

WORKING METHOD OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

The assessment of the bachelor's and master's programmes Public Administration and Organisation Science of the Utrecht University is part of a cluster assessment. From October to December 2017, a panel assessed seven bachelor's programmes and seventeen master's programmes in Public Administration at eight universities. In addition to these two programmes, the panel also assessed the executive master's programme and the research master's programme offered by the Utrecht University School of Governance; the results of these assessments are reported separately.

The panel consists of seventeen members:

- Prof. T. (Tony) Bovaird, professor emeritus of Public Management and Policy at the University of Birmingham (United Kingdom) [chair];
- Prof. A. (Adrian) Ritz, professor for Public Management at the University of Bern (Switzerland) [vice-chair];
- Prof. M. (Marleen) Brans, professor at the Public Governance Institute of the KU Leuven (Belgium) [vice-chair];
- Prof. H.M.C. (Harrie) Eijkelhof, professor emeritus of Physics Education at Utrecht University.
- Prof. P.B. Peter Sloep, professor emeritus in Technology-Enhanced Learning, in particular Learning in Social at the Open Universiteit Nederland;
- Prof. T. (Tiina) Randma-Liiv, professor of Public Management and Policy and vice-dean for Research at Tallinn University of Technology (Estonia);
- Prof. L. (Lan) Xue, professor and dean of the School of Public Policy and Management, Tsinghua University (China);
- Prof. E. (Esther) Versluis, professor of European Regulatory Governance at Maastricht University.
- Prof. W. (William) Webster, professor of Public Policy and Management at the Stirling Management School, University of Stirling (UK);

- Prof. J.J.A. (Jacques) Thomassen, emeritus professor of Political Science at the University of Twente;
- Prof J. E. (Jenneke) Bosch-Boesjes, emeritus professor of Development and Differentiation in Academic Education at the University of Groningen;
- Drs. B. (Bertine) Steenbergen, interim director at the Ministry of Security and Justice.
- Prof. J.P. (Jan) Pronk, professor emeritus in Theory and Practice of International Development at the International Institute of Social Studies and former Minister for Development Co-operation and Minister of Environment, Spatial Planning and Housing;
- Drs. C. (Cees) Vermeer, town clerk of the city of Breda;
- Drs. H. (Henk) de Jong, director of Strategy and Policy of the Dutch National Police;
- J.C. (Jasper) Meijering BSc, master's student Engineering and Policy Analysis at Delft University of Technology [student member];
- S. (Sophie) van Wijngaarden BSc, master's student Systems Engineering, Policy Analysis & Management at the Delft University of Technology [student member].

A panel of six to eight members was appointed for each visited, based on the expertise and availability of each panel member, and taking into account possible conflicts of interest.

Peter Hildering MSc of QANU was project coordinator of the cluster assessment Public Administration. He was secretary during the visits to the University of Twente, Radboud University, Erasmus University Rotterdam and Leiden University. He also attended the final panel consultations of every visit and read and commented on draft versions of each report in order to monitor the consistency of the assessments and the resulting reports. Mark Delmartino MA, freelance worker of QANU, was secretary of the panel during the visits to Tilburg University, Maastricht University, Utrecht University, and the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Dr. Joke Corporaal, freelance worker of QANU, was second secretary during the visits to the Erasmus University Rotterdam and Leiden University.

Joint NVAO-EAPAA assessment

The panel assessment was aimed at (re-)accreditation by both NVAO and EAPAA. In order to increase efficiency and reduce administrative burden, both accreditation processes were combined. NVAO and EAPAA agreed on a joint process and framework on 12 September 2016. This report is based on the joint NVAO-EAPAA framework and is aimed at double accreditation for all programmes involved.

Preparation

Before the assessment panel's site visit to Utrecht University, the project coordinator received the self-evaluation reports that the programmes wrote based on the joint NVAO-EAPAA framework. He sent it to the panel after checking it for completeness of information. Upon reading the self-evaluation reports, the panel members formulated their preliminary findings. The panel also studied a selection of about fifteen theses and the accompanying assessment forms for each programme. This selection was made by the panel's chair, in cooperation with the secretary, from a list of graduates from the past three years. The chair and secretary took care that all tracks and specializations within the programmes were covered, and made sure that the distribution of grades in the theses selection matched the distribution of grades over all theses.

The panel chair, secretary and programme jointly composed a schedule for the site visit. Prior to the site visit, the programme selected representative partners for the various interviews. Interviews were planned with students, teaching staff, management, alumni and professional field, the programme committee and the board of examiners. See appendix 5 for the definitive schedule.

Site visit

The site visit to Utrecht University took place from 11 to 13 December 2017, and was followed by a visit to the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam on 14 and 15 December 2017. At the start of the week, the panel held a preparatory meeting during which it was instructed regarding the assessment framework and procedures. After this, the panel discussed its working method and its preliminary findings for



the Utrecht site visit, and reflected on the content and use of the programme's domain-specific framework of reference (appendix 2).

The assessment of the bachelor's programme was combined with an assessment of the Distinctive Feature Small-Scale and Intensive Education. In addition to the regular programme assessment, the panel performed a practical assessment, which is reported in a separate document, to verify if the specific small-scale intensive character of the bachelor's programme can be reaffirmed.

During the site visit, the panel conducted interviews with representatives of the programmes, and examined materials provided by the programmes. An overview of these materials is given in appendix 6. The panel provided students and staff with the opportunity to speak informally with the panel outside the set interviews. No use was made of this opportunity.

The panel used the final part of the visit to discuss its findings in an internal meeting. Afterwards the panel chair gave an oral presentation, in which he expressed the panel's preliminary impressions and general observations. The visit was concluded with a development conversation, in which the panel and the programmes discussed various development routes for the programmes. The result of this conversation is summarized in a separate report.

Report

After the site visit, the secretary wrote a draft report based on the assessment panel's findings. Subsequently, he sent it to the assessment panel and the project coordinator for feedback. After processing the panel members' feedback, the coordinator sent the draft report to the university in order to have it checked for factual irregularities. The secretary discussed the ensuing comments with the panel's chair and adapted the report accordingly before its finalisation.

Decision rules

The panel used the definitions from the NVAO's Assessment framework for limited programme assessments to assess the six standards in the joint NVAO-EAPAA framework. To determine the score for the programme as a whole, the decision rules of the NVAO's Assessment framework for limited programme assessments were applied to the scores for Standard 1 to 4.

Generic quality

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

Unsatisfactory

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

Satisfactory

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

Good

The programme systematically surpasses the current generic quality standards.

Excellent

The programme systematically well surpasses the current generic quality standards and is regarded as an international example.

SUMMARY JUDGEMENT

This evaluation concerns two Public Administration and Organisation Science programmes offered by the Utrecht University School of Governance: a three-year full-time BSc programme and a one-year MSc programme, which consists of seven tracks. Based on the materials and the interviews on site, the panel has come to an appreciation of the quality of both programmes, which is in part identical and in part specific.

Bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science

The panel considers that the intended learning outcomes are adequate in terms of content (public administration / organization science), orientation (academic) and level (bachelor's); they are in line with the requirements of the domain-specific reference framework and reflect its specificity as a broad multidisciplinary and research based education programme. However, the panel considers that the distinctive character of the programme could have been evidenced even better by mapping the various learning objectives, as listed in the course descriptions, onto the separate dimensions of knowledge and cognitive processes, as in the revised Bloom classification.

The teaching and learning environment of the bachelor's programme is good, in the sense that its components systematically exceed the basic quality requirements: the programme is consistent, the courses coherent, the didactic concept highly befitting, the staff properly qualified and the facilities conducive to organising this small-scale, motivating and intensive programme. The panel appreciates in particular the attention students receive – and acknowledge with enthusiasm – to making their bachelor's study at the UGS 'community' an interesting and valuable experience.

The programme has an adequate assessment system, which is regularly reviewed and enhanced. Individual tests are valid, reliable and transparent, and students get feedback on assessments. Notwithstanding its overall positive impression of the way assessment is organised at USG, the panel does recommend both programmes to develop an assessment plan. Thesis assessment is organised properly, although there is room for improvement: the panel agrees generally with the scores given and also appreciates the quality of the feedback that is provided in a majority of evaluation forms to underpin this score; however, the independence of the second reader, the calibration of the scores and the systematic feedback on each thesis require attention. The panel thinks highly of the expertise and operational capacity of the Board of Examiners and the Testing Committee. It encourages both bodies to keep on monitoring the quality of the theses and to develop a procedure clarifying the organisation of thesis supervision and assessment which guarantees the independence of the second reviewer.

Based on its review of a sample of theses, the panel concludes that the intended learning outcomes are eventually achieved at the end of the curriculum. The panel thinks highly of the approach the programmes take in addressing the employability of both students as an integral part of the curriculum.

The panel appreciates the different ways in which students can – and do – voice their opinion on the quality of the courses and the curriculum. The internal quality assurance of the educational process is catered for adequately, both formally and informally. There are, moreover, regular informal contacts with external stakeholders such as alumni and employers. Nonetheless, the panel sees room for a more comprehensive and systematic involvement of employers (including alumni) through a work-field advisory committee. The programme has taken on board the findings from previous external reviews, which resulted in curricula that have undergone considerable modifications, which all seem for the better.

The panel considers that diversity is on the radar of the department and the programme. It welcomes the initiatives taken so far on this issue and encourages all responsible bodies to step up their efforts. Currently, there is a good gender balance amongst students in the bachelor's programme, a balance which has been maintained over a number of recent cohorts, and amongst staff (except in the highest



academic positions). However, the panel suggests that the programme explores and acts upon further opportunities to increase the diversity in the curriculum, among students and among staff. In this regard, the department and the programme should back up their policies and actions plans with data on the composition of the student and staff body, across all dimensions of diversity, in order to have a baseline, to set targets for the future, and to monitor the progress at regular intervals.

Master's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science

The intended learning outcomes of the master's programme adequate in terms of content, orientation and level, and comply with the PAGO domain framework. However, the particular strength of the programme – its breadth – is not reflected sufficiently in the intended learning outcomes and, according to the panel, could be sharpened to do justice to the individual track 'flavours'.

The teaching and learning environment of the programme has many positive elements: the didactic concept, staff and facilities are of good quality, the selection and intake are organised meticulously, and students are well prepared for professional life after graduation. While the current structure of the programme offers sufficient quality to all students and in all tracks, there is room for improvement in the set-up of the programme (tracks). In the view of the panel, the department and the programme should decide whether to turn this programme into one master's degree with seven specialisations or to offer seven individual programmes with some commonalities. Moreover, the programme should look into the set of research skills each student should certainly have upon graduation, as this now seems to differ per track.

The programme has an adequate assessment system, which is regularly reviewed and enhanced. Individual tests are valid, reliable and transparent, and students get feedback on assessments. Notwithstanding its overall positive impression of the way assessment is organised at USG, the panel does recommend both programmes to develop an assessment plan. Thesis assessment is organised properly, although there is room for improvement: the panel agrees generally with the scores given and also appreciates the quality of the feedback that is provided in a majority of evaluation forms to underpin this score; however, the independence of the second reader, the calibration of the scores and the systematic feedback on each thesis require attention. The panel thinks highly of the expertise and operational capacity of the Board of Examiners and the Testing Committee. It encourages both bodies to keep on monitoring the quality of the theses and to develop a procedure clarifying the organisation of thesis supervision and assessment which guarantees the independence of the second reviewer.

Based on its review of a sample of theses, the panel concludes that the intended learning outcomes are eventually achieved at the end of the curriculum. Nevertheless, the findings from the master's thesis review indicate that the programme needs to tighten its assessment procedures to ensure calibration of theses which assessors consider to be of minimum quality. As regards the employment of graduates, the panel considers that upon graduation students tend to find a job that is in line with the level and domain of their studies. The panel thinks highly of the approach the programmes take in addressing the employability of both bachelor's and master's students as an integral part of the curriculum.

The panel appreciates the different ways in which students can – and do – voice their opinion on the quality of the courses and the curriculum. The internal quality assurance of the educational process is catered for adequately, both formally and informally. There are, moreover, regular informal contacts with external stakeholders such as alumni and employers. Nonetheless, the panel sees room for a more comprehensive and systematic involvement of employers (including alumni) through a work-field advisory committee. The programme has taken on board the findings from previous external reviews, which resulted in curricula that have undergone considerable modifications, which all seem for the better.

The panel considers that diversity is on the radar of the department and the programme. It welcomes the initiatives taken so far on this issue and encourages all responsible bodies to step up their efforts.

Currently, there is a good gender balance amongst students in most of the master's programme tracks, although this is not the case in all tracks, and amongst staff (except in the highest academic positions). However, the panel suggests that the programme explores and acts upon further opportunities to increase the diversity in the curriculum, among students and among staff. Moreover, the department and the programme should back up their policies and actions plans with data on the composition of the student and staff body, across all dimensions of diversity, in order to have a baseline, to set targets for the future, and to monitor the progress at regular intervals.

In sum, the panel considers that both bachelor's and master's programmes are highly interesting and up to standard on all accounts, hence its overall positive conclusion. Because the bachelor's programme is clearly delivering on all aspects of the teaching and learning environment, which is a distinctive feature of the department, the panel considers this standard to be good.

The panel assesses the standards from the *Assessment framework for limited programme assessments* in the following way:

Bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science

Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes	satisfactory
Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment	good
Standard 3: Student assessment	satisfactory
Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes	satisfactory
Standard 5: External input	satisfactory
Standard 6: Diversity	satisfactory
General conclusion	satisfactory

Master's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science (both full-time and dual)

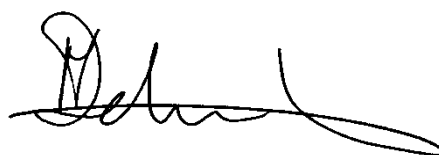
Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes	satisfactory
Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment	satisfactory
Standard 3: Student assessment	satisfactory
Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes	satisfactory
Standard 5: External input	satisfactory
Standard 6: Diversity	satisfactory
General conclusion	satisfactory

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

Date: 09-04-2018



Prof. Tony Bovaird



Mark Delmartino MA



DESCRIPTION OF THE STANDARDS FROM THE JOINT NVAO-EAPAA ACCREDITATION FRAMEWORK

Organisational context

The bachelor's and master's programmes under review are offered by the Utrecht University School of Governance (USG), a department within the Faculty of Law, Economics and Governance. All degree programmes at USG are based on small-scale, intensive and activating education featuring selective admissions. Education is informed by the research conducted in the department and connected to the professional domain, notably through the consultancy and research assignments of USG Consultancy. Both programmes on public administration and organisation science (PAOS) exist for a considerable time and have been re-accredited before.

Given the prominence of its educational approach, the bachelor's programme was awarded the Specific Feature small-scale and intensive education in 2014. This allows the programme to select every year a group of up to 93 first-year students. In addition to the regular programme assessment, the panel also performed a practical assessment, which is reported in a separate document, to verify if the specific small-scale intensive character of the bachelor's programme can be reaffirmed.

The master's programme comprises seven tracks, which provide in-depth elaborations on specific topics within the domain of public administration and organisation science. Five tracks are organised as 'regular' one-year full-time programmes taught in Dutch; the track European Governance is taught in English and constitutes the second year of a two-year Double Degree programme; students start the degree in Brno, Konstanz or Dublin and upon completing the second year in Utrecht, receive two master's degrees. The track Sports Policy and Sports Management is a part-time two-year dual programme where students combine work experience and education. The panel has met representatives from all tracks but will report mainly on its appreciation of the overall master's programme. Nonetheless, where relevant, reference will be made to individual tracks.

Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes

The intended learning outcomes of the programme have been detailed with regard to content, level and orientation; they meet international requirements. As for level and orientation (bachelor's or master's; professional or academic), the intended learning outcomes fit into the Dutch qualifications framework. In addition, they tie in with the international perspective of the requirements currently set by the professional field and the discipline with regard to the contents of the programme. Insofar as is applicable, the intended learning outcomes are in accordance with relevant legislation and regulations. The programme should clearly state its educational philosophy in reaching these outcomes and identify a clear mission.

Findings

To assess the objectives of the degree programmes, the panel studied the domain-specific reference framework (Appendix 2) and the intended learning outcomes (Appendix 3) of both bachelor's and master's programmes.

The design and organisation of both programmes revolve around the mission of USG: to make a substantial contribution to the organisation and governance of society and the creation of societal value. The research and programmes of the department focus on the management and organisation of public issues as they interact with political and social developments. Students are educated to become motivated people who are able to use their academic knowledge to make a useful contribution to the solution of public issues and the organisation of society.

Compared to other public administration programmes in the Netherlands, the *bachelor's programme* PAOS at Utrecht university emphasises explicitly in its objectives and learning outcomes that it brings students a broad multidisciplinary perspective on public administration and organisation, a variety of



science-philosophical research approaches and methods, the ability to communicate at academic level in a professional environment, and the development of a professional attitude.

The *master's programme* PAOS stands out because of the number of tracks (7), which reflect the focal areas of USG's research programmes, and their link to the department's own consultancy practice and contract-funding research. Each track is connected to several chairs and with the expertise and priorities of researchers and lecturers in the department. The panel learned that over the past few years tracks have been added or adjusted; similarly, tracks can be changed or replaced if developments in the field of study and in the international professional practice so require. Based on the materials, the panel wondered to what extent this is one master's programme with seven tracks or rather seven different programmes grouped under one CROHO-number. During the discussions, programme management, staff and students referred systematically to seven programmes rather than to one programme with seven tracks. In the view of the panel, the programme would benefit from a more explicit positioning as either one or seven programmes, as it now seems to 'fall in between stools', which does not do justice to the intrinsic quality of the programme (tracks).

The panel observed that the intended learning outcomes of both programmes are organised along three inter-related learning pathways: substance of public administration and organisation of public issues; research into public administration and organisation of public issues; and professional conduct in public administration and organisation of public issues.

In the case of the *bachelor's programme*, students are trained towards achieving 18 learning outcomes, which have been formulated in an insightful way. The competencies are aligned with the PAGO domain-specific reference framework and with the five Dublin Descriptors for bachelor's programmes. They cover substance, research, professional skills and professional attitudes. The panel learned during the visit that the learning outcomes – and notably their connection to the three learning pathways – have been updated recently to reflect the development of the programme structure. The panel was also informed that the revised learning outcomes enable students to progress better from lower order (knowledge) to higher order (analysis, evaluation) cognitive skills. Other recent programme innovations which were translated into the learning outcomes are its attention to cross-border international issues and to diversity.

Based on the same three learning pathways, *master's programme* students have to achieve 21 learning outcomes that build further on the educational aims of the bachelor's programme. The panel observed that both the master's programme as a whole and the seven individual tracks cover all different knowledge areas of the PAGO domain specific reference framework: three tracks are oriented towards the domain of governance, while four other tracks rather focus on organisational questions of public issues. The formulation of the outcomes reflects the proper –higher – level of cognitive skills that one can expect of a master's student, such as application of knowledge, problem analysis and solution, judgements based on incomplete information. While the panel thinks highly of the breadth of the programme, it was surprised to see that the intended learning outcomes are identical across all tracks and that each track realises these objectives in its own way through individual track-specific curricula. Currently, there is only one learning outcome (Su1) which hints at the master's programme having several 'core areas'. Following the discussion on site, the panel thinks that the intended learning outcomes in their formulation could be more explicit in highlighting the distinctive nature of the individual tracks.

The panel also gathered from the lively and interesting discussions with staff that they pay particular attention to ensuring that bachelor's and master's students acquire meta-cognitive skills. In order to do justice to this part of the programme, the panel thinks that both programmes could specify more clearly in their respective intended learning outcomes what higher learning cognitive skills students are expected to achieve. For example, an extra table to Appendix 2, listing learning objectives against the revised Bloom taxonomy would be one way to achieve this.

Both programmes are underpinned by a similar educational philosophy, which is based on small-scale, intensive and activating education: students work in small groups, there is frequent contact between lecturers and students, staff and services are accessible, and teaching happens mainly in workshops where students are challenged to develop, discuss and apply knowledge and insights on the basis of practical assignments and projects. Students and staff indicated to the panel that they appreciate this approach. It is important to emphasise that this appreciation is expressed by both bachelor's and master's students: while the bachelor's programme with its Distinctive Feature small-scale and intensive education has formalized its educational model, the master's students confirmed that they were taught in small groups and in an activating way by accessible teachers. Furthermore, the panel observed during the guided tour of the premises that the USG-building is conducive to this type of education, as all courses take place within one and the same three-story building, which facilitates small-scale teaching and informal encounters.

Considerations

The panel considers that the intended learning outcomes of the *bachelor's programme* are adequate in terms of content (public administration / organization science), orientation (academic) and level (bachelor's). They are in line with the requirements of the domain-specific reference framework and reflect its specificity as a broad multidisciplinary and research based education programme with particular attention to communication and professional conduct.

However, the way the intended learning outcomes are currently formulated can be improved. In the view of the panel, while the bachelor's programme delivers fully on its intended learning outcomes, the distinctive character of the programme could be evidenced even better. In particular it would be helpful to map the various learning objectives, as listed in the course descriptions, onto the separate dimensions of knowledge and cognitive processes, as in the revised Bloom classification. A third table, similar to Tables 1 and 2 in Appendix 2, would be one way to accomplish this.

Similar considerations apply to the *master's programme*, which in the view of the panel features adequate intended learning outcomes in terms of content, orientation and level that comply with the PAGO domain framework. However, the particular strength of the programme – its breadth – is not reflected sufficiently in the intended learning outcomes: irrespective of whether this is one programme with seven tracks or seven different programmes, the intended learning outcomes could be sharpened to do justice to the individual track flavours. Furthermore, there is room for incorporating more explicitly the programme's attention to higher order cognitive skills.

Conclusion

The panel assesses Standard 1, Intended learning outcomes:
for the Bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science as satisfactory
for the Master's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science as satisfactory

Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment

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

Findings

To assess the content and structure of the programmes, the panel studied the curricula (Appendix 4) and the content of several core courses (Appendix 6) of both bachelor's and master's programmes.



2.1 Core components

The core curriculum provides a thorough teaching of the basic concepts, theories, methods and history (classics) of Public Administration on the level of the programme (bachelor's or master's).

The curriculum of the *bachelor's programme* comprises of four types of courses: domain-specific disciplines such as public governance and organisational sciences, supportive disciplines such as constitutional and administrative law and sociology, methodology courses such as quantitative and qualitative enquiry, and electives. The panel observed that the structure of the curriculum is coherent and that the intended learning outcomes are translated adequately in the different components and the individual courses of the programme. In order to reach the objectives connected to professional conduct, the programme pays particular attention to academic, social and professional skills. The panel learned that this skills training is often provided by course lecturers as part of the regular domain specific courses. Students indicated that they appreciate the skills training and its immediate relevance as they can practice the newly acquired skills in the disciplinary courses.

The *master's programme* in public administration and organisation science actually consists of seven separate tracks:

- Public Governance deals with addressing and organising societal issues and the manner in which public interests and responsibilities are shaped within a pluralist and changing society;
- Communication, Policy and Management focuses on the use of communication for cooperation between organisations and their internal and external stakeholders;
- European Governance concentrates on public issues with European society, including the regulation of financial markets and coping with immigration;
- Organisation, Change and Management focuses on the theory and practice of issues relating to the management of change in organisations with a public function;
- Public Management pertains to how professionals, professional organisations and social service providers can yield public value within the context of care, justice, education or other sectors.
- Sports Policy and Sports Management focuses on the organisation of the complex and changing world of sports, and on the organisational and policy issues that are relevant in this context;
- Strategic Human Resource Management is oriented towards the development of HRM and of knowledge, skills and competencies relating to management.

Each track offers three types of courses, in line with the three learning pathways: substance, research, and skills (professional conduct) courses. Five tracks have a similar curriculum structure, featuring three substantive courses, two academic and professional skills courses and a research seminar that prepares students for the master's thesis. The English-language European Governance track leads to a Double Degree (students have already studied one year in Brno, Konstanz or Dublin before moving to Utrecht). At USG they have one semester of substantive courses and one semester focusing on research, including a research seminar, a research internship and the master's thesis. The Sports Policy and Sports Management track is offered as a part-time two year programme in which the substantive link between specialised topics and the administrative and societal context is drawn in its own way, addressing specific topics from within the context of governmental policy and the societal value of sports and featuring an extensive internship period. The panel learned that, in this track, until now the students have performed, in addition to their studies, a part-time two-year internship in a sports sector organisation. Following the recommendation of the previous accreditation panel, the programme has revised this set-up because it does not constitute a dual programme in the legal sense. As of September 2019, the current master's programme track will be converted into an independent 1.5 year programme with the internship of 30 EC being fully integrated in the 90 EC programme. The panel welcomes this development, as the programme will be able to safeguard the quality of the entire curriculum, including the internship period.

Having studied the materials and having listened to the interviewees, the panel wonders where the balance is between the common elements that unite the tracks and the specificities of each individual track. Following from this question, to what extent is this one master's programme (on paper) or rather seven individual programmes? The latter seems more the case in reality. In the view of the

panel, the USG and the master's programme should consider how and in which direction they want to develop this programme, as the current set-up is not optimal. Should the future direction bring all tracks under one umbrella, then the commonalities of the courses can and should be strengthened, including for instance a common core course and professional skills courses (which would imply particularly large scale changes for the European Governance track). If, however, the programme tracks are to develop into self-standing programmes, then there is room for highlighting the specific features of each track/programme. Moreover, the overall learning pathways could then be translated into learning outcomes (at track, then programme level) and learning goals (at course level) that reflect the specificity of the seven respective curricula.

2.2 Other components and specialisations

The programme clearly defines its objectives for additional work and the rationale for the objectives, and explains how the curriculum is designed to achieve these objectives. The statement of objectives includes any programme specialisation or concentration and the main categories of students to be served (e.g. full-time, part-time).

Throughout the three-year *bachelor's programme*, students can tailor their curriculum to achieve a total of 60 EC. This includes: one elective course in year 2, a minor of 30 EC in the fifth semester, and a specialisation in the graduation phase of 22.5 EC. Students mentioned that they see the increase in electives as a positive development, notably the minor element which allows them to study abroad or focus on a specific topic within or outside the realm of PAOS. The graduation phase consists of a research seminar and a thesis in one of the research themes of the department, which coincide with the specialisation tracks offered in the master programme.

The panel observed that the content of the curriculum is also connected to extra-curricular activities. Bachelor's students can take additional honours courses, which are offered by the PAOS Academy and allow students to experiment and innovate. Given the distinctive character of the bachelor's programme, all students are eligible to enrol for the honours component. Students appreciate that they have room for self-development in this honours programme and can compose their own customised programme. While the panel welcomes the efforts of the programme to offer students a very broad choice of invariably interesting courses, it also understood from the course materials and the interviews that this choice is causing stress to students who are often pushing each other to do more and more. In the view of the panel, the programme may want to monitor that all students are participating and that they do so without undue pressures upon them.

The panel learned that the curriculum does not offer any formal electives, but acknowledges that the *master's programme* in itself consists of seven specialisations. Moreover, students have the opportunity to tailor the study programme to their individual needs and interests. First of all, the social and professional skills component (15 EC) consists of eleven courses from which students can choose two. Secondly, the graduation research phase allows students to select a research topic, a research organisation and a suitable research strategy. Students indicated during the visit that they very much appreciate the social and professional skills; alumni moreover mentioned that it was in particular this component that sets them apart from public administration graduates at other universities. The European Governance students from their side indicated that they pay particular attention to choosing their research internship organisation as this proves often to be the first stepping stone towards the job market once they have graduated. Students in the Sports Policy and Sports Management track choose their own organisation where they will work for two or three days per week.

Based on the materials and the discussions, the panel wondered to what extent all students who graduate from the master's programme have acquired the same set of research skills. In the current set-up of the programme, research skills are taught mainly in the research seminar, which is specific to each track and prepares students for the track-specific thesis. While each student will have acquired an adequate set of research skills in the domain of the track – and the quality of the theses indicate that this is the case – the panel is not sure that each PAOS master's graduate has the



necessary qualitative and quantitative methodological skills the professional field is expecting from a young professional who has been educated to master's level and has graduated from a public administration programme in the Netherlands. The panel suggests therefore that the programme should decide on a common package of research skills that each student should acquire and should offer this package before students move on to the thesis preparation phase with its track-specific research seminar.

2.3 Multi-disciplinarity

The courses taken to fulfil the core curriculum components provide research methods, concepts and theories from the disciplines of economics, law, political science, sociology, public finances, informatisation, and public management as well as the relationship between these fields.

In the compulsory major component of the *bachelor's programme*, students learn about the various core disciplines which focus on the topic of public administration and organisation of public issues. Moreover, the supportive discipline courses look at the role of topics such as law and economics in PAOS and on the contribution they make to the analysis of public issues. The panel learned, moreover, that in several methodological courses, the knowledge of the methodology is connected to the application of the method in the domain of PAOS. The panel found that all relevant disciplines are addressed in the core curriculum of the bachelor's programme, taking up a considerable number of credits.

The *master's programme* offers a broad spectrum of theoretical approaches and disciplines; in every track the object of study is examined from a variety of perspectives. In this regard, various disciplines are supportive: sociology, psychology, anthropology, linguistics, law, political science and economics. The complex character of contemporary social issues makes examination from a variety of disciplinary and social perspectives a vital part of the education. This, in turn, requires the ability to be innovative and open-minded, also with regard to methodology. The panel observed that in the department, researchers use a broad repertoire of qualitative and quantitative methods - such as experimental research, design thinking and arts-based research - which they incorporate in the master's curriculum. By doing so, the three learning pathways - knowledge, research and professional conduct - are integrated in the thesis preparation phase of the master's programme.

Furthermore, the panel learned that the European Governance track has an explicitly interdisciplinary character, as it connects insights from economics, law and governance. Students mentioned that in their courses they compare insights and work on concrete issues from the different perspectives of economics, law and public administration.

2.4 Length

The programmed curriculum length is in line with the objectives of the programme and in accordance with the accreditation category that is applied for.

The panel confirms, based on the information materials and the discussion on site, that the *bachelor's programme* is a three-year full-time programme of 180 EC. All tracks of the *master's programme* consist of 60 EC; five tracks are delivered as a one-year full-time programme. The track European Governance is part of a double degree programme with the Utrecht part taking up 60 EC. The track Sports Policy and Sports Management is a part-time programme spread over two years in which students combine education with work experience.

2.5 Relationship to practice and internships

The programme provides adequate training of practical skills in correspondence with the mission and the programme objectives. Therefore it has adequate links to the public administration profession.

The panel observed that - in line with the programme objective of enabling students to develop a professional attitude and communicate in a professional environment - all students on the *bachelor's*

programme are exposed to professional practice. In addition to the core programme with social and professional skills, several courses integrate real-life case studies, simulations and guest speakers. Students can also do a research internship as an elective. Moreover, extra-curricular activities offered by the university, the faculty or the study association are geared towards the orientation of students to the labour market. Students indicated that they appreciate the efforts of the programme to prepare them for their future professional career both in the courses and as part of the extra-curricular offer.

The *master's programme* prepares students in various ways for practice. Already during the admission interview, students are asked what their ambitions are upon completion of the programme, and these ambitions are revisited during the individual progress reviews with the thesis supervisor. Courses, moreover, feature guest speakers, case studies and working visits to governmental and public sector organisations. Many students conduct research in the professional field during the thesis preparation phase.

The panel learned, moreover, that two tracks pay particular attention to practical experience as part of the curriculum: students in the Sports Policy and Sports Management track acquire work experience in a sport-related organisation from the very start of the programme; the European Governance track has a compulsory internship where students combine research with work experience. During the programme, all students also participate in specific job-market activities such as training sessions for assessments or for writing application letters. Several interviewees provided interesting examples of how the programme enabled them to get a feeling for the 'real working life out there'. While there is some support from the programme and the department for these activities, especially in two of the tracks, the panel thinks that there could be support for all students in order to provide all master's students with such an interesting experience.

2.6 Structure and didactics of the programme

The programme is coherent in its contents. The didactic concepts are in line with the aims and objectives of the programme. The teaching methods correspond to the didactic philosophy of the programme. The programme is 'doable' in the formal time foreseen for the programme in the respective years.

The panel observed that small-scale, motivating and intensive teaching is indeed a distinctive feature of the educational philosophy in both bachelor's and master's programmes. An important element in this philosophy is the creation of a close academic community of staff, students and services. All interviewees confirmed that there is a community feeling and that this community is an important value added of the programmes, notably the three-year bachelor's programme. The panel observed in the discussions the enthusiasm of both students and staff for this approach and their commitment to the programme. The facilities moreover contribute to this community feeling. Some master's students who had done their bachelor's degree elsewhere indicated that joining the USG community at a later moment was not easy, but feasible if you put in sufficient effort.

The *bachelor's programme* includes few plenary lectures. Most core courses are organised in study groups (30 participants) or half study groups (15 students). In electives and specialisation courses the maximum group size is around 25 students; tutorials in the graduation research phase usually have five students. The panel learned that the small group size in combination with the fact that lecturers are expected to have a considerable teaching load leads to substantial interaction among students and between lecturers and students. Furthermore, the programme uses activating teaching methods: students receive a specific task which challenges them to develop and apply knowledge and insights on the basis of practical assignments and projects. When discussing literature, students provide a lot of input and give presentations or organise sessions themselves.

Students indicated to the panel that the individual courses are feasible and the number of contact hours appropriate. While the drop-out rate is quite low, the panel observed that bachelor's students face difficulties in graduating on time. This topic was discussed at length during the visit: given the broad choice of interesting curricular and extra-curricular courses, students often prefer to obtain



more credits than needed, combine study with an extra-curricular internship or board year, or plan their thesis in connection with a research internship. The panel noticed that these practices are not discouraged and in fact align nicely with the cherished principle of 'Bildung' at USG. Nonetheless, the panel encourages the programme to continue, and even step up, its current efforts in managing student expectations and promoting timely graduation.

Teaching in the *master's programme* takes place in fixed groups of no more than 25 students, which allows students to form learning communities around each master's track in the department. Students on all tracks have an average of 12 contact hours per week, a combination of tutorials, individual instruction and feedback, sub-groups, tutor groups and working visits. Students are challenged to make active contributions to education. Moreover, they are expected to prepare well for the sessions through presentations and questions.

The panel observed that the Perikles study association plays an important role in the formation of the academic community in the department. It is closely involved in the programme activities but is also a distinct autonomous entity within USG. The panel gathered from the materials and interviews that Perikles has a more profound impact on bachelor's students, but goes to some lengths to appeal to master's students, too. The association organises lectures, career days, charitable activities, debates and symposia. The department provides teaching areas and helps to fund their activities. The panel noticed with approval that the Directors of Education always refer to Perikles in their presentations and insist that visitors to USG such as this panel should meet representatives during their stay.

2.7 Admission of students

Admission goals, admission policy and admission standards, including academic prerequisites, are in line with the mission and programme objectives. They are clearly and publicly stated, specifying any differences for categories of students.

In accordance with the Distinctive Feature Small-scale and intensive education, the *bachelor's programme* is entitled to select students that best fit the programme. According to the Teaching and Examination Regulations, the programme admits up to 93 students per year. The panel learned that about 300 students apply and that the programme does not ask for a higher tuition fee, although it is entitled to do so. The panel observed, moreover, that the programme has developed a comprehensive admission procedure, which is described extensively in the Self-Evaluation Report: selection tools include a written thematic interview, a profile test, a recommendation, marks and an interview.

The *master's programme* is also a selective and small-scale programme and the admission is set up in such a way that it ensures an optimal match between student and programme. Each track has a maximum inflow of 25 students. The formal admission requirements and procedures are documented in the Education and Examination Regulations. Once the admission committee has determined that the applicant meets the basic requirements, the student participates in the selection procedure. Applicants submit a cover letter, a recommendation, a CV and a transcript of their bachelor's programme. This package is then discussed during an interview, for which the selection committee uses a standardised assessment form. The panel gathered from the materials and the discussion on site that this selection procedure is lengthy and comprehensive, but also effective as it allows the programme to select from a considerable number of applicants those students that fit the programme. The selection process itself is evaluated regularly, and adjusted where necessary.

Interviewees indicated that there is no automatic acceptance of PAOS bachelor's students - they also have to pass the admission and selection procedure. Bachelor's students mentioned that they were aware of the stringent conditions and sometimes thought they were not sufficiently prepared for a specific master's track and therefore followed additional courses during the bachelor's programme. The panel invites both bachelor's and master's programmes to look into this matter and to

communicate clearly which bachelor's courses are essential for students to stand a chance of selection in the respective selection processes, and which courses are 'nice-to-have' but not essential.

2.8 Intake

The structure, contents and the didactics of the programme are in line with the qualifications of the students that enter into the programme.

The admission procedure for the *bachelor's programme* is set up in such a way that the main criterion for selection is the extent to which a candidate is likely to complete the programme successfully. As a result, incoming students are rather homogeneous in terms of their capacity to succeed in the programme. Moreover, the educational philosophy with its small-scale education, intensive teaching and direct contacts with staff contributes to students levelling up quite quickly, if this is at all needed. Hence, the drop-out rate is fairly low.

A similar approach is adopted in the *master's programme* with students being selected in view of their match with their chosen programme track. Deficiencies at the start of the tracks, if any, can be repaired in the initial course in period 1 which establishes how the core of the particular track relates to the domain of PAOS. The panel observed that also in the master's programme, the drop-out is fairly low.

2.9 Faculty qualifications

A substantial percentage of the professional faculty nucleus actively involved in the programme holds an earned doctorate or other equivalent terminal academic degree in their field. Any faculty lacking the terminal degree must have a record of sufficient professional or academic experience directly relevant to their assigned responsibilities. The field of expertise and experience of the faculty reflects the needed expertise to deliver the programme as intended. All faculty with teaching assignments have at least proven basic educational skills. The educational skills are adapted to the didactics of the programme and its components. Where practitioners teach courses, there is satisfactory evidence of the quality of their academic qualifications, professional experience and teaching ability.

Staff have multiple roles – lecturer, supervisor, trainer - in helping students to achieve the programme objectives. The panel learned that almost all lecturers combine teaching and research and that education and teaching within USG benefits from the lecturers' involvement in the research programme Public Matters and the research lines Public Governance and Management and Organisation and Management. As several lecturers have both research (including contract research) and theoretical expertise, students get acquainted from the very beginning of the programme with working practices in the professional field. Moreover, the panel observed in the extensive staff overview indicating individual specialist disciplines, methodological expertise and societal topics that most lecturers have in addition to a PhD also a university teaching qualification (UTQ).

According to the overview in the Self-Evaluation Report, USG staff on the *bachelor's programme* dedicate 10.8 FTE to education, which results in a staff-student ratio of 1:25 when counting a total student number of 275. Recently several new staff were hired: in the discussions the panel felt that the combination of existing and new lecturers is working out nicely. Students, who had been somewhat critical about staffing in the Self-Evaluation Report, mentioned to the panel that this year, the newcomers have integrated well into the staff team; hence, students are again satisfied with the quality of the staff, both content-wise and in terms of didactics, as well as with their availability and their proximity in the building. The panel observed that several but not all full professors are teaching in the bachelor's programme. Given the intensive form of education and the explicit link between research and teaching, the programme may want to involve even more professors in teaching at undergraduate level.

USG staff on the *master's programme* dedicate 7.9 FTE to education, which amounts to a staff-student ratio of 1:17 when counting an average student number of 165. Based on the discussions



on site, the panel gathers that there is sufficient staff to teach the programme and its different tracks. Students are satisfied with the quality of the staff and with their availability. They particularly appreciate that staff are sharing their contacts when students need support in their thesis preparation phase.

Considerations

The panel considers that the teaching and learning environment of the *bachelor's programme* is good, in the sense that its components systematically exceed the basic quality requirements: the programme is consistent, the courses coherent, the didactic concept highly befitting, the staff properly qualified and the facilities conducive to promoting the organisation of this small-scale, motivating and intensive programme. While the panel will report on the elements of the Distinctive Feature Small-scale and intensive education in a separate document, it appreciates the attention students receive – and acknowledge with enthusiasm – to making their bachelor's study an interesting and valuable experience.

In as far as the *master's programme* is concerned, the panel considers that the didactic concept, the staff and the facilities are of good quality; the selection and intake are organised meticulously and students are well prepared for professional life after graduation. While the panel is convinced that the current structure of the programme offers sufficient quality to all students and in all tracks, there is room for improvement, notably in the set-up of the programme (tracks). In the view of the panel, the current structure is sub-optimal because the department and the programme have not clearly decided on being either one master's programme with seven specialisation / graduation tracks or, alternatively, offering seven individual programmes with some commonalities across programmes. Moreover, the panel wonders to what extent all students who graduate from the master's programme in the current set-up have acquired the same set of research skills. It therefore suggests that the programme decides on a common package of research skills offer this package before students move on to the thesis preparation phase with its track-specific research seminar.

Conclusion

The panel assesses standard 2, Teaching-learning environment:
for the bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science as 'good'
for the master's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science as 'satisfactory'

Standard 3: Assessment

The programme has an adequate assessment system in place. The tests and assessments are valid, reliable and transparent to the students. The programme's examining board safeguards the quality of the interim and final tests administered.

Findings

To assess the quality, validity and transparency of assessment within the two programmes, the panel considered the assessment policies, the assessment of the theses and the functioning of the Board of Examiners.

Based on the description in the Self-Evaluation Reports and the sample of tests consulted on site, the panel thinks that the assessment system is fine. In recent years, both bachelor's and master's programmes have invested in testing practices and in strengthening the principles underlying assessment. Moreover, the panel has come across a wide variety of assessment methods that include proper feedback to students. The panel observed that both programmes pay sufficient attention to ensuring that assessments are valid and reliable. Also, students indicated that they are properly informed about the assessment requirements. Given the attention of both programmes to assessment, the panel was surprised to notice that there is no written assessment plan (policy) describing at the level of the programme how the different assessment methods are used and how – certainly in the bachelor's programme – testing proceeds from simple to more complex forms of assessment. In the view of the panel, this gap is relatively easy to fill considering the current

attention to assessment within the programmes. Putting an assessment plan in writing will bring additional insights to the testing practices in the respective bachelor's and master's programmes.

The USG department has one Board of Examiners for all its degree programmes, as well as a Testing Committee that functions as a subcommittee of the Board of Examiners. Over the years the legal position and tasks of the Board of Examiners has changed significantly. Members have been trained by the university to perform their tasks adequately and there is regular cooperation between examination boards within the Faculty and across the university. From the discussion on site with representatives of both Board and Committee, the panel gathered that these members possess the proper capacity and expertise to perform all tasks according to the requirements set by Dutch law. The panel also learned that members of the Testing Committee are supporting lecturers in developing assessments by designing checklists and issuing recommendations to enhance quality of assessment. Furthermore, the Testing Committee is checking and analysing the testing system at course level.

With regard to thesis assessment, the panel found the situation to be quite similar for both bachelor's and master's theses. In both cases the thesis is evaluated and marked by two graders internal to USG, who report on their evaluation on one evaluation form. The panel has reviewed a sample of 15 bachelor's theses and 21 master's theses (3 per track) which were submitted and accepted in the academic years 2014-2015, 2015-2016 and 2016-2017. The panel observed that each thesis is assessed using an evaluation form with relevant assessment criteria. Although the panel agrees in most cases with the scores given by the assessors, it was not always possible to establish how the graders arrived at the final mark, because there is no direct link between each assessment criterion and the score, nor is there an individual weighting of these criteria or a set of decision rules. Moreover, about one third of the thesis assessors in both samples did not back up their scores in the evaluation form with qualitative feedback. While the programmes emphasised in both written materials and discussion that the assessment of the thesis is done independently by the two graders, the panel did not see evidence of this independence in the evaluation form. The panel learned, however, that the Testing Committee is taking an active stance in guaranteeing the thesis quality: it created an overview of minimum requirements for theses, it examines every year a thesis with a narrow pass mark and its recommendations have led to the introduction recently of a peer review system to enhance calibration and inter-rater consistency.

During several sessions, the panel expressed both its appreciation that the majority of assessors had completed the evaluation form in an insightful way and its concern about the considerable minority of graders who had not underpinned their scores with informative feedback. Moreover, the panel indicated that the evaluation form should better reflect the independent character of the assessment by the two graders. While welcoming the recent initiative of the Directors of Education to organise peer review of theses, the panel also encouraged the Boards of Examiners to do away with the weaknesses (documentation of independent judgements, systematic feedback, link between assessment criteria and score) that still exist in the thesis evaluation process.

Considerations

The panel considers that both bachelor's and master's programmes have an adequate assessment system, which is regularly reviewed and enhanced. Individual tests are valid, reliable and transparent, and students get feedback on assessments. Notwithstanding its overall positive impression of the way assessment is organised at USG, the panel does recommend both programmes to develop an assessment plan. Moreover, the bachelor's programme should indicate how the programme realises its claim that throughout the curriculum courses, there is a transfer from more simple to more complex types of assessment.

The panel considers that in principle the thesis assessment in both bachelor's and master's programme is organised properly, although there is room for improvement in the way the system is operating. From a positive side, the panel appreciates the general adequacy of the scores, as well as the quality of the feedback that is provided in a majority of evaluation forms to underpin this score.



In terms of improvement, the documentation of the independent judgements of the first and second reader, the calibration of the scores and the systematic feedback on each thesis require attention.

The panel thinks highly of the expertise and operational capacity of the Board of Examiners and the Testing Committee. It encourages both bodies to keep on monitoring the quality of the theses and to develop a procedure clarifying the organisation of thesis supervision and assessment and guaranteeing the independence of the second reviewer.

Conclusion

The panel assesses standard 3, Assessment:
for the bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science as satisfactory
for the master's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science as satisfactory

Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes

The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved. The level achieved is demonstrated by interim and final tests, final projects and the performance of graduates in actual practice or in post-graduate programmes.

Findings

To assess the achieved learning outcomes of the programmes, the panel studied a sample of theses for each programme (Appendix 6), and interviewed several alumni and representatives of the work field who employ graduates of the programmes.

The *bachelor's thesis* amounts to 22.5 EC and consists of a research seminar and the final thesis product. Students choose one of the six specialisations of the department (reflecting the tracks of the master's programme) and develop their individual thesis proposal during the research seminar. Upon approval of the research proposal, students conduct their own research and report on the results in the thesis. In order to establish whether students have effectively achieved the learning outcomes, the panel reviewed a sample of 15 theses covering the whole range of scores given. The panel observed that students are producing theses on a broad variety of topics with almost all theses adopting a qualitative research approach. In each case, the panel found that the thesis fulfilled at least the minimum requirements one would expect of a final product of an academic programme at bachelor's level. There were several good quality theses, but also a number of theses which were near the pass / fail divide. In almost all cases the panel agreed to the scores given by the assessors, both in the higher and the lower score ranges.

The *master's thesis* amounts in most cases to 22.5 EC (research seminar and master's thesis); students in the European Governance track combine the thesis with an internship for a total of 30 EC. The research seminar offers group training sessions on the different research phases; supervision is organised in small tutorial groups where students receive individual and organised feedback from lecturers and fellow students. Students indicated that they appreciate the freedom they enjoy in selecting topics and theoretical approaches for their own thesis, as well as the personalised supervision. In order to establish whether students have effectively achieved the learning outcomes, the panel reviewed a sample of 21 theses covering all tracks and the whole range of scores given. In each case, the panel found that the thesis fulfilled at least the minimum requirements one would expect of a final product of an academic programme at master's level. While there were several good quality theses, the panel found other theses to be on the pass / fail divide. In the latter cases, the assessors had spotted the weak quality too. Given this observation, the panel welcomes the quality control mechanisms that were recently instituted (and were not in place at the time the theses under consideration were accepted) and suggests that the programme should develop a procedure to ensure calibration of scores and instil confidence in grading in relation to theses that are near the pass / fail level. While the panel appreciates that supervisors are now peer reviewing a handful of theses after the marking process has finished, it suggests that it is also important that such review should also happen before confirming the thesis score.

Both programmes set out to train students for post-graduate programmes and/or an adequate job on the labour market. The panel learned that about 85% of the *bachelor's graduates* enter a (research) master's programme at USG or elsewhere. Bachelor's students indicated during the discussions that the programme is paying increasing attention to support students in their orientation on the job market.

According to general data collected by the *master's programme*, about 30% of the master's graduates find a job in the area of policy, while another 35% go into management consultancy and 10% stay within academic education/research. Depending on the tracks they followed, graduates also find jobs in employment services, in finance or in the care sector. Asked what makes the USG PAOS graduates stand out from colleagues from other universities, both employers and alumni pointed to their academic, professional and social-communicative skills. Moreover, recent graduates indicated that the practice-based research they conduct in the professional field at the end of their (master's) studies, is a good starting point for entering the labour market.

Considerations

Theses indicate to what extent students have achieved the intended learning outcomes. Having established that each bachelor's thesis studied by the panel fulfils at least the minimum criteria required, the panel concludes that the intended learning outcomes of the *bachelor's programme* are achieved by the end of the curriculum.

In case of the *master's programme*, the panel considers that students achieve the intended learning outcomes by the time of their graduation. However, the findings from the thesis review indicate that the programme needs to tighten its assessment procedures to ensure calibration of theses which assessors consider to be of minimum quality.

Based on the information provided in the reports and the enthusiasm of the alumni during the site visit, the panel considers that upon graduation students tend to find a job that is in line with the level and domain of their studies. The panel thinks highly of the way the programme addresses the employability of both bachelor's and master's students as an integral part of the curriculum. In this regard, the programme achieves in its intentions to train students in professional skills and attitudes (conduct).

Conclusion

The panel assesses standard 4, Achieved learning outcomes: for the bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science as satisfactory for the master's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science as satisfactory

Standard 5: External input

The content of a curriculum and the means of communication and teaching change over time. Flexibility, and the ability to innovate on the basis of adequate information on governance and teaching skills are important features of any educational programme, in order to meet the need of the students and the teaching staff. The programme provides evidence of an adequate process of curriculum development in which all relevant stakeholders are involved.

Findings

5.1 Curriculum development

The programme innovates itself, and uses measures of quality in this process, such as summaries of course evaluations, exit interviews, graduate surveys and related information.

According to the Self-Evaluation Report, both programmes have been under constant development over the past few years. Various stakeholders are involved in adjusting the programme in terms of content, structure and teaching method. The Board of the Undergraduate School (BUS) and the



Board of the Academic School (BAS) are responsible for the quality (assurance) of the bachelor's / master's programme. Students complete evaluations on each individual course, while student representatives have panel meetings every semester with the respective Director of bachelor's / master's Education. Course evaluations and programme adjustments are discussed in the Degree Programme Committee featuring both students and staff. 'Studentbelang', which groups all student board members and representatives, brings topics to the attention of the Directors of Education and the BUS/BAS. Programme coordinators and course coordinators meet informally, as well as formally in teaching staff meetings. Students indicated to the panel that adding up all the different opportunities they have, they play an active role in improving education. Student representatives mentioned they particularly appreciate the panel meetings with the Directors of Education. The panel gathered from the discussions with students that their voices are heard and that programme management is taking into account, as much as possible, their concerns and suggestions.

The panel learned that the professional field also provides input to the discussion on curriculum content. This happens informally during alumni activities or in discussions with organisations that are connected to the programmes as internship provider or as contractor for USG Consultancy. Every two years the department evaluates in a more formal setting the master's programme with alumni, in order to determine whether the knowledge and skills that students gain during the programme have proven useful on the job market and whether innovation is needed. Notwithstanding regular contacts with alumni and the professional field, the programme indicated in the report that more systematic input is required from the various domains in which alumni are active. In this respect, the panel supports the idea of establishing an Advisory Board; several alumni indicated during the site visit that they were certainly interested in being involved more systematically in the development of the PAOS programmes.

5.2 External reviews

The programme provides evidence that the recommendations received during previous reviews (by NVAO, EAPAA or any other (inter)national review body) have led to changes in the content or the organisation of the programme.

Both programmes have reported extensively on the decisions of the previous accreditation visit and, in so far as the bachelor's programme is concerned, of the committee establishing the Distinctive Feature Small-scale and intensive education. The panel observed that these recommendations have been followed-up adequately and resulted in bachelor's and master's curricula that have undergone relevant modifications in recent years. These changes - such as the bachelor's study period abroad or the extended range of academic and professional skills offered in the master's programme - all seem for the better. Furthermore, the internal certification process organised by Utrecht University resulted in some additional adjustments. In case similar internal certification exercises are not envisaged in the future, both programmes should consider organising a mid-term audit involving also external peers. In the view of the panel, especially in the light of its findings on the curriculum structure, such an exercise will be especially appropriate for the master's programme and its tracks.

Considerations

The panel appreciates the different ways in which students can – and do – voice their opinion on the quality of the courses and the curriculum. The internal quality assurance of the educational process is catered for adequately, in the view of the panel, both formally and informally. There are, moreover, regular informal contacts with external stakeholders such as alumni and employers. Although alumni are consulted every two years, the panel does see room for a more comprehensive and systematic involvement of employers (including alumni) through a work-field advisory committee. The panel considers that both programmes have done a good job in taking on board the findings from previous external reviews. The panel recommends the programmes to consider a mid-term review if no external reviews are planned within the next few years.

Conclusion

The panel assesses Standard 5, External input:
for the bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science as satisfactory
for the master's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science as satisfactory

Standard 6: Diversity

Diversity among staff and students is one of the aims of the programme. This reflects the broader appreciation of diversity as a relevant variable in the study and practice of public administration and governance. The programme at least takes steps to increase gender balance among the professional staff of the programme, if necessary.

Findings

The panel learned from the materials and the discussions that diversity is currently an issue at institutional level and for the management of both bachelor's and master's programmes. The department / faculty / university sees it as their responsibility to provide space for students and staff from different backgrounds in programmes that reflect the cultural and geographical diversity in society. The bachelor's programme has looked into the selection process and the diversity of its inflow; USG has been working on increasing the diversity of the staff.

The panel appreciates this attention to diversity but understands that there is still a lot of work to do, both in terms of marketing (towards potential students from disadvantaged sections of the Dutch population in secondary schools) and in terms of curriculum content. In the view of the panel, this is all the more important given the perception which current students hold – and shared with the panel – on the diversity in the programme and on the labour market.

The panel observed, moreover, that the department and the programmes do not have quantitative materials to underpin policies and decisions in all aspects of diversity, although there is valuable data on gender diversity.

In terms of the international composition of students and staff, the programmes have had a distinctively Dutch profile until now, with only one master's track being offered entirely in English. This is likely to change, given the growing attention to internationalisation in the programmes. Moreover, the panel learned during the visit that recently a number of international staff have been hired.

Several interviewees indicated – and the panel supports this view – that both programmes need a few role models whose presence can ensure that both staff and student groups are more diverse in future. Furthermore, the panel advises the department and the programmes to back up their policies and actions plans with data on the composition of the student and staff body, across all aspects of diversity, in order to have a baseline, to set targets for the future, and to monitor the progress at regular intervals.

Considerations

The panel considers that diversity is on the radar of the department and the programmes. It welcomes the initiatives taken so far on this issue, both at programme level and within individual master's tracks, and encourages all responsible bodies to step up their efforts. Currently there is a good gender balance amongst students in most programmes and amongst staff (except in the most senior positions). The panel suggests that the programmes explore and act upon further opportunities to increase the diversity in the curriculum, among students and among staff, preferably with specific goals in mind.



Conclusion

The panel assesses Standard 6, Diversity:
for the bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science as satisfactory
for the master's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science as satisfactory

GENERAL CONCLUSION

For the *bachelor's programme*, the panel assesses five standards as 'satisfactory' and standard 2 as 'good'. According to the decision rules of NVAO's Framework for limited programme assessments applied to standards 1 to 4, the panel assesses the bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science as satisfactory.

For the *master's programme*, the panel assesses all standards as satisfactory. According to the decision rules of NVAO's Framework for limited programme assessments applied to standards 1 to 4, the panel assesses the master's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science as satisfactory.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: CURRICULA VITAE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

Prof. dr. T. (Tony) Bovaird is emeritus professor of the University of Birmingham (United Kingdom). He has previously worked at Aston Business School and Bristol Business School. From 2012 he has held a visiting chair in Meiji University (Japan) and has been visiting professor at various universities and business schools in the UK and abroad, such as the University of Bern, University of Barcelona, the University of Minho (Portugal) and the University of Brasilia. His research covers strategic management of public services, performance measurement in public agencies, evaluation of public management and governance reforms, and user and community co-production of public services. He has carried out research and has been involved in projects for, amongst others, the European Commission, several UK government departments and the Welsh Government. He is on the Governing Council of Local Areas Research and Intelligence Association (LARIA) and has been a member of the Strategy Board of the UK Research Councils' Local Government Initiative (LARCI) and the Local Government Reference Panel of the National Audit Office. He has given keynote speeches for several (inter)national annual conferences. Professor Bovaird is a member of the Editorial Board of the *International Public Management Journal* and co-author of *Public Management and Governance*. Professor Bovaird is a member of the Scientific Advisory Board of the German Institute for Public Administration Research and a non-executive director of Governance International.

Prof. dr. M. (Marleen) Brans (vice-chair) is professor at the KU Leuven Public Governance Institute. At KU Leuven she directs the Master in European Politics and Policies programme. At KU Leuven she directs the Master in European Politics and Policies programme, and the Master in Public Management and Policy. She currently teaches courses at bachelor, master, and advanced master level, such as Design and Strategy of Policy, Evaluation of Policy, Comparative Public Policies in Europe, and Policy Analysis. In the past she has taught other subjects such as Public Administration, Relations Government-Citizens, Governance and Steering, Research Seminar. Her research interests focus on the production and use of policy advice by academics, civil servants, personal advisors, and strategic advisory bodies. Her publications include the Routledge Handbook of Comparative Policy Analysis (edited with Iris Geva-May and Michael Howlett) and Policy Analysis Belgium (edited with David Aubin, Policy Press). She serves as Vice-President of the International Public Policy Association and as Chair of the Accreditation Committee of the European Association for Public Administration Accreditation. She serves on the board of the Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis, Policy and Society and Halduskultuur.

Prof. dr. P.B. (Peter) Sloep is professor emeritus in technology enhanced learning with the Open University of the Netherlands. There, he has been involved in the 'Lerarenuniversiteit', an expertise centre in the area of (continuous) teacher professional development in primary, secondary and vocational education. He also headed a unit that researched the use of online social networks for teaching and learning. His main area of expertise is professional development in and with social networks, existing or custom built; but his interests also cover learning design, open learning, massive open online courses (MOOCs), learning technologies in general and learning technology standards more in particular, knowledge sharing and knowledge creation in communities and online networks. Being trained as a theoretical biologist (including a PhD) and having worked as course developer for the OU in this and neighbouring areas, Sloep turned his attention ever more towards the learning sciences, in particular towards educational technology.

Prof. E. (Esther) Versluis is professor of European Regulatory Governance at Maastricht University. She obtained her PhD in 2003 from Utrecht University and was awarded the Van Poelje prize for best PhD dissertation in the field of public administration for her dissertation on 'Enforcement Matters. Enforcement and Compliance of European Directives in Four Member States'. Since 2001 she is involved with education at Maastricht University, first as lecturer, as assistant professor and since 2015 as professor. She was member and chair of the Faculty Council and chair of the Graduate Program Committee Arts & Culture. Until 2014 she was director of Studies master's programme



European Public Affairs and is currently director of Studies of the bachelor's programme European Studies. In 2015 she was awarded the Best PhD supervisor of the year-award by the Netherlands Institute of Government. Professor Versluis' research concentrates on problems and complexities related to European regulatory governance. She is an active member of the Netherlands Institute of Government (NIG), the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR), the European Union Studies Association (EUSA) and the University Association for Contemporary European Studies (UACES).

H. (Henk) de Jong is Strategy Director and Deputy Commissioner at Police Netherlands. From 2007 to 2012 Henk de Jong served as general director at the city of Amsterdam. He has extensive experience as a senior public sector official, public sector consultant and entrepreneur with leading expertise in Dutch, EU and US government practices, with city, regional and national agencies, educational institutions, international businesses and philanthropies on policy-making, organizational change management, business development and crisis accountability. As a practitioner of public sector management, he serves on Advisory Boards, works with academic institutions and is engaged in cultural initiatives. He frequently speaks at conferences, seminars, graduate-level and executive training programmes that focus on the unique aspects and challenges of the public sector.

J.C. (Jasper) Meijering is master's student in Engineering and Policy Analysis at the Delft University of Technology. He obtained his bachelor's degree in Systems Engineering, Policy Analysis and Management also from the Delft University of Technology. His research focuses on using quantitative modelling and simulation techniques to address grand global challenges and acting as strategic policy advisor. He is selected for a scholarship program from, and works as Student Ambassador for, the Dutch Energy sector. From January 2016 to January 2017 he was selected to join outreach program Young Future Energy Leaders Program of the Masdar Institute in Abu Dhabi. In this capacity, he was a member of United Arab Emirates' delegation to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP22) in Marrakech, Morocco and attended the World Future Energy Summit 2016.

Prof. dr. J.J.A. (Jacques) Thomassen is professor emeritus of Political Science at the University of Twente and a member of the Netherlands Royal Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW). He is author and editor of numerous publications including *The European Voter*, *The Legitimacy of the European Union after Enlargement*, *Elections and Representative Democracy*, *Representation and Accountability* and *Myth and Reality of the Legitimacy Crisis. Explaining trends and cross-national differences in established democracies*. He served in many professional positions, amongst others as President of the Dutch Political Science Association from 1997 to 1999, as Scientific Director of the Netherlands Institute of Government (NIG) (1999-2004) and General Secretary of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) from 2008 to 2011.

Prof. mr. dr. J.E. (Jenneke) Bosch-Boesjes is professor emeritus Development and Differentiation in Academic Education at Groningen University. She studied Law and obtained her PhD at the University of Groningen on an internal comparative law study. During her academic career, she was researcher, assistant professor in private and procedural law, and professor at the University of Groningen. She also served as a member of the faculty board responsible for education, and as director of studies at the Faculty of Law. In 2009, Prof. Bosch-Boesjes became dean of the University of Groningen Honors College. Jenneke Bosch-Boesjes was judge in the District Court in Groningen, published widely in her field of research and was responsible for several educational innovations within the faculty.

APPENDIX 2: DOMAIN-SPECIFIC FRAMEWORK OF REFERENCE

Domain-specific requirements Public Administration, Public Governance, and Governance and Organization (PAGO) Programmes, 2010

Introduction

The study of public administration has developed and expanded into a broad interdisciplinary body of knowledge, which tackles a variety of themes and practices on public administration, governance and organization (PAGO). The academic community in the Netherlands acknowledges that throughout the years this field has widened and now includes not only public administration but also governance and organization. This entails a diversity of approaches on the one hand, but on the other, the conviction that these approaches are connected and interrelated and worthwhile to keep together. Programmes may share basic components, but also may differ to express their specialisation in this broadened field. This parallels developments in the profession. Alumni are increasingly challenged in a wide variety of fields that put varying demands regarding professional knowledge, skills and attitudes. In this frame of reference we will address this field as the PAGO-field: including public administration, public governance, and governance and organization.

In this domain-specific frame of reference we start with a brief summary regarding the development of the PAGO-field and argue that the broadening of the field is due to various exogenous and endogenous changes. Accordingly we will outline the programme principles of PAGO-studies as well as related learning outcomes.

Developments

The societal impact of processes like globalization, individualization and ICT has altered the nature of public problems. Issues like risk and security, environment and ecology, economics and welfare, and nationality and culture are high on the societal and political agenda. The impact of such problems has consequences for the abilities of (national) governments. It challenges them to reach beyond traditional approaches. This has led to manifold changes in political and administrative landscapes. New expectations and demands are expressed towards politics and administration, including moral standards. New criteria for performance have emerged that aim at 'value for money', new business-like concepts of management, and reformed public service delivery. There have been new interpretations of democracy and accountability, and of relations between state, civil society and the market.

Government and public administration not only changed its own practices, it also changed its relationship with society. Public administration thus moved towards governance, i.e. dealing with public problems through dispersed networks of organizations and actors, including social institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGO's), and private companies. Government and public policy are still relevant, but new outlooks and mechanisms are designed and used to make things work.

These developments have also changed the field of study of PA. Scholars started to use new concepts to understand developments, broadening categories such as 'government-governance', and crossing boundaries between the public and private world. These concepts include focused attention to issues like interdependence, ambiguity, networks, contextuality, governance, and the role of institutions, trust and integrity. These developments invited researchers to cross disciplinary borders and take aboard theories, concepts, methods and ideas, from organization studies (structure, culture, management, strategy, networks, et cetera) as well as other bodies of knowledge (new fields within economics, political science and sociology, communication theory, ethics and philosophy, geography, international relations and law, et cetera).

Another issue that needs to be highlighted is that the study of Public Administration in the Netherlands includes several fields that elsewhere are situated in political science. The PAGO-studies not only focus on classical PA issues, but also on public organization and management issues, as well as on subfields like 'public policy', 'policy making', 'public governance', 'public culture and ethics'.



Scholars of these issues are part of the broad 'PA' community, in research as well as in educational programmes.

Resulting Fields of Study

This PAGO-community consists of three fields of study. The first embodies the classical features of the discipline, concentrating on politics, administration and the public sector. Public administration often started within the context of (departments of) politics and/or law, with an emphasis on the study of government and bureaucracy as well as public policy-making and implementation.

The second emerged through the fact that public interests and public problems are increasingly tackled by a multitude of public and private actors. It broadened the scope of study to include nongovernmental actors, as part of the often complex public-private, multi-actor networks that deal with collective and public interests.

The third field focuses on questions of governance and organization that surpass the traditional public-private boundaries. It includes the study of private actors in social contexts. This orientation links the worlds of business administration and public administration and pays attention to what we know about management, strategy and behaviour in corporations. This approach can be labelled as 'governance and organization'.

PAGO today is a broad multi- and interdisciplinary field of science. The classical core disciplines of political science, law, sociology and economics are important, and there is an increasing involvement of disciplines that focus on organization, culture, and communication. Also, challenging new interchanges with bodies of knowledge in (for example) social and organizational psychology, planning studies and geography, philosophy and ethics and history have demonstrated added value.

The PAGO-community acknowledges that there are different views regarding object and focus of the field of study. For instance: is PAGO about knowledge by description, explanation and prediction, or is evaluation and improvement the prime goal? Or, how do we relate to and communicate with practitioners in public (and private) administration, governance and organization? Rather than excluding certain views, the PAGO-community welcomes a variety in approaches, ideas and outlook. This variety is also visible in the PAGO-programmes.

Defining programme principles

PAGO-programmes are academic programmes aiming at the development of academic knowledge, skills and attitude in students that are relevant for understanding public administration, governance and organization. They pay particular attention to social and political contexts and developments, relevant (interdisciplinary) bodies of knowledge, aim at developing research capacities, and contribute to working professionally in public and private domains. In this frame of reference we have listed elements that are to be seen as building blocks for academic programmes. As far as knowledge is concerned, contemporary programmes encompass various disciplinary views supporting the PAGO-domain, and various sorts of domain-specific knowledge. As far as skills are concerned, they encompass skills for applying and reflecting on scientific methods and approaches, integrating knowledge and skills for working in public domains/organizations. As far as attitude is concerned, it encompasses critical stances and moral stature. Each of these subfields is briefly elaborated in order to circumscribe specific learning outcomes at Bachelor's and Master's levels (see next paragraph).

Knowledge

Knowledge of society and changing contexts

Activities in public domains influence, are influenced by, and interact with social systems and developments. On the one hand, they constrain public sectors, as they reproduce values, traditions and culture(s). On the other hand, they call for public action; (new) facts, events and problems, fuelled by new technologies, pose new challenges. PAGO-programmes enhance understandings of

social structures and behaviours, societal trends and changes. This calls for an awareness of political, sociological, cultural, historical, philosophical, ethical, economic and judicial contexts.

Knowledge of political and administrative systems

The organization, processes and activities in public domains are shaped by and within political systems. PAGO-programmes should devote attention to the institutions, structure, organization and activities of such political systems, at different levels (local, regional, national, transnational). PAGO-programmes encompass political and social theories, including those regarding legitimacy and the democratic design and functioning of organizations in public domains. They also pay attention to the application of these theories in everyday practice.

Knowledge of (public) policy, decision making and implementation

Governance for societal problems includes many insights derived from various bodies of knowledge, ranging from high-level decision-making to everyday service delivery. PAGO-programmes address both classic and contemporary theories, methods and techniques of policy-making, management, decision-making, and their implementation in everyday practice.

Knowledge of organizations and organizing principles

Public domains entail a variety of organizations, some organized as classical government bodies, some as between the public and private sectors, while others have been influenced by and/or have taken on the characteristics of private organizations. There is a growing awareness that policies and service delivery must be organized and require well-trained and motivated professionals. This leads to a more explicit emphasis on organizational studies. PAGO programmes entail knowledge of organizational concepts/perspectives on organizing, domains of managerial activities, insights in organizational change and management tools.

Knowledge of governance and networks

The powers and authorities to intervene have become less governmental and more distributed. Due to organizational fragmentation, the rise of network relations, and the spread of (normative) governance models – e.g., 'joined up government', 'public-private partnerships', and 'corporate social responsibility' (CSR) – multiple parties have become active in dealing with public problems and representing public interests. PAGO-programmes pay attention to new relations and new governance regimes, having both theoretical and empirical consequences.

Skills

Research skills

The role of knowledge in (public) policies and organizations is crucial for its effectiveness, especially for understanding the complexity of contexts, structures, outcomes and behaviours. PAGO-programmes include methods of quantitative and qualitative social-scientific research to analyse and also emphasise a clear understanding of contextual aspects.

Integrative skills

Public domains can be analysed from different angles; theories are grounded in various disciplines. The quality of research and capacities of civil servants and other functionaries in public domains depend on integrative skills, i.e. abilities to combine, integrate and apply different bodies of knowledge. PAGO-programmes devote attention to and provide opportunities to practice integrative skills.

Cooperation and communication skills

The functioning of the public domain largely depends on the skills of actors to exchange ideas, to negotiate when necessary, and to cooperate in constructive ways. Civil servants and other functionaries use a repertoire of skills and attitudes to communicate ideas to audiences of experts as well as laymen. Cooperation is at the heart of PAGO and includes a sense of responsibility and leadership. PAGO-programmes devote attention to and provide opportunities to practice cooperative and communicative skills.



Attitude

Critical stances

PAGO programmes are academic programmes that not only facilitate cognitive learning and skill development, they also develop critical powers. Students are taught how to critically analyze arguments used by others, how to relate 'fashionable' statements, e.g. by politicians, to more traditional as well as to scientific insights, and how to reflect upon political and normative implications of policy choices and organizational design. PAGO-programmes devote attention to the development of a constructive, critical attitude.

Moral stature and professionalism

The eloquence and credibility of PAGO has two features. First is its ability to approach societal problems in effective ways, but second is the degree to which government and governance principles serves as a moral compass. PAGO-programmes train students in this respect for occupying positions in governance regimes (public and private), they also train students in developing appropriate or 'professional' conduct. This is a matter of guarding values, such as accountability and integrity, and of practicing values, such as entrepreneurship and innovation.

Academic learning outcomes for PAGO studies

The broad fields identified and circumscribed in the above are to be seen as programme criteria and, thus, as the building blocks of a programme. Each programme will emphasize a specific selection of these building blocks to impose specific learning outcomes on students. In the table below we list such learning outcomes. This is a generic list, both applicable for bachelor's and master's programmes.

The difference between both studies is in the degree of complexity; in the level of analysis; and in the independence of the student. Here we follow the distinctions made in the so-called Dublin descriptors. In this system a distinction is made between first cycle learning for bachelors and second cycle learning for masters. First cycle learning involves an introduction to the field of study. It aims at the acquisition and understanding of knowledge, ideas, methods and theories, elementary research activities, and basic skills regarding communication and learning competences. At second cycle learning we find a deeper understanding of knowledge; problem solving skills are developed for new and unexpected environments and broader contexts. Here students can apply knowledge in various environments. At the master's level we also expect a well-developed level of autonomy regarding the direction and choices in a study.

In generic bachelor's PAGO-programmes most of the learning outcomes will apply that are listed below. Master's programmes, however, usually have a much stronger thematic focus and may especially focus on a particular set of these learning outcomes that are best suited for that specialisation, but not covering all the learning outcomes listed below. We propose that the learning outcomes for the bachelor's level, apply for the master's level in the sense that students demonstrate that they are capable of:

- dealing with increased situational, theoretical and methodological complexity;
- demonstrating increased levels of autonomy and self-management;
- applying ideas, methods, theories in research and problem solving;
- mastering the complexity that is inherent to the field of specialisation.

In the table below we have organized the learning outcomes according to the Dublin descriptors. We present the main components of the Dublin descriptors in italics, and accordingly the proposed learning outcomes.

Knowledge and understanding

1 (Bachelor's) [Is] supported by advanced text books [with] some aspects informed by knowledge at the forefront of their field of study

2 (Master's) provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing or applying ideas often in a research context

- (Basic) knowledge of (changing) societal contexts
- (Basic) knowledge and understanding of the distinctive nature of organization, policy making, management, service delivery and governance in PAGO domains
- (Basic) awareness of political traditions and politics
- (Basic) knowledge and understanding of the discipline, PAGO-paradigms, intellectual tradition, theories and approaches
- (Basic) knowledge and understanding of multi-actor and multi-level concepts
- A general (basic) understanding regarding the dynamics and processes of actors in public domains, how these processes influence society and vice versa

Applying knowledge and understanding

1 (Bachelor's) [through] devising and sustaining arguments

2 (Master's) [through] problem solving abilities [applied] in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts

- (Basic) capacity to work at different levels of abstraction
- (Basic) skills in problem definition and problem solving in the PAGO domain
- (Basic) ability to distinguish normative preferences and empirical evidence
- (Basic) skills in combining, integrating and applying knowledge
- (Basic) insight into the scientific practice
- (Basic) capacity to select a suitable theoretical framework for a given empirical problem
- (Basic) skills in combining normative and empirical aspects
- (Basic) capacity to build arguments and reflect upon the arguments of others
- (Basic) awareness of relevant social, ethical, academic and practical issues

Making judgments

1 (Bachelor's) [involves] gathering and interpreting relevant data

2 (Master's) [demonstrates] the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements with incomplete data

- (Basic) ability to formulate research questions on problems in the PAGO-domain
- (Basic) knowledge regarding research on social-scientific positions and thinking
- (Basic) training in and application of quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods social science research
- (Basic) abilities to collect data and to derive judgments thereof

Communication

1 (Bachelor's) [of] information, ideas, problems and solutions

2 (Master's) [of] their conclusions and the underpinning knowledge and rationale (restricted scope) to specialist and non-specialist audiences (monologue)

- (Basic) capacity to use argumentative skills effectively
- (Basic) capacity to function in multi- and interdisciplinary teams in several roles
- (Basic) capacity to function effectively in governance, organization, management, policy and advocacy settings
- (Basic) capacity to use communicative skills effectively in oral and written presentation

Learning skills

1 (Bachelor's) have developed those skills needed to study further with a high level of autonomy

2 (Master's) study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous

- Learning attitude
- (Basic) capacity to reflect upon one's own conceptual and professional capacities and conduct



APPENDIX 3: INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science:

Primary aim of the Public Administration and Organisation Science Bachelor's degree programme is: *To educate motivated people who are able and willing to use their academic knowledge in the field of public administration and organisation to make a useful contribution to the solution of public issues.*

To this end, the degree programme has three learning pathways:

1. The substance of the public administration and organisation of public issues: Knowledge and understanding which are important for the contextualised understanding and analysis of the public administration and organisation of public issues. The cognitive skills to use this knowledge in concrete situations and to look critically at both the theory and practice.
2. Research into the public administration and organisation of public issues: The skills to research the public administration and organisation of public issues using a variety of approaches in order to generate both scientifically and socially relevant insights.
3. Professional actions in the public administration and organisation of public issues: The necessary skills and attitude to play a useful and professional role in solving public issues based on relevant knowledge and research skills.

This leads to the following educational aims for each of the learning pathways in the Bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science.

The substance of the public administration and organisation of public issues (S):

The graduate:

1. is aware of and understands basic public administration and organisational science theories, particularly in the areas of (a) management, policy, decision-making and implementation, (b) organisations and organisational principles, and (c) forms of cooperation between organisations in the solving of public issues, and is able to critically reflect on these issues at a basic level;
2. is aware of and understands the basics of the disciplines of sociology, psychology, political science, economics, law and philosophy which are relevant to the study of public administration and organisation, and understands the importance of these for the study of public issues;
3. has insight into the social, political, historical, international and intercultural dimensions of the public administration and organisation of public issues, and is aware of the diversity of approaches and backgrounds which play a role in this;
4. has immersed themselves in particular in aspects of public administration and organisation of public issues and has broadened their knowledge with insights into self-selected themes from within and/or outside the public administration and organisational science field of study;
5. is able to use and reflect upon this theoretical background, both in its totality and in smaller units, in the analysis of practical situations in the field of public administration and organisation of public issues and can convert this analysis into theoretically substantiated action plans.

Research into the public administration and organisation of public issues (R):

The graduate:

1. is aware of, understands, and has insight into the basics of qualitative and quantitative research methods into the public administration and organisation of public issues;
2. has insight into the fundamental philosophical scientific assumptions around research and research methods and can apply this insight to their own research and that of others;
3. can formulate a clear and researchable problem statement for research into socially and scientifically relevant elements of the public administration and organisation public issues from a local, national, international and comparative perspective;
4. can adequately operationalise the concepts in a problem statement; can carry out coherent theoretical and empirical research into a topic; can draw a clear, synthesising conclusion; can use the results to answer the research question or to contribute to the clarification and, where possible, resolution of a public issue.

Professional actions in the public administration and organisation of public issues:

For professional skills (Sk):

The graduate:

1. can form a critical opinion based in part on relevant social, scientific and ethical elements such as responsibility and integrity;
2. is able to provide adequate verbal and written communication, in both Dutch and English, about the basics of public administration and organisation of public issues and about research into this area, to a specialist and/or non-specialist audience whilst keeping the social consequences of this communication in mind;
3. has the skills to exchange ideas and work with others constructively and is, in particular, able to reflect on their own role, strengths and weaknesses in this context, has insight into the basics of group dynamics and in opposing interests, and has the necessary competencies to constructively negotiate these interests;
4. can give well-founded, constructive feedback into the behaviour and achievements of others and can use the feedback they receive to develop their own behaviour;
5. is in possession of the necessary independent meta-cognitive skills to start either a Dutch or English Master's programme¹.

For a professional attitude (A):

The graduate has started to develop an attitude that demonstrates:

1. an awareness of the value of a diversity of approaches to issues and can value the role that various backgrounds play in both a national and international context;
2. a critical reflection of their own values and behaviour in relation to people from a different (cultural) background, and empathy for others which enables them to cooperate well and make useful connections with others;
3. sensitivity to the context of professional behaviour and an awareness of their own role in this and the consequences of their actions;
4. a sense of the ethical responsibility and importance of integrity in relation to managing and organising public issues and in researching them.

¹ Skills such as processing complex scientific information (such as articles), independently prioritising and planning their work, analysing what action is needed to acquire certain knowledge and skills, applying relevant learning strategies, and reflecting on their own performance.



Master's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science:

Primary aim of the Public Administration and Organisation Science Master's degree programme is:
To educate motivated people who are able and willing to use their academic knowledge in the field of public administration and organisation to make a useful contribution to the solution of public issues.

To this end, the degree programme has three learning pathways:

1. *The substance of the public administration and organisation of public issues:* Knowledge and understanding which are important for the contextualised understanding and analysis of the public administration and organisation of public issues. The cognitive skills to use this knowledge in concrete situations and to look critically at both the theory and practice.
2. *Research into the public administration and organisation of public issues:* The skills to research the public administration and organisation of public issues using various approaches in order to generate both scientifically and socially relevant insights.
3. *Professional actions in the public administration and organisation of public issues:* The necessary skills and attitude to play a useful and professional role in solving public issues based on relevant knowledge and research skills.

Building on the educational aims of the Bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science, this leads to the following educational aims for each of the learning pathways in the Master's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science.

The substance of the public administration and organisation of public issues (Su):

The graduate:

1. has a thorough knowledge of and insight into the public administration and organisation of public issues in interaction with the national and international political and societal context, specifically in one of the following core areas: Public Governance, Communication, Policy and Management, European Governance, Organisations, Change and Management, Public Management, Strategic Human Resource Management, or Sports Policy and Sports Management;
2. can make use of 'state of the art' theoretical insights alongside their own knowledge of empirical studies in public administration and organisational science and related disciplines to independently identify, formulate and analyse relevant problems and can provide solutions to these;
3. can critically reflect on the dominant views on the public administration and organisation of public issues in international scientific literature and professional practice, as well as the central concepts on which these views are based in one of the core areas;
4. can carefully distinguish between analysis, solution and effect and relate them to each other;
5. can design or choose between solutions and implementation strategies for public administration and organisation based on scientific analysis.

Research into the public administration and organisation of public issues (R):

The graduate:

1. has the ability to independently set up, conduct and report on a research project in Public Administration and Organisational Science in a manner than meets accepted disciplinary standards;
2. can make a methodologically argued choice for a particular research strategy relevant to the specific problem, keeping in mind the scientific-philosophical insights into reality, and knowledge about that reality;
3. can make use of theoretical concepts to analyse and interpret the results of an empirical study and use these to draw substantiated conclusions;
4. shows a degree of originality in the study and contemplation of public issues in the light of existing literature and new empirical facts;
5. can critically reflect on research results in the light of the research strategy used and relevant theoretical concepts;
6. can operationalise theoretical insights and convert these into practical action perspectives.

Professional actions in the public administration and organisation of public issues:

For professional skills (Sk):

The graduate:

1. possesses advanced professional and academic skills in the area of advice, policy, management and/or research which will prepare them in their professional life;
2. can take a well-founded view on a scientific discourse in relation to practical public administration and organisational issues, can estimate both their theoretical and practical value and translate this into professional practice whilst keeping social and ethical aspects such as responsibility and integrity in mind;
3. can give substantiated and constructive feedback and is able to use received feedback in a professional context;
4. is able to independently apply knowledge, insights and problem-solving skills to new or unknown situations within a broader, multidisciplinary or international context related to their field of study;
5. is able to provide clear and unambiguous verbal and written communication, in Dutch and/or English, about the acquired knowledge and insights, including the motives and considerations on which these are based, to a specialist and/or non-specialist audience whilst keeping the social consequences of this communication in mind.

For a professional attitude (A):

The graduate:

1. has an awareness of the value of a diversity of approaches to issues and can value the role that various backgrounds play in both a national and international context;
2. critically reflects on their own values and behaviour in relation to people from a different (cultural) background and shows empathy for others, enabling them to cooperate well and make useful connections with others;
3. is sensitive to the context of professional behaviour and is aware of their own role in this;
4. takes an open attitude to the ambiguity and uncertainty of processes in organisations and public administration;
5. has a sense of the ethical responsibilities and the importance of integrity in relation to public administration and organising public issues and in researching them.

APPENDIX 4: OVERVIEW OF THE CURRICULUM

Bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science:

BA1 Period 1	EC	BA1 Period 2	EC	BA1 Period 3	EC	BA1 Period 4	EC
Public Governance: government, policy and organisation USG1020	7,5	Classical Texts on Governance USG1010	7,5	Researching Governance: Methods and Statistics USG1050	7,5	Quantitative Inquiry of Public Organisations USG1030	7,5
Trends in Dutch Society USG1060	7,5	Organisational Sciences: Perspectives on Organising USG1080	7,5	Management Studies: Managing Service Delivery USG1070/USG1070H	7,5	Economics and Public Governance USG1100	7,5
BA2 Period 1	EC	BA2 Period 2	EC	BA2 Period 3	EC	BA2 Period 4	EC
Organisations and Organising USG2090	7,5	Optional course	7,5	Philosophy of Science USG2030	7,5	Qualitative Inquiry USG2020	15
Constitutional and Administrative Law USG2060	7,5	Comparative Analysis of Political Institutions USG2051	7,5	Policy, Rationality and Power USG2010	7,5		
BA3 Period 1	EC	BA3 Period 2	EC	BA3 Period 3	EC	BA3 Period 4	EC
Optional course	7,5	Optional course	7,5	<i>Research seminars (parttime):</i> - Civil society: Organising between State and Market USG3130 - Organising Interaction USG3150 - Governance, Democracy and Accountability USG3160 - Future of Work: Management of People and Organisation USG3190 - Organisations on the Move USG3200 - Public Management USG3210	7,5	<i>Research seminars (fulltime):</i> - Civil society: Organising between State and Market USG3130 - Organising Interaction USG3150 - Governance, Democracy and Accountability USG3160 - Future of Work: Management of People and Organisation USG3190 - Organisations on the Move USG3200 - Public Management USG3210	15
Optional course		Optional course		Governance of Public Issues: Analysing and Consulting USG3031	7,5		

Master's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science:

One-year programmes

B&B Period 1	EC	B&B Period 2	EC	B&B Period 3	EC	B&B Period 4	EC
Governance USG6060	7,5	Decision Making USG6050	7,5	Citizenship and Responsibilities beyond the State USG6310	7,5	Research Seminar Public Governance part II USG6041	22,5
Academic and Professional Skills	7,5	Academic and Professional Skills	7,5	Research Seminar Public Governance part I USG6041			
PM Period 1	EC	PM Period 2	EC	PM Period 3	EC	PM Period 4	EC
Publieke Performance USG6140	7,5	Public Professionalism USG6150	7,5	Public Innovation USG6340	7,5	Research Seminar Public Management part II USG6131	22,5
Academic and Professional Skills	7,5	Academic and Professional Skills	7,5	Research Seminar Public Management part I USG6131			
CBM Period 1	EC	CBM Period 2	EC	CBM Period 3	EC	CBM Period 4	EC
Knowledge Sharing & Collaboration in Organisations USG6020	7,5	Communicating with Impact USG6030	7,5	Changing Behaviour: a Public Policy Perspective USG6320	7,5	Researchseminar Communication Policy and Management part II USG6011	22,5
Academic and Professional Skills	7,5	Academic and Professional Skills	7,5	Researchseminar Communication Policy and Management part I USG6011			
OVM Period 1	EC	OVM Period 2	EC	OVM Period 3	EC	OVM Period 4	EC
Managing Change: Conflict, Culture, Control USG6120	7,5	Organisations and Change USG6110	7,5	Change and the Imagination USG6330	7,5	Researchseminar Organization, Change and Management part II USG6101	22,5
Academic and Professional Skills	7,5	Academic and Professional Skills	7,5	Researchseminar Organization, Change and Management part I USG6101			
SHRM Period 1	EC	SHRM Period 2	EC	SHRM Period 3	EC	SHRM Period 4	EC
Strategic human resource management USG6090	7,5	HRM and Personnel USG6080	7,5	The Public Dimension of SHRM USG6350	7,5	Researchseminar SHRM part I USG6071	22,5
Academic and Professional Skills	7,5	Academic and Professional Skills (Labour Law/HRM skills)	7,5	Researchseminar SHRM part I USG6071			
EG Period 1	EC	EG Period 2	EC	EG Period 3 en 4		EC	
Regulating markets USG6210	7,5	Designing Institutions in a Multilevel Context USG6230	7,5	Researchseminar - Research internship and master thesis USG6250		30	
Labour Markets and Welfare States in Europe USG6220	7,5	Enforcement in Europe USG6240	7,5				

Two-years programme: Sports Policy and Sports Management

Year I (2017-2018 – cohort 2017)

Sport Period 1	EC	Sport Period 2	EC	Sport Period 3	EC	Sport Period 4	EC
USG7011 Organising Sports and Public Values	7,5	USG7031 Management of Diversity in Sports	7,5	USG7041 Sports Development and Policy Consequences	7,5	USG7022 Qualitative Sports Research	7,5

Year II (2017-2018 – cohort 2016)

Sport Period 1	EC	Sport Period 2, 3, 4	EC
USG7070 Sports in context: Policy and Professional Skills	7,5	USG7080 Researchseminar Sports Policy and Sports Management	22,5

APPENDIX 5: PROGRAMME OF THE SITE VISIT

Monday 11 December 2017

- 09.00 Arrival at Utrecht School of Governance (USG)
- 09.10 Internal meeting panel
- 12.30 Management USG
- 13.30 Lunch
- 14.15 Bachelor's students
- 15.05 Bachelor's lecturers
- 16.05 Board of Examiners
- 17.00 Transfer to hotel
- 17.30 Internal meeting panel (Court Hotel)
- 18.30 end of day 1

Tuesday 12 December 2017

- 08.30 Open consultation hour (Court Hotel)
- 09.30 Alumni and professional field Ba + Ma
- 10.20 Master's students
- 11.25 Master's lecturers
- 12.20 Lunch
- 13.30 Internal meeting panel
- 14.15 Management Research Master's programme
- 15.00 Research Master's students
- 15.45 Research Master's lecturers
- 16.30 Alumni and professional field RM
- 17.00 Internal meeting panel
- 17.45 Final meeting management Research Master's
- 18.15 Internal meeting panel
- 19.00 end of day 2

Wednesday 13 December 2017

- 09.00 Alumni and professional field Executive Master's
- 09.45 Executive Master's students
- 10.30 Executive Master's lecturers
- 11.00 Internal meeting panel
- 12.15 Final meeting management Ba + Ma + EM
- 13.00 Lunch and internal meeting panel
- 15.30 Feedback to USG on key panel findings
- 16.15 Development dialogue
- 17.15 End of site visit

APPENDIX 6: THESES AND DOCUMENTS STUDIED BY THE PANEL

Prior to the site visit, the panel studied 15 theses of the bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organization Science, as well as 21 theses of the master's programme Public Administration and Organization Science. The associated student numbers are available through QANU upon request.

In the framework of the site visit, the panel studied, among other things, the following documents (partly as hard copies, partly via the institute's electronic learning environment):

- Self-Evaluation Report, Bachelor's Programme Public Administration and Organisation Science, Utrecht, August 2017.
- Appendices to the self-evaluation report of the bachelor's programme, August 2017.
- Self-Evaluation Report, Master's Programme Public Administration and Organisation Science, Utrecht, August 2017.
- Appendices to the self-evaluation report of the master's programme, August 2017.

Course materials, evaluations and assessments Bachelor's PAOS:

- Researching Governance: Methods and Statistics (USG1050 Bachelor 1)
- Organizations and Organizing (USG2090 Bachelor 2)
- Governance of Public Issues: Analysis & Consultancy (USG3031 Bachelor 3)

Course materials, evaluations and assessments Master's PAOS:

- Performance Management and Public Values (USG6140 Public Management)
- Consultancy (USG8010 programme Academic and Professional Skills)
- Research Seminar Strategic Human Resource Management (USG6071 Strategic Human Resource Management)

Other materials

- Course Manuals
- Literature
- Reports by Programme Committee
- Examination Board materials
- Materials on Honours Programme
- Materials on Diversity
- Number of graduates Bachelor's programme PAOS
- Agenda versterking internationalisering bacheloropleiding, 2016
- Plan van Aanpak Internationalisering, mei 2015
- Versterken internationale en interculturele competenties, april 2015



ASSESSMENT FOR THE DISTINCTIVE FEATURE OF
SMALL-SCALE AND INTENSIVE EDUCATION

BACHELOR'S PROGRAMME
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
AND ORGANIZATION SCIENCE

FACULTY OF LAW, ECONOMICS AND GOVERNANCE

UTRECHT UNIVERSITY

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This report was finalized on 09-04-2018

REPORT ON THE DISTINCTIVE FEATURE SMALL-SCALE AND INTENSIVE EDUCATION OF THE BACHELOR'S PROGRAMME PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION SCIENCE OF UTRECHT UNIVERSITY

This report takes the NVAO's Assessment Framework for the Distinctive Feature of Small-scale and Intensive Education as a starting point (4 November 2011).

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE PROGRAMME

Bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science

Name of the programme:	Public Administration and Organisation Science
CROHO number:	50007
Level of the programme:	bachelor's
Orientation of the programme:	academic
Number of credits:	180 EC
Specializations or tracks:	-
Location(s):	Utrecht
Mode(s) of study:	full time
Language of instruction:	Dutch, English
Expiration of accreditation:	31/12/2018

The visit of the assessment panel Public Administration to the Faculty of Law, Economics and Governance of Utrecht University took place on 11/12/2017 - 13/12/2017.

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE INSTITUTION

Name of the institution:	Utrecht University
Status of the institution:	publicly funded institution
Result institutional quality assurance assessment:	positive

COMPOSITION OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

The NVAO has approved the composition of the panel on 16 October 2017. The panel that assessed the bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science, including its Specific Feature Small-Scale and Intensive Education, consisted of:

- Prof. dr. T. (Tony) Bovaird, professor emeritus of Public Management and Policy at the University of Birmingham (United Kingdom) [chair];
- Prof. dr. M. (Marleen) Brans, professor at the Public Governance Institute of the KU Leuven (Belgium) [vice-chair];
- Prof. dr. P.B. Peter Sloep, professor emeritus in Technology-Enhanced Learning, in particular Learning in Social at the Open Universiteit Nederland;
- Prof. mr. dr. J.E. (Jenneke) Bosch-Boesjes, professor emeritus Development and Differentiation Academic Education, former dean at the University of Groningen Honours College;
- Prof. E. (Esther) Versluis, professor of European Regulatory Governance at Maastricht University.
- Drs. H. (Henk) de Jong, director of Strategy and Policy of the Dutch National Police. Previous positions include chair of the board of the ROC Leiden and positions in the municipalities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam;

- J.C. (Jasper) Meijering, master's student Engineering and Policy Analysis at Delft University of Technology [student member];
- Prof. dr. J.J.A. (Jacques) Thomassen, emeritus professor of Political Science at the University of Twente.

The panel was supported by Mark Delmartino MA, who acted as secretary. Appendix 1 contains the curricula vitae of the panel members.

WORKING METHOD OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

The assessment of the bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science of the Utrecht University, during which the assessment of the Distinctive Feature took place, is part of a cluster assessment. From October to December 2017, a panel assessed seven bachelor's programmes and seventeen master's programmes in Public Administration at eight universities.

The panel consists of seventeen members:

- Prof. T. (Tony) Bovaird, professor emeritus of Public Management and Policy at the University of Birmingham (United Kingdom) [chair];
- Prof. A. (Adrian) Ritz, professor for Public Management at the University of Bern (Switzerland) [vice-chair];
- Prof. M. (Marleen) Brans, professor at the Public Governance Institute of the KU Leuven (Belgium) [vice-chair];
- Prof. H.M.C. (Harrie) Eijkelhof, professor emeritus of Physics Education at Utrecht University.
- Prof. P.B. Peter Sloep, professor emeritus in Technology-Enhanced Learning, in particular Learning in Social at the Open Universiteit Nederland;
- Prof. T. (Tiina) Randma-Liiv, professor of Public Management and Policy and vice-dean for Research at Tallinn University of Technology (Estonia);
- Prof. L. (Lan) Xue, professor and dean of the School of Public Policy and Management, Tsinghua University (China);
- Prof. E. (Esther) Versluis, professor of European Regulatory Governance at Maastricht University.
- Prof. W. (William) Webster, professor of Public Policy and Management at the Stirling Management School, University of Stirling (UK);
- Prof. J.J.A. (Jacques) Thomassen, emeritus professor of Political Science at the University of Twente;
- Prof J. E. (Jenneke) Bosch-Boesjes, emeritus professor of Development and Differentiation in Academic Education at the University of Groningen;
- Drs. B. (Bertine) Steenbergen, interim director at the Ministry of Security and Justice.
- Prof. J.P. (Jan) Pronk, professor emeritus in Theory and Practice of International Development at the International Institute of Social Studies and former Minister for Development Co-operation and Minister of Environment, Spatial Planning and Housing;
- Drs. C. (Cees) Vermeer, town clerk of the city of Breda;
- Drs. H. (Henk) de Jong, director of Strategy and Policy of the Dutch National Police;
- J.C. (Jasper) Meijering BSc, master's student Engineering and Policy Analysis at Delft University of Technology [student member];
- S. (Sophie) van Wijngaarden BSc, master's student Systems Engineering, Policy Analysis & Management at the Delft University of Technology [student member].

A panel of six to eight members was appointed for each visited, based on the expertise and availability of each panel member, and taking into account possible conflicts of interest. For the bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science of Utrecht University, an NVAO-approved expert on the Distinctive Feature Small-Scale and Intensive Education (Prof J. E. Bosch-Boesjes) was appointed.

Peter Hildering MSc of QANU was project coordinator of the cluster assessment Public Administration. He was secretary during the visits to the University of Twente, Radboud University, Erasmus University Rotterdam and Leiden University. He also attended the final panel consultations of every visit and read and commented on draft versions of each report in order to monitor the consistency of the assessments and the resulting reports. Mark Delmartino MA, freelance worker of QANU, was secretary of the panel during the visits to Tilburg University, Maastricht University, Utrecht University, and the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Dr. Joke Corporaal, freelance worker of QANU, was second secretary during the visits to the Erasmus University Rotterdam and Leiden University.

Preparation

Before the assessment panel's site visit to Utrecht University, the project coordinator received the self-evaluation report that the programme wrote, based on both the joint NVAO-EAPAA framework and the framework for the assessment criteria for the Distinctive Feature Small-Scale and Intensive Education. The QANU project coordinator sent it to the panel after checking it for completeness of information. Upon reading the self-evaluation report, the panel members formulated their preliminary findings. The panel also studied a selection of fifteen theses and the accompanying assessment forms for the programme. This selection was made by the panel's chair, in cooperation with the secretary, from a list of graduates from the past three years. The chair and secretary took care that a variety of topics was covered, and made sure that the distribution of grades in the theses selection matched the distribution of grades over all theses.

The panel chair, secretary and programme jointly composed a schedule for the site visit. Prior to the site visit, the programme selected representative partners for the various interviews. Interviews were planned with students, teaching staff, management, alumni and professional field, the programme committee and the board of examiners. See Appendix 5 for the definitive schedule.

Site visit

The site visit to Utrecht University took place from 11 to 13 December 2017, and was followed by a visit to the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam on 14 and 15 December 2017. At the start of the week, the panel held a preparatory meeting during which it was instructed regarding all assessment frameworks and procedures. After this, the panel discussed its working method and its preliminary findings for the Utrecht site visit, and reflected on the content and use of the programme's domain-specific framework of reference (Appendix 2).

During the site visit, the panel conducted interviews with representatives of the programmes, and examined materials provided by the programmes. An overview of these materials is given in Appendix 7. The panel provided students and staff with the opportunity to speak informally with the panel outside the set interviews. No use was made of this opportunity.

The panel used the final part of the visit to discuss its findings in an internal meeting. Afterwards the panel chair gave an oral presentation, in which he expressed the panel's preliminary impressions and general observations. The visit was concluded with a development conversation, in which the panel and the programmes discussed various development routes for the programmes. The result of this conversation is summarized in a separate report.

Report

After the site visit, the secretary wrote two draft reports based on the assessment panel's findings: one report focusing on the NVAO-EAPAA programme assessment of the bachelor's programme, and this report addressing specifically the standards related to the Distinctive Feature Small-Scale and Intensive Education. Subsequently, he sent both reports to the assessment panel and the project coordinator for feedback. After processing the panel members' feedback, the coordinator sent the draft reports to the university in order to have these checked for factual irregularities. The secretary discussed the ensuing comments with the panel's chair and adapted the report accordingly before its finalisation.



Decision rules

The panel used the definitions from the NVAO's Assessment Framework for the Distinctive Feature of Small-scale and Intensive Education (4 November 2011) to assess the eight standards connected to this Distinctive Feature. Given that the programme obtained this Distinctive Feature for the first time in 2014, the panel was asked to also perform a practice-based assessment to check whether the ambitions that the programme expressed in 2014 have been met. Every standard is assessed on a two-point scale: satisfactory or not satisfactory. In order for the Distinctive Feature of the bachelor's programme to be assessed positively, all eight standards should be judged as satisfactory.

SUMMARY JUDGEMENT

This evaluation concerns the Distinctive Feature Small-Scale and Intensive Education of the bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science. Four years ago the initial accreditation committee gave permission to organize the bachelor's programme according to the principles of small-scale and intensive education. The current panel considers that in the meantime further progress has been made on all accounts, both in terms of the standards of this evaluation framework and with regard to the 'points of attention' raised by the previous committee.

The intended learning outcomes have been strengthened and reflect the programme's specific profile as a broad, multidisciplinary and research based education programme with particular attention to communication and professional conduct. Moreover, the current programme is more geared towards the international dimension of public administration and organisation science with Dutch-speaking students being increasingly exposed to programme objectives and course contents with a distinctively international and inter-cultural touch.

The bachelor's programme as a whole and the range of courses offered in the three-year curriculum are coherent. Moreover, the panel gathers that good progress has been made in extending the course offer: students go abroad or study for one semester at a different faculty or university. Furthermore, the panel considers that the current curriculum is adequately linked to extra-curricular activities and that this link is consistent in terms of both structure and content.

The teaching and learning environment of the programme has many strong elements in the view of the panel: the didactic concept, staff and facilities are of good quality, the selection and intake are organised meticulously, and students are well prepared for professional life after graduation. The panel appreciates in particular the attention students receive to making their bachelor's study an interesting and valuable experience. Moreover, the panel considers that the teaching and learning methods clearly reflect the small-scale and intensive character of the programme: students are often at the department for face-to-face teaching in small groups and study-related contacts among fellow students and with lecturers are actively promoted. This has created a genuine community feeling, which is facilitated by the department, the programme and the study association.

Furthermore, the staff teaching in the bachelor's programme are sufficient in number, open and approachable, and properly qualified to deliver the courses within the small-scale and intensive educational framework. Similarly, the facilities at the Utrecht University School of Governance (USG) are conducive to the organisation of the bachelor's programme.

The panel considers that the bachelor's programme is feasible, with only a limited number of students dropping out and a high percentage of students eventually graduating, also in comparison to other public administration programmes in the Netherlands. Nonetheless, the panel encourages the programme to step up its current efforts in managing student expectations and promoting timely graduation.

Having established that each bachelor's thesis studied by the panel fulfils at least the minimum criteria required, the panel considers that the intended learning outcomes of the bachelor's programme are achieved by the end of the curriculum. Moreover, upon graduation students tend to find a job that is in line with the level and domain of their studies. In this regard, the panel thinks highly of the way the programme addresses the employability of the bachelor's students as an integral part of the curriculum.

In sum, the panel assesses each of the eight standards as satisfactory. Within these standards, the panel observed that the bachelor's programme has addressed adequately the five 'points of attention' that were raised by the previous accreditation panel. The assessment panel therefore issues a positive judgement on the practice-based assessment of the programme and concludes that the



Distinctive Feature Small-Scale and Intensive Education of the bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science can be reaffirmed.

The panel assesses the standards from the *Assessment framework for the Distinctive Feature of Small-Scale and Intensive Education* in the following way:

Bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organization Science

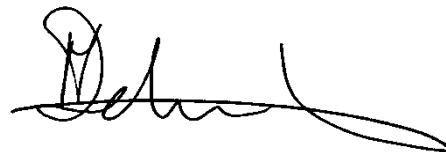
Standard A: Intended learning outcomes	satisfactory
Standard B: Relationship between the goals and content of the programme	satisfactory
Standard C: Structure and didactic concept	satisfactory
Standard D: Intake	satisfactory
Standard E: Quality of staff	satisfactory
Standard F: Number of staff	satisfactory
Standard G: Available facilities	satisfactory
Standard H: Level realised	satisfactory
General conclusion	satisfactory

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

Date: 09-04-2018



Prof. dr. Tony Bovaird



Mark Delmartino MA

DESCRIPTION OF THE STANDARDS FROM THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK FOR THE DISTINCTIVE FEATURE OF SMALL-SCALE AND INTENSIVE EDUCATION

Organisational context

The bachelor's programme under review is offered by the Utrecht University School of Governance (USG), a department within the Faculty of Law, Economics and Governance. Given the prominence of its educational approach, the bachelor's programme was awarded the Specific Feature small-scale and intensive education in 2014.

It allows the programme to select every year a group of up to 93 first-year students. In addition to the regular assessment of the bachelor's programme, which is reported in a separate document, the panel performed a practice-based assessment to verify if the specific small-scale intensive character of the bachelor's programme can be reaffirmed. This assessment focuses on five 'points of attention' formulated by the panel of the initial assessment of the distinctive feature in 2014:

- development of the international character/profile of the programme (standard A);
- structure of extra-curricular activities within the curriculum (standard B);
- creation of more opportunities for students to study outside USG (standard B);
- integration of international and multi-cultural aspects in the community (standard C);
- efforts to achieve a higher nominal success rate (standard H).

Standard A. Intended learning outcomes

The intended learning outcomes are not only aimed at achieving a high level in the relevant academic discipline and/or professional practice, but also have a broader aim: to train socially skilled and initiative-rich scholars and/or professionals with a wide interest in social developments and issues within a multidisciplinary and/or interdisciplinary context.

Findings

To assess the objectives of the bachelor's programme, the panel studied the intended learning outcomes (Appendix 3).

The design and organisation of the bachelor's programme revolve around the mission of USG: to make a substantial contribution to the organisation and governance of society and to the creation of societal value. Students are educated to become motivated people who are able to use their academic knowledge to make a contribution to the solution of public issues and to the organisation of society. Compared to other public administration programmes in the Netherlands, the bachelor's programme PAOS at Utrecht University emphasises a broad multidisciplinary perspective on public administration and organisation, a variety of science-philosophical research approaches and methods, and social skills such as the ability to communicate at academic level in a professional environment, and the development of a professional attitude.

The panel observed that the intended learning outcomes of the bachelor's programme are organised along three inter-related learning pathways: substance of public administration and organisation of public issues; research into public administration and organisation of public issues; and professional conduct in public administration and organisation of public issues. The competencies cover substance, research, professional skills and professional attitudes. Moreover, the panel learned during the visit that the learning outcomes – and notably their connection to the three learning pathways – have been updated recently to reflect the development of the programme structure. For instance, the revised learning outcomes enable students to progress better from lower order (knowledge) to higher order (analysis, evaluation) cognitive skills. The panel was also informed during the discussion on site that the international dimension of PAOS is much more present than



before in both learning outcomes and curriculum: the current programme pays more attention to cross-border international issues, to the internationalisation of professional practice, and to diversity.

In the compulsory major component of the bachelor's programme, students learn about the various core disciplines which focus on the topic of public administration and organisation of public issues. Moreover, the supportive discipline courses look at the role of topics such as law and economics in PAOS and on the contribution they make to the analysis of public issues. Moreover, a social and professional skills programme forms a core part of the curriculum. By offering training sessions in topics such as ICT literacy, communication, social and cultural skills, it contributes to the realisation of the learning outcomes regarding professional skills and attitudes. Furthermore, the programme allows students to broaden their own disciplinary horizon through elective courses and/or individual curricular and extra-curricular research and project internships.

Four years ago the initial accreditation committee gave permission to organize the bachelor's programme according to the principles of small-scale and intensive education. The current panel has seen that in the meantime further progress has been made: the intended learning outcomes have been strengthened and reflect the programme's specific profile as a broad, multidisciplinary and research-based education programme with particular attention to communication and professional conduct. Hence, the panel considers that the intended learning outcomes of the bachelor's programme are adequate in terms of content (public administration / organization science), orientation (academic) and level (bachelor's).

Moreover, the panel is convinced that the current programme is more geared towards the international dimension of public administration and organisation science. Dutch-speaking students are increasingly exposed to programme objectives and course contents with a distinctively international and inter-cultural touch. Furthermore, the panel found that all relevant disciplines are addressed in the core curriculum of the programme taking up a considerable number of credits.

Considerations

In sum, the panel considers that the objectives/learning outcomes fit the ambition of the programme to offer a quality degree through small-scale and intensive education thereby training socially skilled and initiative-rich scholars with a wide interest in social developments.

Conclusion

The panel assesses Standard A, intended learning outcomes, as 'satisfactory'.

Standard B. Relationship between the goals and content of the programme

The content of the programme is inseparably connected to relevant extra-curricular activities, which ensures a high level and broadening of interests as set down in the intended learning outcomes.

Findings

The curriculum of the bachelor's programme consists of four types of courses: domain-specific disciplines such as public governance and organisational sciences, supportive disciplines such as constitutional and administrative law and sociology, methodology courses such as quantitative and qualitative enquiry, and electives. The panel observed that the structure of the curriculum is coherent and that the intended learning outcomes are translated adequately in the different components and individual courses of the programme.

The panel learned that there have always been some electives in the programme, but that this offer has been increased and systematised recently: students can tailor their three-year curriculum to gain a total of 60 EC: this includes one elective course in year 2, a minor subject of 30 EC in the fifth semester, and a specialisation in the graduation phase of 22.5 EC. Students mentioned that they see the increase in electives as a positive development, notably the minor subject which allows them to study abroad, take an internship or focus on a specific topic within or outside the realm of PAOS and

USG, which is in line with the 2014 recommendations. Students, moreover, indicated that they are effectively using this opportunity to study abroad or widen their knowledge basis by taking a university-wide minor subject outside PAOS.

The panel observed that, as recommended by the previous assessment panel, the content of the curriculum is also connected to extra-curricular activities. Bachelor's students can take additional honours courses, which are offered by the PAOS Academy and allow students to experiment and innovate. Given the distinctive character of the bachelor's programme, all students are eligible to enrol for the honours component. Students appreciate that they have room for self-development in this honours programme and can compose their own customised programme. While the panel welcomes the efforts of the programme to offer students a very broad choice of invariably interesting courses, it also recognised from the written materials and from the interviews that this choice is often causing stress to students who are pushing each other to do more and more. In the view of the panel, the programme may want to monitor that all students are participating and that they do so without undue pressures upon them. Furthermore, the panel observed that the Perikles study association is contributing to the extra-curricular programme by organising lectures, career days, debates and symposia.

Considerations

The panel considers that the bachelor's programme and the range of courses offered in the three-year curriculum are coherent. The intended learning outcomes are translated adequately in the different components and individual courses of the programme

Moreover, the panel gathers from the discussions on site that over the past few years good progress has been made in extending the course offer to opportunities outside USG, an offer that students are effectively accepting by either going abroad or studying at a different faculty. Furthermore, the panel considers that the current curriculum is adequately linked to extra-curricular activities and that this link is consistent in terms of both structure and content.

Conclusion

The panel assesses Standard B, relationship goals and content of the programme, as 'satisfactory'.

Standard C. Structure and didactic concept

The concept of the programme is aimed at creating an academic and/or professional community. Key terms are small-scale and intensively organised education, leading to a high number of hours of face-to-face teaching, close involvement between students and teachers and between students among themselves and socially relevant extra-curricular activities.

Findings

The panel observed that small-scale, motivating and intensive teaching is a distinctive feature of the educational philosophy in the bachelor's programme. An important element in this philosophy is the creation of a close academic community of staff, students and services. All interviewees confirmed that there is a community feeling and that this community is an important value added of the three-year bachelor's programme. The panel observed in the discussions the enthusiasm of both students and staff for this approach and their commitment to the programme.

The bachelor's programme includes few plenary lectures but relatively many contact hours (on average 12-16 hours per week). Most face-to-face core courses are organised in study groups (30 participants) or half study groups (15 students). In electives and specialisation courses the maximum group size is around 25 students; tutorials in the thesis preparation phase usually have five students. The panel learned that the small group size in combination with the fact that lecturers are expected to have a considerable teaching load leads to substantial interaction among students and between lecturers and students. Furthermore, the programme uses activating teaching methods: students receive a specific task which challenges them to develop and apply knowledge and insights on the



basis of practical assignments and projects. When discussing literature, students provide a lot of input and give presentations or organise sessions themselves.

The panel observed that the Perikles study association plays an important role in the formation of the academic community in the department. It not only organizes social activities for students within the programme, but it is also closely involved in the programme activities and is a distinct autonomous entity within USG. The panel gathered from the materials and interviews that Perikles is having a profound impact on bachelor's students and that the department helps to fund its activities. The panel noticed with approval that the Director of Bachelor's Education always refers to Perikles in his presentation and insists that visitors to USG such as this panel should meet representatives of the study association during their stay.

The panel investigated the integration of international and multi-cultural aspects in the community recommended by the 2014 assessment. The panel learned during the discussions, as well as from the internal document 'Agenda versterking internationalisering Bacheloropleiding' (2016), that over the past few years the internationalisation component of the bachelor's programme has been strengthened. In this way, students are increasingly exposed to the international and inter-cultural dimension of PAOS and prepared for a career that is likely to be international and inter-cultural. The intended learning outcomes are now referring explicitly to international and inter-cultural components, while individual courses have been adjusted to include more international topics. Both the optional and the honours part of the curriculum now include courses such as the minor European Governance or the International Research Project which have an international topic and are taught in English for an international student audience.

Considerations

The panel considers that in general the teaching and learning environment of the bachelor's programme is of high quality. In particular, the panel thinks highly of the teaching and learning methods which clearly reflect the small-scale and intensive character of the programme: students are often at the department for face-to-face teaching in small groups. There is a genuine community feeling among bachelor's students, which is facilitated by the department, the programme and the study association. The panel, moreover, acknowledges the efforts of the department and the programme to increase the international and inter-cultural component of the programme. This adjustment has not only an impact on the course content, but also brings Dutch and non-Dutch students closer together within the USG student community.

Conclusion

The panel assesses Standard C, structure and didactic concept, as 'satisfactory'.

Standard D. Intake

The programme has a sound selection procedure in place, aimed at admitting motivated and academically and/or professionally talented students.

Findings

In accordance with the Distinctive Feature small-scale and intensive education, the bachelor's programme is entitled to select up to 93 students per year. The panel learned that about 300 students apply and that the programme does not ask for a higher tuition fee, although it is entitled to so. The panel observed, moreover, that the programme has developed a comprehensive admission procedure to assess the motivation and talents of the students. The procedure is described extensively in the Self-Evaluation Report: selection tools include a written thematic interview, a proficiency test, recommendation, grade averages in previous education and an interview. The panel understood from the discussions that the programme tries to attract a more diverse audience, thereby including promising secondary school graduates from disadvantaged sections of the Dutch population.

The admission procedure for the bachelor's programme is set up in such a way that the main criterion for selection is the extent to which a candidate is likely to complete the programme successfully. As a result, incoming students are rather homogeneous in terms of capacity to succeed in the programme. Moreover, the educational philosophy with its small-scale education, intensive teaching and direct contacts with staff contributes to students levelling up quite quickly, if this is needed. Hence, the drop-out rate is fairly low.

Considerations

The panel considers that the selection procedure is adequate. The panel appreciates the efforts of the programme to attract a more diverse audience and encourage the programme to continue its outreach activities in schools.

Conclusion

The panel assesses Standard D, intake, as 'satisfactory'

Standard E. Quality of staff

The teachers have high-quality knowledge of the relevant subject and feel involved in the distinctive nature of the programme.

Findings

Staff have multiple roles – lecturer, supervisor, trainer - in helping students to achieve the programme objectives. The panel learned that almost all lecturers combine teaching and research and that education and teaching within USG benefits from the lecturers' involvement in the research programme Public Matters and the research lines Public Governance and Management and Organisation and Management. As several lecturers have both research (including contract research) and theoretical expertise, students get acquainted from the very beginning of the programme with working practices in the professional field. Moreover, the panel observed in the extensive staff overview indicating individual specialist disciplines, methodological expertise and societal topics that most lecturers have, in addition to a PhD, also a university teaching qualification (UTQ). When new lecturers are recruited, the programme not only looks at the science-based knowledge and expertise of the candidates, but also takes into account whether the pedagogical-didactic experience and qualities of the potential lecturer matches with the educational concept of the programme, and if they have affinity with intensive teaching methods and personal support and guidance to students.

The panel gathers from the discussion with lecturers that they appreciate working in a small-scale and intensive teaching environment and enjoy the regular contacts with students, both formally and informally. Lecturers indicated that the 'open-door policy' of the department and the concentration of all programme activities in one and the same building contribute to a community feeling of which not only students but also staff are part.

The panel observed that several but not all full professors are teaching in the bachelor's programme. Given the intensive form of education and the explicit link between research and teaching, the programme may want to involve even more professors in teaching at undergraduate level.

Considerations

The panel considers that the staff teaching in the bachelor's programme are properly qualified to deliver the courses within the educational framework of small-scale, motivating and intensive teaching. The panel appreciates the attention students receive – and acknowledge with enthusiasm – to making their bachelor's study an interesting and valuable experience. The panel acknowledges the high quality expertise that is present among staff in the department; while appreciating that students are exposed to this academic excellence, the panel nonetheless encourages the department and the programme to increase the number of full professors taking up teaching roles in the bachelor's programme.



Conclusion

The panel assesses Standard E, quality of staff, as 'satisfactory'.

Standard F. Number of staff

There are sufficient staff available to provide small-scale and intensive education and to ensure and develop individual contact between teachers and students.

Findings

According to the overview in the Self-Evaluation Report, USG staff on the bachelor's programme dedicate 10.8 FTE to education, which results in a staff-student ratio of 1:25 when counting a total student number of 275. Recently several new staff were hired: in the discussions the panel felt that the combination of existing and new lecturers is working out nicely.

Students, who had been somewhat critical about staff turnover in the Self-Evaluation Report, mentioned to the panel that this year, the newcomers have integrated well into the staff team; hence, students are again satisfied with the quality of the staff, both content-wise and in terms of didactics, as well as with their availability and their proximity in the building. Discussions with staff revealed that they feel comfortable in their teams with the bachelor's students and appreciate the educational philosophy of small-scale, motivating and intensive education.

Considerations

The panel considers that the number of staff on the bachelor's programme is adequate to deliver this small-scale and intensive programme. Based on the discussions on site, the panel gathers that the combination of existing and new staff is now working out nicely with students continuing to appreciate the small-scale community character of the programme and with staff being open and approachable.

Conclusion

The panel assesses standard F, number of staff, as 'satisfactory'.

Standard G. Available facilities

The programme has its own infrastructure with facilities for small-scale and intensive education and common extra-curricular social activities.

Findings

The panel observed that small-scale, motivating and intensive teaching is a distinctive feature of the educational philosophy in the bachelor's programme. An important element in this philosophy is the creation of a close academic community of staff, students and services. All interviewees confirmed that there is a community feeling and that this community is an important value added of the programme.

The facilities moreover contribute to this community feeling: the panel observed during the guided tour of the premises that the USG-building is conducive to this type of education as all courses take place within one and the same three-storey building, which facilitates small-scale teaching and informal encounters. The panel also gathered from the materials and interviews that the study association Perikles plays an important role in facilitating student life at the department, notably but not exclusively by organising extra-curricular activities such as parents' days, career days or debates. In addition, Perikles arranges a buddy system for international exchange students and plays an important role in the international research project.

Considerations

The panel considers that the facilities – building, staff, study association - at USG are conducive to promoting the organisation of this small-scale, motivating and intensive bachelor's programme.

Conclusion

The panel assesses Standard G, available facilities, as 'satisfactory'.

Standard H. Level realised

The content and the level of the final projects are in line with the level and the broadening of interests as set down in the intended learning outcomes. Graduates are admitted to prestigious postgraduate programmes and/or jobs. The success rates are substantially higher than those of other relevant programmes.

Findings

To assess the achieved learning outcomes of the programme, the panel studied a sample of theses for each programme (Appendix 7), and interviewed several alumni and representatives of the work field who employ graduates of the programme.

The bachelor's thesis consists of a research seminar and the final thesis product. Students choose one of the six specialisations of the department (reflecting the tracks of the master's programme), develop an individual thesis proposal, conduct their own research and report on the research results in the thesis. In order to establish whether students have effectively achieved the learning outcomes, the panel reviewed a sample of 15 theses covering the whole range of scores given. The panel observed that students are producing theses on a broad variety of topics. In each case, the panel found that the thesis fulfilled at least the minimum requirements one would expect of a final product of an academic programme at bachelor's level.

The programme sets out to train students for post-graduate programmes and/or an adequate job on the labour market. The panel learned that about 85% of the bachelor's graduates enter a (research) master's programme at USG or elsewhere. Bachelor's students indicated during the discussions that the programme is paying increasing attention to supporting students in their orientation towards the job market.

Asked what makes the USG PAOS graduates stand out from colleagues from other universities, both employers and alumni pointed to their academic, professional and social-communicative skills.

Students indicated to the panel that the individual courses are feasible and the number of contact hours appropriate. Because the drop-out rate is rather low, the success rates are higher than in other programmes. The panel read in the self-evaluation report that between 5% and 10% of students who start the programme do not complete it. While the total number of bachelor's students who eventually graduate is high (between 80% and 90%), the panel observed that bachelor's students face difficulties in graduating on time (about 25%). This topic has been discussed at length during the visit: given the broad choice of interesting curricular and extra-curricular courses, students often prefer to obtain more credits than needed, combine study with an extra-curricular internship or board year, or plan their thesis in connection with a research internship. The panel observed on the one hand that these practices are not discouraged and in fact align nicely with the cherished principle of 'Bildung' at USG. On the other hand, the panel also learned that the programme is starting to be more active in managing the expectations of students. The discussions with students highlighted that the programme could start by emphasising more clearly that students can graduate in three years and will then already have fulfilled the requirements to proceed to a relevant master's programme of their choice without having to follow additional courses.

Considerations

Having established that each bachelor's thesis studied by the panel fulfils at least the minimum criteria required, the panel considers that the intended learning outcomes of the bachelor's programme are achieved by the end of the curriculum. Based on the information provided in the reports and the enthusiasm of the alumni during the site visit, the panel gathers that upon graduation students tend to find a job that is in line with the level and domain of their studies. The panel thinks



highly of the way the programme addresses the employability of the bachelor's students as an integral part of the curriculum. In this regard, the programme achieves its intention to train students in professional skills and attitudes (conduct).

The panel considers that the bachelor's programme is feasible, with only a limited number of students dropping out and a high percentage of students eventually graduating. However, as many students tend to spread the three-year programme over four years because of the interesting extra-curricular activities on offer, the panel encourages the programme to continue, and even step up, its current efforts in managing student expectations and promoting timely graduation. Notwithstanding the extended graduation time, the panel acknowledges that – in comparison to other public administration programmes in the Netherlands – the overall success rate of the bachelor's programme PAOS is higher. According to data in the self-evaluation report relating to the cohort 2011/12, 85% of the PAOS bachelor's students graduated after four years, compared to about half of the students in other universities.

Conclusion

The panel assesses Standard H, level realised, as 'satisfactory'.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

With regard to the Distinctive Feature Small-Scale and Intensive Education of the bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organization Science, the panel assesses each of the eight standards as satisfactory. Within these standards, the panel observed that the bachelor's programme has addressed the five 'points of attention' that were raised by the previous accreditation panel. The assessment panel, therefore, issues a positive judgement on the practice-based assessment of the programme. It concludes that the Distinctive Feature Small-Scale and Intensive Education of the bachelor's programme can be reaffirmed.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: CURRICULA VITAE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

Prof. dr. T. (Tony) Bovaird (chair) is emeritus professor of the University of Birmingham (United Kingdom). He has previously worked at Aston Business School and Bristol Business School. From 2012 he has held a visiting chair in Meiji University (Japan) and has been visiting professor at various universities and business schools in the UK and abroad, such as the University of Bern, University of Barcelona, the University of Minho (Portugal) and the University of Brasilia. His research covers strategic management of public services, performance measurement in public agencies, evaluation of public management and governance reforms, and user and community co-production of public services. He has carried out research and has been involved in projects for, amongst others, the European Commission, several UK government departments and the Welsh Government. He is on the Governing Council of Local Areas Research and Intelligence Association (LARIA) and has been a member of the Strategy Board of the UK Research Councils' Local Government Initiative (LARCI) and the Local Government Reference Panel of the National Audit Office. He has given keynote speeches for several (inter)national annual conferences. Professor Bovaird is a member of the Editorial Board of the *International Public Management Journal* and co-author of *Public Management and Governance*. Professor Bovaird is a member of the Scientific Advisory Board of the German Institute for Public Administration Research and a non-executive director of Governance International.

Prof. dr. M. (Marleen) Brans (vice-chair) is professor at the KU Leuven Public Governance Institute. At KU Leuven she directs the Master in European Politics and Policies programme. At KU Leuven she directs the Master in European Politics and Policies programme, and the Master in Public Management and Policy. She currently teaches courses at bachelor, master, and advanced master level, such as Design and Strategy of Policy, Evaluation of Policy, Comparative Public Policies in Europe, and Policy Analysis. In the past she has taught other subjects such as Public Administration, Relations Government-Citizens, Governance and Steering, Research Seminar. Her research interests focus on the production and use of policy advice by academics, civil servants, personal advisors, and strategic advisory bodies. Her publications include the Routledge Handbook of Comparative Policy Analysis (edited with Iris Geva-May and Michael Howlett) and Policy Analysis Belgium (edited with David Aubin, Policy Press). She serves as Vice-President of the International Public Policy Association and as Chair of the Accreditation Committee of the European Association for Public Administration Accreditation. She serves on the board of the Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis, Policy and Society and Halduskultuur.

Prof. dr. P.B. (Peter) Sloep is professor emeritus in technology enhanced learning with the Open University of the Netherlands. There, he has been involved in the 'Lerarenuniversiteit', an expertise centre in the area of (continuous) teacher professional development in primary, secondary and vocational education. He also headed a unit that researched the use of online social networks for teaching and learning. His main area of expertise is professional development in and with social networks, existing or custom built; but his interests also cover learning design, open learning, massive open online courses (MOOCs), learning technologies in general and learning technology standards more in particular, knowledge sharing and knowledge creation in communities and online networks. Being trained as a theoretical biologist (including a PhD) and having worked as course developer for the OU in this and neighboring areas, Sloep turned his attention ever more towards the learning sciences, in particular towards educational technology.

Prof. E. (Esther) Versluis is professor of European Regulatory Governance at Maastricht University. She obtained her PhD in 2003 from Utrecht University and was awarded the Van Poelje prize for best PhD dissertation in the field of public administration for her dissertation on 'Enforcement Matters. Enforcement and Compliance of European Directives in Four Member States'. Since 2001 she is involved with education at Maastricht University, first as lecturer, as assistant professor and since 2015 as professor. She was member and chair of the Faculty Council and chair of the Graduate Program Committee Arts & Culture. Until 2014 she was director of Studies master's programme



European Public Affairs and is currently director of Studies of the bachelor's programme European Studies. In 2015 she was awarded the Best PhD supervisor of the year-award by the Netherlands Institute of Government. Professor Versluis' research concentrates on problems and complexities related to European regulatory governance. She is an active member of the Netherlands Institute of Government (NIG), the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR), the European Union Studies Association (EUSA) and the University Association for Contemporary European Studies (UACES).

Drs. H. (Henk) de Jong is Strategy Director and Deputy Commissioner at Police Netherlands. From 2007 to 2012 Henk de Jong served as general director at the city of Amsterdam. He has extensive experience as a senior public sector official, public sector consultant and entrepreneur with leading expertise in Dutch, EU and US government practices, with city, regional and national agencies, educational institutions, international businesses and philanthropies on policy-making, organizational change management, business development and crisis accountability. As a practitioner of public sector management, he serves on the Advisory Boards, works with academic institutions and is engaged in cultural initiatives. He frequently speaks at conferences, seminars, graduate-level and executive training programs that focus on the unique aspects and challenges of the public sector.

J.C. (Jasper) Meijering (student member) is master's student in Engineering and Policy Analysis at the Delft University of Technology. He obtained his bachelor's degree in Systems Engineering, Policy Analysis and Management also from the Delft University of Technology. His research focuses on using quantitative modelling and simulation techniques to address grand global challenges and acting as strategic policy advisor. He is selected for a scholarship program from, and works as Student Ambassador for, the Dutch Energy sector. From January 2016 to January 2017 he was selected to join outreach program Young Future Energy Leaders Program of the Masdar Institute in Abu Dhabi. In this capacity, he was a member of United Arab Emirates' delegation to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP22) in Marrakech, Morocco and attended the World Future Energy Summit 2016.

Prof. dr. J.J.A. (Jacques) Thomassen is professor emeritus of Political Science at the University of Twente and a member of the Netherlands Royal Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW). He is author and editor of numerous publications including *The European Voter*, *The Legitimacy of the European Union after Enlargement*, *Elections and Representative Democracy*, *Representation and Accountability* and *Myth and Reality of the Legitimacy Crisis. Explaining trends and cross-national differences in established democracies*. He served in many professional positions, amongst others as President of the Dutch Political Science Association from 1997 to 1999, as Scientific Director of the Netherlands Institute of Government (NIG) (1999-2004) and General Secretary of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) from 2008 to 2011.

Prof. mr. dr. J.E. (Jenneke) Bosch-Boesjes is professor emeritus Development and Differentiation in Academic Education at Groningen University. She studied Law and obtained her PhD at the University of Groningen on an internal comparative law study. During her academic career, she was researcher, assistant professor in private and procedural law, and professor at the University of Groningen. She also served as a member of the faculty board responsible for education, and as director of studies at the Faculty of Law. In 2009, Prof. Bosch-Boesjes became dean of the University of Groningen Honors College. Jenneke Bosch-Boesjes was judge in the District Court in Groningen, published widely in her field of research and was responsible for several educational innovations within the faculty.

APPENDIX 2: DOMAIN-SPECIFIC FRAMEWORK OF REFERENCE

Domain-specific requirements Public Administration, Public Governance, and Governance and Organization (PAGO) Programmes, 2010

Introduction

The study of public administration has developed and expanded into a broad interdisciplinary body of knowledge, which tackles a variety of themes and practices on public administration, governance and organization (PAGO). The academic community in the Netherlands acknowledges that throughout the years this field has widened and now includes not only public administration but also governance and organization. This entails a diversity of approaches on the one hand, but on the other, the conviction that these approaches are connected and interrelated and worthwhile to keep together. Programmes may share basic components, but also may differ to express their specialisation in this broadened field. This parallels developments in the profession. Alumni are increasingly challenged in a wide variety of fields that put varying demands regarding professional knowledge, skills and attitudes. In this frame of reference we will address this field as the PAGO-field: including public administration, public governance, and governance and organization.

In this domain-specific frame of reference we start with a brief summary regarding the development of the PAGO-field and argue that the broadening of the field is due to various exogenous and endogenous changes. Accordingly we will outline the programme principles of PAGO-studies as well as related learning outcomes.

Developments

The societal impact of processes like globalization, individualization and ICT has altered the nature of public problems. Issues like risk and security, environment and ecology, economics and welfare, and nationality and culture are high on the societal and political agenda. The impact of such problems has consequences for the abilities of (national) governments. It challenges them to reach beyond traditional approaches. This has led to manifold changes in political and administrative landscapes. New expectations and demands are expressed towards politics and administration, including moral standards. New criteria for performance have emerged that aim at 'value for money', new business-like concepts of management, and reformed public service delivery. There have been new interpretations of democracy and accountability, and of relations between state, civil society and the market.

Government and public administration not only changed its own practices, it also changed its relationship with society. Public administration thus moved towards governance, i.e. dealing with public problems through dispersed networks of organizations and actors, including social institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGO's), and private companies. Government and public policy are still relevant, but new outlooks and mechanisms are designed and used to make things work.

These developments have also changed the field of study of PA. Scholars started to use new concepts to understand developments, broadening categories such as 'government-governance', and crossing boundaries between the public and private world. These concepts include focused attention to issues like interdependence, ambiguity, networks, contextuality, governance, and the role of institutions, trust and integrity. These developments invited researchers to cross disciplinary borders and take aboard theories, concepts, methods and ideas, from organization studies (structure, culture, management, strategy, networks, et cetera) as well as other bodies of knowledge (new fields within economics, political science and sociology, communication theory, ethics and philosophy, geography, international relations and law, et cetera).

Another issue that needs to be highlighted is that the study of Public Administration in the Netherlands includes several fields that elsewhere are situated in political science. The PAGO-studies not only focus on classical PA issues, but also on public organization and management issues, as well as on subfields like 'public policy', 'policy making', 'public governance', 'public culture and ethics'.



Scholars of these issues are part of the broad 'PA' community, in research as well as in educational programmes.

Resulting Fields of Study

This PAGO-community consists of three fields of study. The first embodies the classical features of the discipline, concentrating on politics, administration and the public sector. Public administration often started within the context of (departments of) politics and/or law, with an emphasis on the study of government and bureaucracy as well as public policy-making and implementation.

The second emerged through the fact that public interests and public problems are increasingly tackled by a multitude of public and private actors. It broadened the scope of study to include nongovernmental actors, as part of the often complex public-private, multi-actor networks that deal with collective and public interests.

The third field focuses on questions of governance and organization that surpass the traditional public-private boundaries. It includes the study of private actors in social contexts. This orientation links the worlds of business administration and public administration and pays attention to what we know about management, strategy and behaviour in corporations. This approach can be labelled as 'governance and organization'.

PAGO today is a broad multi- and interdisciplinary field of science. The classical core disciplines of political science, law, sociology and economics are important, and there is an increasing involvement of disciplines that focus on organization, culture, and communication. Also, challenging new interchanges with bodies of knowledge in (for example) social and organizational psychology, planning studies and geography, philosophy and ethics and history have demonstrated added value.

The PAGO-community acknowledges that there are different views regarding object and focus of the field of study. For instance: is PAGO about knowledge by description, explanation and prediction, or is evaluation and improvement the prime goal? Or, how do we relate to and communicate with practitioners in public (and private) administration, governance and organization? Rather than excluding certain views, the PAGO-community welcomes a variety in approaches, ideas and outlook. This variety is also visible in the PAGO-programmes.

Defining programme principles

PAGO-programmes are academic programmes aiming at the development of academic knowledge, skills and attitude in students that are relevant for understanding public administration, governance and organization. They pay particular attention to social and political contexts and developments, relevant (interdisciplinary) bodies of knowledge, aim at developing research capacities, and contribute to working professionally in public and private domains. In this frame of reference we have listed elements that are to be seen as building blocks for academic programmes. As far as knowledge is concerned, contemporary programmes encompass various disciplinary views supporting the PAGO-domain, and various sorts of domain-specific knowledge. As far as skills are concerned, they encompass skills for applying and reflecting on scientific methods and approaches, integrating knowledge and skills for working in public domains/organizations. As far as attitude is concerned, it encompasses critical stances and moral stature. Each of these subfields is briefly elaborated in order to circumscribe specific learning outcomes at Bachelor's and Master's levels (see next paragraph).

Knowledge

Knowledge of society and changing contexts

Activities in public domains influence, are influenced by, and interact with social systems and developments. On the one hand, they constrain public sectors, as they reproduce values, traditions and culture(s). On the other hand, they call for public action; (new) facts, events and problems, fuelled by new technologies, pose new challenges. PAGO-programmes enhance understandings of

social structures and behaviours, societal trends and changes. This calls for an awareness of political, sociological, cultural, historical, philosophical, ethical, economic and judicial contexts.

Knowledge of political and administrative systems

The organization, processes and activities in public domains are shaped by and within political systems. PAGO-programmes should devote attention to the institutions, structure, organization and activities of such political systems, at different levels (local, regional, national, transnational). PAGO-programmes encompass political and social theories, including those regarding legitimacy and the democratic design and functioning of organizations in public domains. They also pay attention to the application of these theories in everyday practice.

Knowledge of (public) policy, decision making and implementation

Governance for societal problems includes many insights derived from various bodies of knowledge, ranging from high-level decision-making to everyday service delivery. PAGO-programmes address both classic and contemporary theories, methods and techniques of policy-making, management, decision-making, and their implementation in everyday practice.

Knowledge of organizations and organizing principles

Public domains entail a variety of organizations, some organized as classical government bodies, some as between the public and private sectors, while others have been influenced by and/or have taken on the characteristics of private organizations. There is a growing awareness that policies and service delivery must be organized and require well-trained and motivated professionals. This leads to a more explicit emphasis on organizational studies. PAGO programmes entail knowledge of organizational concepts/perspectives on organizing, domains of managerial activities, insights in organizational change and management tools.

Knowledge of governance and networks

The powers and authorities to intervene have become less governmental and more distributed. Due to organizational fragmentation, the rise of network relations, and the spread of (normative) governance models – e.g., 'joined up government', 'public-private partnerships', and 'corporate social responsibility' (CSR) – multiple parties have become active in dealing with public problems and representing public interests. PAGO-programmes pay attention to new relations and new governance regimes, having both theoretical and empirical consequences.

Skills

Research skills

The role of knowledge in (public) policies and organizations is crucial for its effectiveness, especially for understanding the complexity of contexts, structures, outcomes and behaviours. PAGO-programmes include methods of quantitative and qualitative social-scientific research to analyse and also emphasise a clear understanding of contextual aspects.

Integrative skills

Public domains can be analysed from different angles; theories are grounded in various disciplines. The quality of research and capacities of civil servants and other functionaries in public domains depend on integrative skills, i.e. abilities to combine, integrate and apply different bodies of knowledge. PAGO-programmes devote attention to and provide opportunities to practice integrative skills.

Cooperation and communication skills

The functioning of the public domain largely depends on the skills of actors to exchange ideas, to negotiate when necessary, and to cooperate in constructive ways. Civil servants and other functionaries use a repertoire of skills and attitudes to communicate ideas to audiences of experts as well as laymen. Cooperation is at the heart of PAGO and includes a sense of responsibility and leadership. PAGO-programmes devote attention to and provide opportunities to practice cooperative and communicative skills.



Attitude

Critical stances

PAGO programmes are academic programmes that not only facilitate cognitive learning and skill development, they also develop critical powers. Students are taught how to critically analyze arguments used by others, how to relate 'fashionable' statements, e.g. by politicians, to more traditional as well as to scientific insights, and how to reflect upon political and normative implications of policy choices and organizational design. PAGO-programmes devote attention to the development of a constructive, critical attitude.

Moral stature and professionalism

The eloquence and credibility of PAGO has two features. First is its ability to approach societal problems in effective ways, but second is the degree to which government and governance principles serves as a moral compass. PAGO-programmes train students in this respect for occupying positions in governance regimes (public and private), they also train students in developing appropriate or 'professional' conduct. This is a matter of guarding values, such as accountability and integrity, and of practicing values, such as entrepreneurship and innovation.

Academic learning outcomes for PAGO studies

The broad fields identified and circumscribed in the above are to be seen as programme criteria and, thus, as the building blocks of a programme. Each programme will emphasize a specific selection of these building blocks to impose specific learning outcomes on students. In the table below we list such learning outcomes. This is a generic list, both applicable for bachelor's and master's programmes.

The difference between both studies is in the degree of complexity; in the level of analysis; and in the independence of the student. Here we follow the distinctions made in the so-called Dublin descriptors. In this system a distinction is made between first cycle learning for bachelors and second cycle learning for masters. First cycle learning involves an introduction to the field of study. It aims at the acquisition and understanding of knowledge, ideas, methods and theories, elementary research activities, and basic skills regarding communication and learning competences. At second cycle learning we find a deeper understanding of knowledge; problem solving skills are developed for new and unexpected environments and broader contexts. Here students can apply knowledge in various environments. At the master's level we also expect a well-developed level of autonomy regarding the direction and choices in a study.

In generic bachelor's PAGO-programmes most of the learning outcomes will apply that are listed below. Master's programmes, however, usually have a much stronger thematic focus and may especially focus on a particular set of these learning outcomes that are best suited for that specialisation, but not covering all the learning outcomes listed below. We propose that the learning outcomes for the bachelor's level, apply for the master's level in the sense that students demonstrate that they are capable of:

- dealing with increased situational, theoretical and methodological complexity;
- demonstrating increased levels of autonomy and self-management;
- applying ideas, methods, theories in research and problem solving;
- mastering the complexity that is inherent to the field of specialisation.

In the table below we have organized the learning outcomes according to the Dublin descriptors. We present the main components of the Dublin descriptors in italics, and accordingly the proposed learning outcomes.

Knowledge and understanding

1 (Bachelor's) [Is] supported by advanced text books [with] some aspects informed by knowledge at the forefront of their field of study

2 (Master's) provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing or applying ideas often in a research context

- (Basic) knowledge of (changing) societal contexts
- (Basic) knowledge and understanding of the distinctive nature of organization, policy making, management, service delivery and governance in PAGO domains
- (Basic) awareness of political traditions and politics
- (Basic) knowledge and understanding of the discipline, PAGO-paradigms, intellectual tradition, theories and approaches
- (Basic) knowledge and understanding of multi-actor and multi-level concepts
- A general (basic) understanding regarding the dynamics and processes of actors in public domains, how these processes influence society and vice versa

Applying knowledge and understanding

1 (Bachelor's) [through] devising and sustaining arguments

2 (Master's) [through] problem solving abilities [applied] in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts

- (Basic) capacity to work at different levels of abstraction
- (Basic) skills in problem definition and problem solving in the PAGO domain
- (Basic) ability to distinguish normative preferences and empirical evidence
- (Basic) skills in combining, integrating and applying knowledge
- (Basic) insight into the scientific practice
- (Basic) capacity to select a suitable theoretical framework for a given empirical problem
- (Basic) skills in combining normative and empirical aspects
- (Basic) capacity to build arguments and reflect upon the arguments of others
- (Basic) awareness of relevant social, ethical, academic and practical issues

Making judgments

1 (Bachelor's) [involves] gathering and interpreting relevant data

2 (Master's) [demonstrates] the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements with incomplete data

- (Basic) ability to formulate research questions on problems in the PAGO-domain
- (Basic) knowledge regarding research on social-scientific positions and thinking
- (Basic) training in and application of quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods social science research
- (Basic) abilities to collect data and to derive judgments thereof

Communication

1 (Bachelor's) [of] information, ideas, problems and solutions

2 (Master's) [of] their conclusions and the underpinning knowledge and rationale (restricted scope) to specialist and non-specialist audiences (monologue)

- (Basic) capacity to use argumentative skills effectively
- (Basic) capacity to function in multi- and interdisciplinary teams in several roles
- (Basic) capacity to function effectively in governance, organization, management, policy and advocacy settings
- (Basic) capacity to use communicative skills effectively in oral and written presentation

Learning skills

1 (Bachelor's) have developed those skills needed to study further with a high level of autonomy

2 (Master's) study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous

- Learning attitude
- (Basic) capacity to reflect upon one's own conceptual and professional capacities and conduct



APPENDIX 3: INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Primary aim of the Public Administration and Organisation Science Bachelor's degree programme is: *To educate motivated people who are able and willing to use their academic knowledge in the field of public administration and organisation to make a useful contribution to the solution of public issues.*

To this end, the degree programme has three learning pathways:

1. The substance of the public administration and organisation of public issues: Knowledge and understanding which are important for the contextualised understanding and analysis of the public administration and organisation of public issues. The cognitive skills to use this knowledge in concrete situations and to look critically at both the theory and practice.
2. Research into the public administration and organisation of public issues: The skills to research the public administration and organisation of public issues using a variety of approaches in order to generate both scientifically and socially relevant insights.
3. Professional actions in the public administration and organisation of public issues: The necessary skills and attitude to play a useful and professional role in solving public issues based on relevant knowledge and research skills.

This leads to the following educational aims for each of the learning pathways in the Bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organisation Science.

The substance of the public administration and organisation of public issues (S):

The graduate:

1. is aware of and understands basic public administration and organisational science theories, particularly in the areas of (a) management, policy, decision-making and implementation, (b) organisations and organisational principles, and (c) forms of cooperation between organisations in the solving of public issues, and is able to critically reflect on these issues at a basic level;
2. is aware of and understands the basics of the disciplines of sociology, psychology, political science, economics, law and philosophy which are relevant to the study of public administration and organisation, and understands the importance of these for the study of public issues;
3. has insight into the social, political, historical, international and intercultural dimensions of the public administration and organisation of public issues, and is aware of the diversity of approaches and backgrounds which play a role in this;
4. has immersed themselves in particular in aspects of public administration and organisation of public issues and has broadened their knowledge with insights into self-selected themes from within and/or outside the public administration and organisational science field of study;
5. is able to use and reflect upon this theoretical background, both in its totality and in smaller units, in the analysis of practical situations in the field of public administration and organisation of public issues and can convert this analysis into theoretically substantiated action plans.

Research into the public administration and organisation of public issues (R):

The graduate:

1. is aware of, understands, and has insight into the basics of qualitative and quantitative research methods into the public administration and organisation of public issues;
2. has insight into the fundamental philosophical scientific assumptions around research and research methods and can apply this insight to their own research and that of others;
3. can formulate a clear and researchable problem statement for research into socially and scientifically relevant elements of the public administration and organisation public issues from a local, national, international and comparative perspective;
4. can adequately operationalise the concepts in a problem statement; can carry out coherent theoretical and empirical research into a topic; can draw a clear, synthesising conclusion; can use the results to answer the research question or to contribute to the clarification and, where possible, resolution of a public issue.

Professional actions in the public administration and organisation of public issues:

For professional skills (Sk):

The graduate:

1. can form a critical opinion based in part on relevant social, scientific and ethical elements such as responsibility and integrity;
2. is able to provide adequate verbal and written communication, in both Dutch and English, about the basics of public administration and organisation of public issues and about research into this area, to a specialist and/or non-specialist audience whilst keeping the social consequences of this communication in mind;
3. has the skills to exchange ideas and work with others constructively and is, in particular, able to reflect on their own role, strengths and weaknesses in this context, has insight into the basics of group dynamics and in opposing interests, and has the necessary competencies to constructively negotiate these interests;
4. can give well-founded, constructive feedback into the behaviour and achievements of others and can use the feedback they receive to develop their own behaviour;
5. is in possession of the necessary independent meta-cognitive skills to start either a Dutch or English Master's programme¹.

For a professional attitude (A):

The graduate has started to develop an attitude that demonstrates:

1. an awareness of the value of a diversity of approaches to issues and can value the role that various backgrounds play in both a national and international context;
2. a critical reflection of their own values and behaviour in relation to people from a different (cultural) background, and empathy for others which enables them to cooperate well and make useful connections with others;
3. sensitivity to the context of professional behaviour and an awareness of their own role in this and the consequences of their actions;
4. a sense of the ethical responsibility and importance of integrity in relation to managing and organising public issues and in researching them.

¹ Skills such as processing complex scientific information (such as articles), independently prioritising and planning their work, analysing what action is needed to acquire certain knowledge and skills, applying relevant learning strategies, and reflecting on their own performance.



APPENDIX 4: OVERVIEW OF THE CURRICULUM

BA1 Period 1	EC	BA1 Period 2	EC	BA1 Period 3	EC	BA1 Period 4	EC
Public Governance: government, policy and organisation USG1020	7,5	Classical Texts on Governance USG1010	7,5	Researching Governance: Methods and Statistics USG1050	7,5	Quantitative Inquiry of Public Organisations USG1030	7,5
Trends in Dutch Society USG1060	7,5	Organisational Sciences: Perspectives on Organising USG1080	7,5	Management Studies: Managing Service Delivery USG1070/USG1070H	7,5	Economics and Public Governance USG1100	7,5
BA2 Period 1	EC	BA2 Period 2	EC	BA2 Period 3	EC	BA2 Period 4	EC
Organisations and Organising USG2090	7,5	Optional course	7,5	Philosophy of Science USG2030	7,5	Qualitative Inquiry USG2020	15
Constitutional and Administrative Law USG2060	7,5	Comparative Analysis of Political Institutions USG2051	7,5	Policy, Rationality and Power USG2010	7,5		
BA3 Period 1	EC	BA3 Period 2	EC	BA3 Period 3	EC	BA3 Period 4	EC
Optional course	7,5	Optional course	7,5	<i>Research seminars (parttime):</i> - Civil society: Organising between State and Market USG3130 - Organising Interaction USG3150 - Governance, Democracy and Accountability USG3160 - Future of Work: Management of People and Organisation USG3190 - Organisations on the Move USG3200 - Public Management USG3210	7,5	<i>Research seminars (fulltime):</i> - Civil society: Organising between State and Market USG3130 - Organising Interaction USG3150 - Governance, Democracy and Accountability USG3160 - Future of Work: Management of People and Organisation USG3190 - Organisations on the Move USG3200 - Public Management USG3210	15
Optional course		Optional course		Governance of Public Issues: Analysing and Consulting USG3031	7,5		

APPENDIX 5: PROGRAMME OF THE SITE VISIT

Monday 11 December 2017

09.00 Arrival at Utrecht School of Governance (USG)
09.10 Internal meeting panel
12.30 Management USG
13.30 Lunch
14.15 Bachelor's students
15.05 Bachelor's lecturers
16.05 Board of Examiners
17.00 Transfer to hotel
17.30 Internal meeting panel (Court Hotel)
18.30 end of day 1

Tuesday 12 December 2017

08.30 Open consultation hour (Court Hotel)
09.30 Alumni and professional field Ba + Ma
10.20 Master's students
11.25 Master's lecturers
12.20 Lunch
13.30 Internal meeting panel
14.15 Management Research Master's programme
15.00 Research Master's students
15.45 Research Master's lecturers
16.30 Alumni and professional field RM
17.00 Internal meeting panel
17.45 Final meeting management Research Master's
18.15 Internal meeting panel
19.00 end of day 2

Wednesday 13 December 2017

09.00 Alumni and professional field Executive Master's
09.45 Executive Master's students
10.30 Executive Master's lecturers
11.00 Internal meeting panel
12.15 Final meeting management Ba + Ma + EM
13.00 Lunch and internal meeting panel
15.30 Feedback to USG on key panel findings
16.15 Development dialogue
17.15 End of site visit

APPENDIX 6: QUANTITATIVE DATA REGARDING THE PROGRAMME

Intake and success rates of the programme

2011: 93 Students > 6 stopped (7%)			
		total	percentage
graduates	<3 years	25	27%
	3-4 years	79	85%
	>4 years	85	91%
	Still studying	2	
EC			
= 3 years	>180 EC	25	27%
= 3 years	180 EC	20	22%
>3 years	165-180 EC	9	10%
>3years	150-165 EC	13	14%

2012: 93 Students > 6 Stopped (7%)			
		total	percentage
graduates	<3 years	19	20%
	3-4 years	71	76%
	>4 years	81	87%
	Still studying	6	
EC			
= 3 years	>180 EC	21	23%
= 3 years	180 EC	25	27%
>3 years	165-180 EC	11	12%
>3years	150-165 EC	12	13%

2013: 93 Students > 7 stopped 7 (8%)			
		total	percentage
graduates	<3 years	16	17%
	3-4 years	37	40%
	>4 years ³	-	-
	Still studying		
EC			
= 3 years	>180 EC	14	15%
= 3 years	180 EC	23	25%
>3 years	165-180 EC	19	20%
>3years	150-165 EC	11	12%

Contact hours

Year	Contact hours*
Bachelor 1	12 - 18
Bachelor 2	10 - 14 with exception of the research-course (15 EC) and optional course (7,5 EC)
Bachelor 3	10 - 12 with exception of the research-seminar (22,5 EC), optional courses/internship (15 EC)

* Including: scheduled lessons, working in groups, assessments and supervision

Teacher quality

Staff	Number	UTQ
Professor	8	8
Associate professor	14	14
Assistant professor	37	32
Lecturer	8	0
Total	67	54

APPENDIX 7: THESES AND DOCUMENTS STUDIED BY THE PANEL

Prior to the site visit, the panel studied 15 theses of the bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organization Science. The associated student numbers are available through QANU upon request.

In the framework of the site visit, the panel studied, among other things, the following documents (partly as hard copies, partly via the institute's electronic learning environment):

- Self-Evaluation Report, Bachelor's Programme Public Administration and Organisation Science, Utrecht, August 2017.
- Appendices to the self-evaluation report of the bachelor's programme, August 2017.

Course materials, evaluations and assessments Bachelor's PAOS:

- Researching Governance: Methods and Statistics (USG1050 Bachelor 1)
- Organizations and Organizing (USG2090 Bachelor 2)
- Governance of Public Issues: Analysis & Consultancy (USG3031 Bachelor 3)

Other materials

- Course Manuals
- Literature
- Reports by Programme Committee
- Examination Board materials
- Materials on Honours Programme
- Materials on Diversity
- Number of graduates Bachelor's programme PAOS
- Agenda versterking internationalisering bacheloropleiding, 2016
- Plan van Aanpak Internationalisering, mei 2015
- Versterken internationale en interculturele competenties, april 2015

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