



**B Landscape Architecture and Planning**  
**M Landscape Architecture and Planning**  
**Wageningen University**

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## Summary

### Standard 1. Intended learning outcomes

The bachelor's programme Landscape Architecture and Spatial Planning (BLP) focuses on the study of planning, design, and governance of landscapes. The programme is grounded in the study of various disciplines from social and natural science, such as soil/water science, ecology, geo-information systems, human geography, landscape engineering, land-use economics, and politics, as the basis for planning and design. Students are trained to plan, design, and manage landscapes with critical academic reflection on both process and outcomes. The master's programme Landscape Architecture and Spatial Planning (MLP) aims to train students to become innovative leaders in the field of landscape architecture and spatial planning, for example as designers, spatial planners, consultants, policy-makers, or researchers. The programme focuses on the understanding of the complex relationships between humans, non-humans, and landscapes. It addresses important challenges with regard to current landscape transitions. Students acquire design and spatial planning skills as well as research skills that enable them to critically reflect on design and planning. BLP and MLP both offer two specializations: 'Landscape Architecture' and 'Spatial Planning'.

The panel is positive about the programmes' profiles. It especially values the holistic approach to landscapes, allowing students to become aware of the interconnectedness between the various aspects related to landscapes. The panel considers this holistic approach to be a distinctive feature of the programmes, which may be articulated and showcased more prominently. The panel also greatly values the programmes' strong focus on science and research, which differentiates them from similar programmes. The attention for research through design in MLP's specialization 'Landscape Architecture' fits well with the field of landscape architecture. Both programmes focus primarily on Dutch landscapes, which the panel considers appropriate. The Dutch landscapes serve as examples that allow students to acquire methods and skills that are applicable in any part of the world. The panel considers the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) to be well formulated, well aligned to the bachelor's and master's level as described in the Dublin descriptors, and covering all relevant areas in the field of landscape architecture and spatial planning. The revitalized External Advisory Committee (EAC) is an active community, consulting the programmes regarding their profiles, current developments, and the expectations and needs of the professional field. The panel encourages the programmes to continue to invest in the EAC and to explicitly consult it about the ILOs and the curricula as well.

### Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment

According to the panel, the curricula of both programmes are well designed and well structured, covering all important topics. The panel appreciates the multidisciplinary approach that is evident in the curricula and the fine balance between theory and application. The studios allow for the application and integration of knowledge and skills from different disciplines. Regarding BLP, the panel advises the programme to improve and clarify the connections between courses by intensifying the alignment and interaction between teachers and by strengthening the learning lines. Also, customizing the statistics and mathematics courses is advisable. Regarding the specialization 'Landscape Architecture' in MLP, the panel underlines the relevance of research through design as an appropriate research method, and is happy to see that the programme recently introduced a new course that elaborates on this approach. The panel recommends to closely monitor the impact of the recently revised structure of the graduation project, to make sure that it sufficiently supports research through design.

MLP is taught in English, which, according to the panel, flows logically from the international nature of the field of landscape architecture and spatial planning. The teaching methods used in the programmes are diverse and include various activating formats, such as excursions, projects for clients, and (design) studios. The panel compliments the programmes for their hands-on approach and focus on experience-based learning. The international classroom also adds value to the learning environment. The panel does feel that the didactics could be better aligned across courses, particularly in BLP, and advises the programme to develop an overview of the didactics applied and to make sure that there is a good balance and alignment.

The panel is very positive about the three dedicated study advisors. They are well informed, proactive, and strongly student-centred, offering students valuable guiding. Despite the various ways in which the study advisors support BLP students in choosing a specialization, some students still feel uncertain about this decision. The panel advises to look for ways to further improve the guidance and support for students in choosing a specialization by proactively preparing students throughout the first year and by providing more information on the content of the specializations and the related profiles in the job market. The panel believes that the programmes are feasible, and is happy to see that study progress is actively monitored by the programmes. Where possible, measures are taken to improve the feasibility. To further decrease study delay, the panel recommends MLP to stick to the allocated time period for the thesis project and not to allow the granting of extra time to become the norm. The panel appreciates the dialogue, initiated by the programmes, on workload, contact hours, and experienced stress and pressure related to the studios. It recommends continuing this dialogue and exploring ways to build more 'breath' into the programmes.

The teaching staff has sufficient expertise on all areas related to landscape architecture and spatial planning. The teachers are didactically qualified and, in the case of MLP, have sufficient proficiency in English. The teachers are dedicated, student-centred, and accessible, fostering an open atmosphere. The panel advises to intensify communication within the learning line teacher teams and within the teaching team as a whole, in order to strengthen the alignment and coherence within the programmes. Also, teachers' supervising styles should be harmonized, to make sure that students are treated consistently and fairly across the board.

According to the panel, the facilities for students with a disability are appropriate and sufficient. For studio projects, the programmes have dedicated studio space. However, both staff and students feel that the studio space is insufficient. The panel underlines the importance of expanding the studio facilities and advises the university to support the programmes in realizing this.

### Standard 3. Student assessment

The panel considers the assessment in the programmes to be well designed, allowing students to achieve the final exit level for all ILOs. In both programmes, there is a fine diversity of assessment methods and a good balance of individual and group assessments. Assessment could be further improved by developing an overview of formative assessment in the programmes and including formative assessment in the assessment matrices. The programmes may also reconsider some assessment methods and explore alternative grading methods that are less intense, to lower the workload. The assessment procedure for the thesis project is well structured. Each thesis is assessed by two assessors, based on an elaborate form, including written feedback. For BPL, the panel recommends to revisit the criteria and their respective weights in the assessment form, to make sure that it leads to a justified overall grade.

The panel considers the Examining Board of Environment and Landscape (EBEL) to be independent, competent and in control. It is proactive in safeguarding the quality of assessment and the exit level, amongst others by performing chair group visits and thesis reviews. So far, thesis reviews were only performed for MLP. The panel highly recommends EBEL to perform thesis reviews for BLP as well.

#### Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes

Based on the review of a sample of 15 theses per programme, the panel concludes that the level demonstrated in these theses is appropriate for an academic bachelor's/master's programme. The documentation and the interviews indicate that graduates of BLP are well prepared to follow a master's programme. MLP graduates are well prepared for and prove to be successful in the professional field. Alumni from these programmes appear to have a good reputation in the professional field.

#### Score table

The panel assesses the programmes as follows:

##### *Bachelor's programme Landscape Architecture and Planning*

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

##### *Master's programme Landscape Architecture and Planning*

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

General conclusion positive

Prof. dr. Jacqueline van Muijlwijk, panel chair Anne-Lise Kamphuis MSc, panel secretary

Date: 20 March 2025

# Introduction

## Procedure

### Assessment

On 2 and 3 December 2024, the bachelor's and master's programmes Landscape Architecture and Planning of Wageningen University were assessed by an independent peer review panel as part of the cluster assessment WO Life Sciences and Natural Resources 3. The assessment cluster consisted of ten programmes, offered by the Wageningen University. The assessment followed the procedure and standards of the NVAO Assessment Framework for the Higher Education Accreditation System of the Netherlands (September 2024).

Quality assurance agency Academion coordinated the assessment upon request of Wageningen University. Jessica van Rossum acted as coordinator and panel secretary. Anne-Lise Kamphuis, Rik Ligthart and Sarah Boer also acted as panel secretaries in the cluster assessment. They have been certified and registered by the NVAO. Anne-Lise Kamphuis acted as panel secretary for the site visit in which the Landscape Architecture and Planning programmes were assessed.

### Preparation

Academion composed the peer review panel in cooperation with the institution and taking into account the expertise and independence of the members, as well as consistency within the cluster. On 6 September 2024, the NVAO approved the composition of the panel. The coordinator instructed the panel chair on its role in the site visit according to the Panel chair profile (NVAO, 2016).

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

The programmes provided the secretary with a list of graduates of the academic years 2021-2022, 2022-2023 and 2023-2024. In consultation with the coordinator, the panel chair selected 15 theses of the bachelor's programme. From the specialization Landscape Architecture, 7 theses were selected. From the specialization Spatial Planning, 8 theses were selected. The coordinator and chair also selected 15 theses from the master's programme. From the specialization Landscape Architecture, 7 theses were selected. From the specialization Spatial Planning, 8 theses were selected. The diversity of final grades was taken into account. Prior to the site visit, the programmes provided the panel with the theses and the accompanying assessment forms. They also provided the panel with an information file (see appendix 4).

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

### Site visit

During the site visit, the panel interviewed various programme representatives (see appendix 3). The panel also offered students and staff members an opportunity for confidential discussion during a consultation

hour. No consultation was requested. The panel used the final part of the site visit to discuss its findings in an internal meeting. Afterwards, the panel chair publicly presented the preliminary findings.

## Report

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

## Panel

The following panel members were involved in the cluster assessment:

- Prof. dr. J.E. (Jacqueline) van Muijlwijk-Koezen, Chief Education Officer and professor in Innovations in Human Health and Life Sciences at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (chair);
- Ir. M.L. (Margot) Kok, Director of Education at the Faculty of Science at Utrecht University;
- Dr. A.A.J. (Annik) Van Keer, policy officer for Education at Utrecht University;
- Dr. Ir. L.G.J. (Luc) Boerboom, associate professor at the Faculty of Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation at the Universiteit Twente;
- Dr. G.M. (Garrett) Broad PhD, associate professor in Communication Studies at Rowan University (United States of America);
- Prof. V.B. (Vilis) Brukas, professor in Forest Planning at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (Sweden);
- Prof. dr. M. (Marleen) De Troch, associate professor in Marine Ecology at Ghent University (Belgium);
- Prof. dr. M.P. (Michael) Gilek, professor in Environmental Science at Södertörn University (Sweden);
- Prof. dr. Ing. B.J.J.M. (Bart) van der Hurk, Scientific Director at Deltares and professor in Climate Interactions with the Socio-Ecological System at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam;
- Prof. dr. P.L. (Pierre) Ibisch, professor in Socio-ecology of Forest Ecosystems at the Hochschule für nachhaltige Entwicklung Eberswalde (Germany);
- Dr. T.K. (Torsten) Krause, associate professor at the Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies of Lund University (Sweden);
- Em. prof. dr. B.A. (Bruce) Lankford, professor emeritus in Water and Irrigation Policy at the University of East Anglia (United Kingdom);
- Prof. dr. T. (Tatiana) Loboda, professor at the Department of Geographical Sciences of the University of Maryland (United States of America);
- Prof. dr. ing. S. (Steffen) Nijhuis, professor in Landscape-based Urbanism at the Technical University Delft (referee panel member);
- Dr. M.A.F. (Mirjam) Ros-Tonen, researcher and former associate professor at the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences of the University of Amsterdam;
- Prof. dr. S.T. (Sabine) Timpf, professor in Geoinformatics at the University of Augsburg (Germany);
- Prof. dr. V.B. (Veerle) Van Eetvelde, professor in Landscape research at Ghent University (Belgium);
- Prof. dipl. ing. (Christian) Werthmann, professor in Landscape Architecture and Design at Leibniz University Hannover (Germany);
- J.A. (Job) Tuinder BSc, master's student Earth Sciences at the University of Amsterdam (student member);
- F. (Finn) van der Straaten BSc, master's student International Development Studies at the University of Amsterdam (student member).

- Prof. dr. ing. S. (Steffen) Nijhuis, professor in Landscape-based Urbanism at the Delft University of Technology, Department of Urbanism, Section Landscape Architecture (referee panel member).

The panel assessing the bachelor's and master's programme Landscape Architecture and Planning at Wageningen University consisted of the following members:

- Prof. dr. J.E. (Jacqueline) van Muijlwijk-Koezen, Chief Education Officer and professor in Innovations in Human Health and Life Sciences at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (chair);
- Ir. M.L. (Margot) Kok, Director of Education at the Faculty of Science at Utrecht University;
- Prof. dr. V.B. (Veerle) Van Eetvelde, professor in Landscape research at Ghent University (Belgium);
- Prof. dipl. ing. (Christian) Werthmann, professor in Landscape Architecture and Design at Leibniz University Hannover (Germany);
- J.A. (Job) Tuinder, master's student Earth Sciences at the University of Amsterdam (student member);
- Prof. dr. ing. S. (Steffen) Nijhuis, professor in Landscape-based Urbanism at the Delft University of Technology, Department of Urbanism, Section Landscape Architecture (referee panel member).

## Information on the programmes

Name of the institution:	Wageningen University
Status of the institution:	Publicly funded institution
Result institutional quality assurance assessment:	Positive
Programme name:	B Landscape Architecture and Planning (Dutch name: B Landschapsarchitectuur en Ruimtelijke Planning)
CROHO number:	56848
Level:	Bachelor
Orientation:	Academic
Number of credits:	180 EC
Specializations or tracks:	Landscape Architecture Spatial Planning
Location:	Wageningen
Mode(s) of study:	Fulltime
Language of instruction:	Dutch
Submission date NVAO:	1 May 2025
Programme name:	M Landscape Architecture and Planning
CROHO number:	66848
Level:	Master
Orientation:	Academic
Number of credits:	120 EC
Specializations or tracks:	Landscape Architecture Spatial Planning
Location:	Wageningen
Mode(s) of study:	Fulltime
Language of instruction:	English
Submission date NVAO:	1 May 2025

## Description of the assessment

### Organization

Wageningen University comprises of one faculty with five science groups, also known as departments. These science groups are Agrotechnology and Food Sciences, Animal Sciences, Environmental Sciences, Plant Sciences, and Social Sciences. The science groups deliver education through chair groups. The science groups are responsible for the management of the activities of the chair groups and the research institutes of Wageningen Research (WR). Chair groups are usually clustered according to similarities under the broad field of a particular science group. A chair group is the organizational component within Wageningen University to give shape to academic teaching and research and create societal value in a specific field. There are about ninety chair groups, each of them led by a professor, that conduct research in specific domains. Despite the exclusiveness of every chair group, they all work under the thematic area of healthy food and living environment. A chair group can be involved in the education of more than one programme. The involvement of chair groups in a programme is evident in the courses and the specializations. For each educational programme, the Board of Education oversees that the programme director and the programme committee, consisting of students and teachers, develop and update bachelor's and master's curricula and align with the chair group(s) on whether new courses and specializations are needed and/or existing courses or thesis specializations have to be enhanced.

### Previous accreditation's panel's recommendations

The previous accreditation of the programmes took place in 2019. For the bachelor's programme Landscape Architecture and Spatial Planning (BLP), the panel assessed standards 1 and 2 as good, and standards 3 and 4 as satisfactory. For the master's programme Landscape Architecture and Spatial Planning (MLP), the panel assessed standards 1, 2, and 4 as good, and standard 3 as satisfactory. The panel gave a number of recommendations. In response to these recommendations, the programmes implemented several improvements, including various changes in (the scheduling of) courses to reduce students' workload, a training for course coordinators on developing an assessment strategy, the implementation of a new central grade administration system for a.o. theses and internships, and more attention for students' graphical skills.

The panel examined the programmes' response to the recommendations and concludes that they have been seriously acted upon by the programmes. The panel is generally content with the improvement measures taken and with the argumentation provided for suggestions that were not fully followed up on. The recommendation on lowering the pressure on facilities and teaching staff has received a lot of attention but remains a challenge for the programmes. This will be addressed further on in this report. The panel is impressed with the recent developments in the programmes that have accelerated improvements.

### Standard 1. Intended learning outcomes

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

### Findings

#### *Vision and profile*

BLP focuses on the study of planning, design, and governance of landscapes. The programme is grounded in the study of various disciplines from social and natural science, such as soil/water science, ecology, geo-

information systems, human geography, landscape engineering, land-use economics, and politics, as the basis for planning and design. Students are trained to plan, design, and manage landscapes with critical academic reflection on both process and outcomes. The ambition is to create, maintain, protect, and enhance places to be functional, beautiful, sustainable, and appropriate for diverse human, non-human, and ecological needs. BLP offers two specializations: 'Landscape Architecture' and 'Spatial Planning'.

MLP aims to train students to become innovative leaders in the field of landscape architecture and spatial planning, for example as designers, spatial planners, consultants, policy-makers, or researchers. The programme focuses on the understanding of the complex relationships between humans, non-humans, and landscapes. It addresses important challenges with regard to current landscape transitions, such as the effects of climate change, the growing need for sustainable energy sources, the demand for local food production (in urban areas), and the impact of globalization. Students acquire design and spatial planning skills as well as research skills that enable them to critically reflect on design and planning. Similar to BLP, MLP offers two specializations: 'Landscape Architecture' and 'Spatial Planning'.

The panel appreciates the profiles of both BLP and MLP. It especially values the holistic approach to landscapes that is evident in both programmes. The programmes emphasize seeing the landscape as a whole, including a solid understanding of the soil and water dynamics. Students learn to be aware of the interconnectedness between the various aspects related to landscape. The panel considers this holistic approach to be a distinctive feature of the programmes that can significantly strengthen their profiles. The panel thinks that the programmes would benefit from articulating and showcasing their distinctive profile more clearly to prospective students. This is particularly relevant for the specialization 'Spatial Planning' in both programmes, as the holistic approach differentiates this specialization from similar programmes at other institutions.

Another distinctive quality of the programmes is their strong focus on science and research. The panel greatly values the research component, which provides a solid foundation for both academic and practical applications. The panel encourages the programmes to continue to develop and build on this strength. In MLP's specialization 'Landscape Architecture', 'research through design' is addressed as a method that students can apply. The panel agrees with the programme's aim to increase the attention for research through design, as this fits well with the field and nature of landscape architecture. The panel underlines that students should learn to perform research through design, understanding it as an iterative process integrating research and design.

Both BLP and MLP focus primarily on landscapes in the Netherlands. This is partly motivated by practical reasons, in light of opportunities for excursions and real-life cases that students can work on. The Dutch landscapes serve as examples for students to learn from. Both urban and rural landscapes are addressed, but the emphasis is on rural landscapes and the transition between urban and rural landscapes. The panel understands the programmes' choice to focus on Dutch landscapes. The interviews during the site visit made clear that students acquire methods and transferrable skills that are applicable in any part of the world. Students are prepared to apply their knowledge and skills in contexts outside the Netherlands.

According to the panel, the programmes match well with the university's vision to educate future change makers. The panel encourages the programmes to embrace this even more and to highlight how the programmes empower students to contribute to the transformation of landscapes by envisioning and designing transformative scenarios with creativity and purpose.

### *Intended learning outcomes*

For BLP, ten intended learning outcomes (ILOs) were formulated to describe the exit level of the programme. MLP formulated eight shared ILOs for both specializations, and two additional ILOs for each specialization (see appendix 1 for an overview of both programmes' ILOs). In a table included in the documentation, the ILOs are related to the various Dublin descriptors. The panel considers BLP's and MLP's ILOs to be well formulated and appropriate for the respective bachelor's and master's level as described in the Dublin descriptors. The ILOs cover all relevant areas related to the field of landscape architecture and spatial planning.

### *Professional field*

The programmes have a shared External Advisory Committee (EAC), consisting of a variety of representatives from different sectors in the professional field. The EAC was revitalized in 2024. Prior to 2024, no EAC meeting had taken place since 2018. As part of the revitalization, the programmes decided to increase the number and diversity of professionals represented in the EAC. The EAC is consulted about the programmes' profile and reputation in the professional field, alignment with the needs and expectations of the professional field, and current developments. The panel is happy to see that the EAC was relaunched. Based on the documentation and the interviews during the site visit, the panel concludes that the EAC is a valuable and active community that allows the programmes to align with the demands and developments in the professional field. The panel appreciates the diversity of professionals represented in the committee. It encourages the programmes to continue to invest in the EAC and to explicitly consult it about the ILOs and the curricula as well.

### *Considerations*

The panel is positive about the programmes' profiles. It especially values the holistic approach to landscapes, allowing students to become aware of the interconnectedness between the various aspects related to landscapes. The panel considers this holistic approach to be a distinctive feature of the programmes, which may be articulated and showcased more prominently. The panel also greatly values the programmes' strong focus on science and research, which differentiates them from similar programmes. The attention for research through design in MLP's specialization 'Landscape Architecture' fits well with the field of landscape architecture. Both programmes focus primarily on Dutch landscapes, which the panel considers appropriate. The Dutch landscapes serve as examples that allow students to acquire methods and skills that are applicable in any part of the world. The panel considers the ILOs to be well formulated, well aligned to the bachelor's and master's level as described in the Dublin descriptors, and covering all relevant areas in the field of landscape architecture and spatial planning. The revitalized EAC is an active community, consulting the programmes regarding their profiles, current developments, and the expectations and needs of the professional field. The panel encourages the programmes to continue to invest in the EAC and to explicitly consult it about the ILOs and the curricula as well.

### *Conclusion*

The panel concludes that the bachelor's programme and the master's programme Landscape Architecture and Planning meet standard 1.

## Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment

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

### Findings

#### *Curriculum*

BLP and MLP are both recognized as educational programmes in Landscape Architecture by the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA), which means that the curricula meet the criteria that IFLA set. IFLA is a global federation that represents the world body of landscape architects and that aims to establish, develop, and promote the profession, discipline, and education of landscape architecture.

#### Bachelor's programme

BLP is a 180 EC programme, offered as a three year full-time curriculum (see appendix 2 for a curriculum overview). The first year is identical for all students and provides a broad foundation in various related scientific disciplines and methodological skills. Besides these foundational courses (48 EC), students take four studio-courses (12 EC in total) in which they apply their knowledge and skills to (real-life) cases. In the studio-courses, students work project-based and in groups on designs in the university's studio facilities. At the end of the first year, students choose one of two specializations: 'Landscape Architecture' or 'Spatial Planning'. In the second and third years, students take courses specific to their specialization (42 EC) as well as several courses that integrate both specializations (36 EC). The fifth semester is dedicated to elective space (30 EC) that students can use to follow a minor or another set of electives. Students in the specialization 'Landscape Architecture' also have the opportunity to do an 18 EC internship in this semester. The final period of year 3 is dedicated to the 12 EC bachelor thesis.

The panel considers the curriculum of BLP to be well structured, covering all important topics. The panel appreciates the multidisciplinary approach that is evident in the curriculum, allowing students to acquire a broad understanding and view of landscape architecture and spatial planning. The studios allow for the application and integration of knowledge and skills from different disciplines.

During the interviews with students and teachers, the panel learnt that there is room for improvement regarding the link and alignment between the courses. The courses are hosted by various chair groups, which is positive in terms of a broad and multidisciplinary offer but requires more alignment between the courses. The teachers involved in the studios, for example, are often not well informed of the contents of foundational courses that students are expected to apply in the studio. Likewise, the teachers of foundational courses do not always know how their course content will be used and applied in a studio. To assist students in the application of knowledge from foundational courses, the programme arranges for teachers of these courses to come over to the studio at certain moments to advise students on their designs and answer their questions. Although this is helpful, the panel feels that more could be done to strengthen the link between the foundational courses and the studios. Another issue brought up during the interviews, concerns the alignment between the first and second year. Students mentioned that a lot of knowledge from foundational courses in the first year is not revisited in the second year. It would be helpful if the curriculum structure ensured more continuity and progression through the years. Furthermore, the statistics and mathematics courses are generic courses offered to all bachelor students at the university. This means that the course content is not tailored to this particular programme and that the teachers are not always informed of how certain statistical analyses are applied in the field of landscape architecture and spatial planning.

The panel recommends the programme to look for ways to strengthen and clarify the connections between courses in the curriculum. The panel advises to consider customizing the statistics and mathematics courses. The connection between courses will also benefit from more alignment and interaction between the teachers involved in the programme, in order to make sure that teachers are aware of the contents of other courses in the programmes. In addition, the panel believes that it is important to strengthen the recently introduced learning lines. The visibility of the learning lines should be improved, for students as well as staff. Also, the learning line teacher teams could meet more frequently to improve the way the learning line builds up throughout the curriculum. This will help to further integrate the learning lines and align courses so that they build on prior knowledge.

### Master's programme

MLP is a 120 EC programme, offered as a two-year full-time curriculum (see appendix 2 for a curriculum overview). The first year contains several shared courses for both specializations (30 EC in total): 'Reflections on Planning and Design Practices', 'Landscape Theory and Analysis', 'Research Methodology for Planning and Design', 'Modular Skills Training', and 'Atelier Landscape Architecture and Planning'. Besides these courses, the specialization 'Landscape Architecture' contains two studio-courses (15 EC in total), 12 EC for (partially restricted) electives, and the 3 EC course 'Research and Design in LAR' (which was recently introduced). The specialization 'Spatial Planning' offers the courses 'Spatial Planning and Scarce Resources' (6 EC) and 'Political Dilemmas of Spatial Planning' (6 EC) as well as 18 EC elective space (partially restricted) on top of the shared courses.

The second year of the specialization 'Landscape Architecture' is dedicated to the master thesis (30 EC), the 'Design Practice' (24 EC) in which students develop a design flowing from their thesis research, and a professional profile course (6 EC). These three courses are all scheduled simultaneously, running the entire year. In the specialization 'Spatial Planning', students do a 24 EC internship and write a 36 EC master thesis in the second year. The internship is done at an external organization, and can be either research-oriented, which means that students work on a research project that is completed with a research report, or professional-oriented, which means that students contribute to one or more projects and work on a separate internship project. In some cases, students can perform a 'research practice' in one of the chair groups in the university as an alternative to the internship.

According to the panel, MLP's curricula for both specializations are well designed, allowing students to achieve the programme's ILOs. The panel appreciates the balance between theory and application that is evident in the curricula.

For the graduation project (second year) in the specialization 'Landscape Architecture', students can choose to do research first and then design (research for design) or to perform these simultaneously (research through design). Formerly, the thesis and the design practice were integrated into one course. However, due to university-wide policy regarding a uniform grading process for the thesis, the programme was forced to divide the graduation project into two separate components: the course 'MSc Thesis' and the course 'Design Practice' (starting in academic year 2022/2023). Together, these two courses are regarded as the thesis project. In practice, students can still perform research through design, as these courses are scheduled simultaneously. The panel advises the programme to closely monitor the new structure and to evaluate whether it sufficiently supports research through design. The panel was happy to learn that an evaluation was already planned after running the new curriculum for two years. If this evaluation points out that the structure puts pressure on the research through design philosophy, the panel advises the programme to restart its discussions and negotiations with the university's central educational management.

The interviews made clear that, at the moment, most students choose the more linear approach of research for design. This seems to be related to the notion that research through design does not receive sufficient attention to enable students to fully grasp this research approach. To improve this, the programme recently introduced a new course on this topic ('Research and Design in LAR') to give students a more thorough understanding of research through design, and the various ways to interweave research and design. The panel is positive about this new course and believes it will help increase the number of students that apply this method in the graduation year. The panel underlines the relevance of research through design as an appropriate research method in the field of landscape architecture.

### *Skills*

According to the panel, skills receive ample attention in both programmes. The courses in the programmes allow students to develop general academic and research skills. Several courses, most notably the studio-courses, also provide students with elaborate hands-on training in specific skills related to planning and design. The interviews with students and alumni show that they are content with the skills they (have) develop(ed) during the programme. The panel does think that the skills learning line could be made more explicit and visible, in order to allow students to recognize what they have already mastered and to encourage them to take the next step forward. Also, the application of some specific skills and tools, such as geo-information systems (GIS), may be better aligned across courses.

As part of a university-wide trajectory, BLP developed a 'skills profile', describing the programme's core skills, supportive skills, and implicitly taught skills, and demonstrating how various skills are addressed. Based on the skills profile, the programme management decided to increase the attention to the skill of 'receiving and providing feedback'. According to the programme management, improving this skill will contribute to a healthy studio working culture. The panel agrees with the programme management and appreciates the plans to improve feedback skills. It underlines the importance of addressing the feedback skills of both students and teachers and of establishing a consistent feedback culture across courses and teachers.

### *Teaching methods*

The didactic approach in the programmes is based on the university's vision on education. This vision emphasizes a focus on high-quality scientific knowledge, a rich learning environment combining knowledge, skills, and attitude, and room for flexible and personalized learning paths. Besides lectures and seminars, various activating and interactive teaching formats are used, such as excursions, projects for clients, and studios (in which students work on design projects in the university's studio facilities). MLP has a mix of Dutch and international students. This international classroom is much appreciated by students and alumni, as it allows students to learn from each other and reflect on topics and cases from international perspectives.

The panel is pleased to see that a variety of teaching methods is applied in both programmes. The panel appreciates the hands-on approach and the focus on experience-based learning. The panel does feel that the didactics in the programmes could be more aligned across courses, especially in BLP. The programmes make use of teachers from various chair groups, which results in a variety of teaching methods. The panel advises the programmes to develop an overview of the didactics applied in various courses and to make sure that there is a good balance and alignment.

Regarding BLP, students mentioned that they felt ill-prepared for the first studio, scheduled in the first period of year 1, because they had to start designing without much prior knowledge. The panel understands

the idea of ‘throwing students in the deep’, to allow them to get familiar with studio work and make them aware of the knowledge they miss. The latter will increase the relevance of subsequent courses for students. The panel agrees with this approach but thinks that the programme should communicate it to students in a more transparent way, so that students understand what is expected from them. Also, the feedback given by teachers may be better aligned with the explorative nature and purpose of this first studio.

### *Guidance*

Information about the programmes and courses can be found in the online Study Handbook, the course guides, and on the online learning platform Brightspace. Student guidance is organized according to the university’s ‘Study Advice Service Level Commitment’. This policy stipulates the role, responsibilities and tasks of study advisors for various student groups. BLP and MLP have three study advisors to guide and support students. The students are positive about the study advisors’ availability and accessibility.

The panel concludes that the information provision and guidance are in order. The panel is very positive about the programmes’ dedicated study advisors. They work well together, are well informed of the curricula and have a strongly student-centred and proactive attitude. The panel also appreciates the helpful study information document (‘routeplanner’) for first year bachelor students and master students, prepared by the student advisors. The panel thinks that it may help if a similar document would be prepared for the second and third year of the bachelor’s programme.

At the end of the first year, BLP students have to choose their specialization. During the interviews, the panel received mixed feedback from students on whether they felt well informed and confident about this decision. On the positive side, students can get a taste of both specializations in the first year courses and they are provided with examples of projects in each specialization. Also, the study advisors are available for guidance in this decision-making process. One of the ways the study advisors support students, is by providing a set of assignments to help them navigate the options. Students can also contact second and third year students and join excursions, organized by the study association, to organizations in different segments of the professional field. Nevertheless, some students indicated they still felt uncertain about making the right choice. The panel advises the programme to explore ways to further improve the guidance and support for students in choosing a specialization by looking for ways to proactively prepare students throughout the first year and by providing more information on the content of the specializations and the related profiles in the job market.

From the documentation and the interviews, the panel learnt that the programmes are working on improving the studio working culture and the related experienced work pressure and stress. Due to the studio-courses, the programmes have a lot of contact hours, and students spend a fair amount of time working together in the studio facilities. One of the problems that arises from this situation is that a number of students suffer from RSI (Repetitive Strain Injury)/CANS (Complaints Arm Neck Shoulder), particularly in the specialization ‘Landscape Architecture’. Also, some students experience stress and feel pressured to work longer than the number of hours allocated to the studio-course. Students pointed out that there are inconsistencies between studio teachers with regard to their expectations in terms of dedication and time commitment. It appears that some teachers are stricter than others, requiring the students they supervise to stay longer and work harder to get a good grade. The panel is positive about the discussions that the programmes initiated about workload, contact hours, and experienced stress and pressure. It recommends continuing this dialogue and exploring ways to build more ‘breath’ into the programmes. The panel wants to encourage the programmes to ensure a healthy studio culture, including normal work days, and to not be afraid this will come at the cost of the high academic standards. According to the panel, well rested students will perform better.

The facilities for students with disabilities are laid down in the university's policy regarding studying with a disability. Students can appeal to the student dean to request modifications in education and/or exams. In most cases, a statement from the student psychologist or student doctor is required. The student dean sends the request to the Examining Board. The panel considers the facilities for students with a disability to be appropriate and sufficient.

### *Feasibility*

The documentation shows that there is reasonable study delay in both programmes. Over the past few years, less than a third of the bachelor students graduated within three years. About two-thirds graduated within four years. In MLP, less than a quarter of the students graduated in two years over the past few years, while about half of the students graduated within three years. In the interviews, the programmes indicated that, besides personal circumstances, part of the delay is caused by the high number of students doing extracurricular activities, such as a 'board year'. Also, some students take extra courses, such as an internship. The programmes feel it is important to give students space for these types of activities, which seems to match with the student-centred and somewhat lenient culture of the university.

Another reason for the delay is the thesis project, especially in MLP. The interviews made clear that a lot of master students exceed the time period allocated to the thesis project (which is ten months for the specialization 'Landscape Architecture' and six months for the specialization 'Spatial Planning'). Supervisors are authorized to grant their students two extra months. On top of that, the Examining Board can grant another two extra months upon request. The panel notes that it is a common practice for supervisors to give students two extra months. If students finish their thesis project within the allocated time plus two months (resp. twelve months for the specialization 'Landscape Architecture' and eight months for the specialization 'Spatial Planning'), this is still considered 'in time'. It seems that this tendency to extend the time period is partly caused by expectations and the ambition to achieve excellence. The panel senses that there is a culture in which students are often encouraged to improve their thesis/design even more by taking more time.

On the positive side, the panel believes that the programmes in themselves are feasible: students should normally be able to finish the programmes within the given time. The panel is happy to see that the programmes actively monitor the study progression of students and have taken measures to improve the feasibility of the programmes, such as rescheduling studio-courses to lower the workload in specific periods. However, the panel recommends the master's programme to look into the practice of granting extra time for the thesis project. The panel advises the programme to stick to the allocated time period and not to allow a longer period of time to become the norm. This requires a realistic approach from both students and supervisors as to what is feasible. There needs to be a balance between the ambition to be excellent and feasibility.

### *Language of instruction*

The master's programme has an English name and is taught in English. This is in line with the university-wide policy for its master's programmes. The international classroom is one of the basic educational principles at the university, allowing students to develop their skills with regard to international collaboration and dealing with diversity of cultures and perspectives. The panel agrees with MLP's argumentation for an English-taught programme and an English name. MLP has an international orientation, which echoes the international nature of the academic and professional field. According to the panel, the vast majority of the academic and professional discourse in the field of landscape architecture and spatial planning is in English. Therefore, an English-taught programme allows students to be prepared for this international field. Also, the programme

benefits from the international classroom, which obviously adds value to the learning environment and to students' development.

#### *Admission*

The admission criteria are laid down in the Education and Examination Regulations (EER). Applications are decided on by an Admission Board. The admission requirements for BLP are aligned with the general requirements for bachelor's programmes laid down in the law (WHW). Applicants must have a vwo-diploma (all profiles, provided the subjects biology and/or mathematics were included), or a hbo-propedeuse with a demonstrated vwo 6-level for the subjects mathematics and biology/geography, or an equivalent diploma. Applicants aged 21+ may be admitted based on an entrance examination (colloquium doctum), provided that partial certificates on vwo 6-level can be provided. The admission requirements of MLP include a bachelor's degree in a relevant discipline (as stipulated in the EER) and sufficient proficiency in English. For students who are not directly admissible, the programme offers a premaster's programme that can be customized to individual students, to target their specific deficiencies. The panel considers the admission criteria to be appropriate for both programmes. It appreciates the application and admission procedure for MLP, which includes a portfolio.

#### *Teaching staff*

BLP is taught by a team of nearly 70 teachers. MLP has a teaching team of about 40 teachers, the majority of whom teach in BLP as well. The teaching staff of both programmes represents a variety of chair groups, which illustrates the multidisciplinary nature of the programmes. The panel is positive about the teaching teams, which represent all areas of expertise relevant to the programmes. The teachers are all experts in their field and very dedicated. Students are positive about the teachers' expertise and appreciate their accessibility. The panel greatly appreciates the teachers' openness to continually improve the programmes, fostering a positive, student-centred environment and open atmosphere. The panel sees room for improvement with regard to the alignment within the teaching team. Because various chair groups are involved, it requires effort to create a sense of shared responsibility for the programmes as a team. The panel advises intensifying communication within the learning line teacher teams and within the teaching team as a whole in order to strengthen the alignment and coherence within the programmes. Also, teachers' varying styles in supervising projects should be harmonized, to make sure that students are treated consistently and fairly across the board. As mentioned earlier, supervisors appear to have different expectations from students in terms of dedication and time commitment. The panel considers it essential to better align this in the teacher team.

Based on the overview of lecturers, included in the documentation, it appears that a reasonable part of the teaching staff does not hold a University Teaching Qualification (UTQ). In the interviews, the programmes explained that this overview does not give a complete picture. For example, the overview mainly shows UTQ's that were awarded by the WU, whereas many teachers have obtained a UTQ (or equivalent) at another university. In reality, most teachers in the programmes have a UTQ or equivalent. A UTQ (or equivalent) is required to be appointed as examiner by the Examining Board. Based on this additional information and the interviews, the panel concludes that the teachers are sufficiently didactically qualified. The panel was informed that a new policy on the registration of the UTQ is being implemented at the university, which will solve the problems described. The panel underlines the importance of correct and complete registration of the didactic qualifications of teachers. This also includes qualifications regarding proficiency in the English language for teachers involved in English-taught programmes. At the moment of the site visit, no information was available on the number of teachers with a certificate for English proficiency (or equivalent). The university's language policy does require teachers to take English tests and/or training programmes, but a

complete registration of this is missing. Based on the interviews, the panel is positive about the English proficiency of teachers involved in MLP. Also, students are content about this and voiced no complaints.

### *Facilities*

Besides regular rooms for lectures and seminars, the programmes have dedicated studio space for students to work on design projects. The studio space offers large desks and materials for making designs and maquettes. Also, students have the possibility to leave their work/designs in the studio during the project. It is clear, from the documentation and the interviews, that both staff and students feel that the current studio space is insufficient. In recent years, the programme management has put a lot of effort into discussions and negotiations with the university's central management to expand the studio space available, but so far this has not led to the desired outcome. The panel considers it critical that sufficient dedicated studio space is provided, as these facilities are indeed vital for the learning process of students in the programmes. The panel underlines the importance of expanding the studio facilities and advises the university to support the programmes in realizing this.

### *Considerations*

According to the panel, the curricula of both programmes are well designed and well structured, covering all important topics. The panel appreciates the multidisciplinary approach that is evident in the curricula and the fine balance between theory and application. The studios allow for the application and integration of knowledge and skills from different disciplines. Regarding BLP, the panel advises the programme to improve and clarify the connections between courses by intensifying the alignment and interaction between teachers and by strengthening the learning lines. Also, customizing the statistics and mathematics courses is advisable. Regarding the specialization 'Landscape Architecture' in MLP, the panel underlines the relevance of research through design as an appropriate research method, and is happy to see that the programme recently introduced a new course that elaborates on this approach. The panel recommends to closely monitor the impact of the recently revised structure of the graduation project, to make sure that it sufficiently supports research through design.

MLP is taught in English, which, according to the panel, flows logically from the international nature of the field of landscape architecture and spatial planning. The teaching methods used in the programmes are diverse and include various activating formats, such as excursions, projects for clients, and (design) studios. The panel compliments the programmes for their hands-on approach and focus on experience-based learning. The international classroom also adds value to the learning environment. The panel does feel that the didactics could be better aligned across courses, particularly in BLP, and advises the programme to develop an overview of the didactics applied and to make sure that there is a good balance and alignment.

The panel is very positive about the three dedicated study advisors. They are well informed, proactive, and strongly student-centred, offering students valuable guiding. Despite the various ways in which the study advisors support BLP students in choosing a specialization, some students still feel uncertain about this decision. The panel advises to look for ways to further improve the guidance and support for students in choosing a specialization by proactively preparing students throughout the first year and by providing more information on the content of the specializations and the related profiles in the job market. The panel believes that the programmes are feasible, and is happy to see that study progress is actively monitored by the programmes. Where possible, measures are taken to improve the feasibility. To further decrease study delay, the panel recommends MLP to stick to the allocated time period for the thesis project and not to allow the granting of extra time to become the norm. The panel appreciates the dialogue, initiated by the programmes, on workload, contact hours, and experienced stress and pressure related to the studios. It recommends continuing this dialogue and exploring ways to build more 'breath' into the programmes.

The teaching staff has sufficient expertise on all areas related to landscape architecture and spatial planning. The teachers are didactically qualified and, in the case of MLP, have sufficient proficiency in English. The teachers are dedicated, student-centred, and accessible, fostering an open atmosphere. The panel advises to intensify communication within the learning line teacher teams and within the teaching team as a whole, in order to strengthen the alignment and coherence within the programmes. Also, teachers' supervising styles should be harmonized, to make sure that students are treated consistently and fairly across the board.

According to the panel, the facilities for students with a disability are appropriate and sufficient. For studio projects, the programmes have dedicated studio space. However, both staff and students feel that the studio space is insufficient. The panel underlines the importance of expanding the studio facilities and advises the university to support the programmes in realizing this.

### Conclusion

The panel concludes that the bachelor's programme and master's programme Landscape Architecture and Planning meet standard 2.

### Standard 3. Student assessment

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

### Findings

#### *Assessment matrix*

Assessment in the programmes is based on the university's education assessment policy, which describes how assessment should be designed and structured in each programme. It also describes the roles and responsibilities of various actors and the assessment quality assurance cycle. The vision for assessment described in this policy emphasizes constructive alignment, which is visualized in the programmes' assessment matrices. These matrices demonstrate how the programmes' ILOs relate to the courses, and where and how each ILO is assessed.

The panel considers the assessment in the programmes to be well designed. Each ILOs is addressed and assessed in multiple courses, allowing students to achieve the final exit level in all areas. In both programmes, there is a fine diversity of assessment methods applied, including written exams, reports, assignments, designs, and presentations. Also, there is a good balance of individual and group assessments. According to the panel, the assessment matrices can be improved by including formative assessments as well. The current assessment matrices show only summative assessments, and no overview of formative assessments in the programmes is available. The panel encourages the programmes to develop such overviews for the programmes, possibly in the learning lines, and to include formative assessment in the matrices.

The panel learnt that assessment sometimes creates a serious workload for supervisors as well as students, as the programmes include a lot of projects that are assessed by means of reports and/or designs. The panel encourages the programmes to reconsider some of these assessment methods and forms, and explore alternative grading methods that are less intense, to lower the workload. This would help to ensure a more balanced and efficient assessment process. Exploring alternative assessment methods is also relevant in light of the developments in generative artificial intelligence (AI).

### *Thesis assessment*

In both programmes, the final student project is the thesis. As mentioned above, for MLP's specialization 'Landscape Architecture', the thesis project includes two courses 'MSc Thesis' and 'Design Practice'. The thesis assessment in both programmes includes the thesis (and design if applicable) and an oral defence. In the MLP thesis project, there is a 'green light meeting' (a formal go/no go moment) 6-8 weeks into the trajectory. In both BLP and MLP, the thesis is assessed by two assessors, the thesis supervisor and the second assessor, who independently assess the thesis on the basis of an assessment form. The thesis assessment forms for both programmes contain several criteria/categories that need to be scored. Based on the scores and weighting of the separate criteria, the overall grade is calculated.

According to the panel, the thesis assessment procedure is well set up. The panel is pleased to see that the four eyes principle is applied and that theses in MLP are always assessed by assessors from different chair groups, to emphasize interdisciplinarity. The panel is also positive about the thesis assessment forms in both BLP and MLP. However, the panel does want to suggest a reconsideration of the weight attributed to the oral presentation/defence. Currently, the presentation and defence make up 10% of the total grade. The panel believes a higher percentage would be appropriate, particularly in light of current developments concerning AI. The panel learnt that the current practice is the result of a great effort to standardize these percentages across programmes, and that the percentages are partly based on the average time students spend on the different aspects. Nevertheless, the panel thinks that, in light of AI, it would be appropriate to reconsider. In the interview, the Examining Board indicated that it agrees there is a case to be made for reconsideration.

As part of the preparation for the site visit, the panel reviewed a sample of 15 theses from each programme, including the filled-in assessment forms. The panel is generally very positive about the assessment process demonstrated in the forms. It appreciates the transparent procedures and the quality of the written comments that substantiate the scores and provide the students with valuable feedback. For MLP, the panel agrees with the grades awarded to the theses included in the sample. Regarding BLP, there is one thesis in the sample that was assessed as a pass while the panel feels it is not sufficient. From the interviews, the panel learnt that this particular thesis was the result of a complex trajectory. The involved assessors explained how they scored the various criteria and what their considerations were. This helped the panel understand how the assessors arrived at a pass, but still did not convince the panel that the thesis did indeed deserve a pass. It became clear that certain criteria, such as time management, were scored very high, which positively affected the overall score. This made the panel wonder if the current form always leads to a justified overall grade and if the weights properly represent the importance of the different aspects of the thesis. The panel advises BLP to revisit the criteria and their respective weights and to discuss whether the current use and interpretation of the criteria are in line with what the assessors deem appropriate. Related to this, the panel encourages the programmes to regularly organize calibration sessions in which thesis supervisors and assessors discuss and align the grading process and their interpretations of the assessment criteria. These calibration sessions could consist of reviewing a sample of theses together.

### *Examining Board*

BLP and MLP fall under the responsibility of the Examining Board of Environment and Landscape (EBEL). EBEL is responsible for all programmes in the cluster Environment and Landscape. Besides appointing examiners and handling requests and complaints, EBEL performs several activities to safeguard the quality of assessment in the programmes. Two important activities in this respect are the evaluation of course assessment strategies during chair group visits and the review of samples of theses. Each chair group is visited at least once every five years. Prior to a chair group visit, all courses hosted by the chair group are evaluated by EBEL. The results of these evaluations are then discussed with the chair group during the visit. EBEL also performs thesis reviews. The documentation includes the report of a MLP thesis review performed

in 2023. The panel learnt that, so far, no thesis review was performed for BLP. In the interview with representatives of EBEL, it became clear that, besides chair group visits and thesis reviews, EBEL advises BLP and MLP on the constructive alignment in the programmes and the assessment matrices.

The panel considers EBEL to be independent, competent, and in control. Although it is positioned at some distance from BLP and MLP, as it is responsible for a bigger cluster of programmes, the panel sees that EBEL is well aware of issues in BLP and MLP and well informed of the particularities of these programmes. The panel is pleased to see that EBEL is proactive with regard to AI policies. It is clear that valuable discussions take place about how AI may be used by students in an ethical and responsible way. These discussions are aligned with the university-wide developments in this area. The panel appreciates the thorough chair group visits EBEL performs to safeguard the quality of assessment in courses. It is also positive about the thesis review performed for MLP. The panel highly recommends EBEL to perform similar reviews of samples of BLP theses as well.

#### Considerations

The panel considers the assessment in the programmes to be well designed, allowing students to achieve the final exit level for all ILOs. In both programmes, there is a fine diversity of assessment methods and a good balance of individual and group assessments. Assessment could be further improved by developing an overview of formative assessment in the programmes and including formative assessment in the assessment matrices. The programmes may also reconsider some assessment methods and explore alternative grading methods that are less intense, to lower the workload. The assessment procedure for the thesis project is well structured. Each thesis is assessed by two assessors, based on an elaborate form, including written feedback. For BLP, the panel recommends to revisit the criteria and their respective weights in the assessment form, to make sure that it leads to a justified overall grade. The panel considers the EBEL to be independent, competent and in control. It is proactive in safeguarding the quality of assessment and the exit level, amongst others by performing chair group visits and thesis reviews. So far, thesis reviews were only performed for MLP. The panel highly recommends EBEL to perform thesis reviews for BLP as well.

#### Conclusion

The panel concludes that the bachelor's programme and master's programme Landscape Architecture and Planning meet standard 3.

### Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes

The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

#### Findings

##### *Theses*

As mentioned above, the thesis project is regarded as the final student project in both programmes, demonstrating the achieved exit level of students. The panel reviewed a sample of 15 theses per programme. With regard to MLP, the panel concludes that the theses reflect a high, sometimes excellent, level, appropriate for an academic master's programme. The theses demonstrate strong theoretical frameworks. With regard to BLP, the panel concludes that most theses demonstrate a good level, appropriate for an academic bachelor's programme. The panel appreciates the creative topics and relevant research questions, and the scientific approach and methodology evident in the theses. As mentioned earlier, the panel regards one of the bachelor theses as insufficient. The panel considers this to be an exception that does not detract from the panel's positive conclusion about the achieved exit level of BLP's graduates.

### *Alumni*

Based on the documentation and interviews, the panel concludes that graduates of BLP have a lot of opportunities for further education. A fair share of graduates continue to follow a master's programme at the WU, while other graduates choose other universities. It is evident from the documentation and interviews that graduates of MLP have good employment opportunities. MLP and its alumni appear to have a good reputation in the professional field. Alumni enter a diverse range of employment sectors, with the majority of graduates working as consultants/advisors, landscape designers or planners in government or business. In the interview, MLP alumni indicated that they were well prepared for the labour market, equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills. They especially appreciate the experience from the studios and projects involving real clients and stakeholders.

### Considerations

Based on the review of a sample of 15 theses per programme, the panel concludes that the level demonstrated in these theses is appropriate for an academic bachelor's/master's programme. The documentation and the interviews indicate that graduates of BLP are well prepared to follow a master's programme. MLP graduates are well prepared for and prove to be successful in the professional field. Alumni from these programmes appear to have a good reputation in the professional field.

### Conclusion

The panel concludes that the bachelor's programme and master's programme Landscape Architecture and Planning meet standard 4.

### General conclusion

The panel's assessment of the bachelor's programme and the master's programme Landscape Architecture and Planning is positive.

### Recommendations

#### *Both programmes:*

1. Continue the dialogue on workload, contact hours, and experienced stress and pressure related to the studios, and explore ways to build more 'breath' into the programmes.
2. Intensify communication within the learning line teacher teams and within the teaching team as a whole, in order to strengthen the alignment and coherence within the programmes. Also, teachers' supervising styles should be harmonized, to make sure that students are treated consistently and fairly across the board.
3. The panel underlines the importance of expanding the studio facilities and advises the university to support the programmes in realizing this.

#### *BLP:*

4. Improve and clarify the connections between courses by intensifying the alignment and interaction between teachers and by strengthening the learning lines. Better align the didactics across courses, by developing an overview of the didactics applied in different courses. Also, customizing the statistics and mathematics courses is advisable.
5. Look for ways to further improve the guidance and support for students in choosing a specialization by proactively preparing students throughout the first year and by providing more information on the content of the specializations and the related profiles in the job market.

6. Revisit the criteria and their respective weights in the thesis assessment form, to make sure that it leads to a justified overall grade.
7. The panel highly recommends EBEL to perform thesis reviews for BLP.

*MLP:*

8. Stick to the allocated time period for the thesis project and do not allow the granting of extra time to become the norm.
9. Closely monitor the impact of the recently revised structure of the graduation project in the specialization 'Landscape Architecture', to make sure that it sufficiently supports research through design.

## Appendix 1. Intended learning outcomes

### Bachelor's programme Landscape Architecture and Planning

#### Intended Learning Outcomes BLP and Dublin Descriptors:

Type	Core areas		Learning outcomes (After successful completion of this BSc programme graduates are expected to be able to)	Dublin Descriptors
domain-specific learning outcomes	planning and design	1	distinguish different design and planning theories, methodologies and practices	knowledge and understanding
		2	show the creativity and power of imagination necessary to generate and represent future landscapes and spatial organizations and their impact on society at large and can distinguish different planning or design methods	applying knowledge and understanding making judgements
		3	present models, alternatives and potential scenarios of past, present and future landscape interventions on interrelating scales and/or research results both visually, orally and in text	communication
	nature of the landscape	4	carry out an analysis of the physical and social dimensions of landscapes and their historical development in order to understand the multidimensional aspects of landscapes and to assess the impact of proposed landscape interventions on people's lives	knowledge and understanding applying knowledge and understanding making judgements
		5	identify the ethical implications of planning and design interventions in relation to themes as gender, equity, multiculturalism and sustainability	knowledge and understanding
general academic learning outcomes	science and research	6	execute landscape research under supervision: the student is able to develop a research proposal, to formulate research questions, to collect empirical data and to analyse different types of related literature	knowledge and understanding applying knowledge and understanding
	academic skills and attitudes	7	show scientific curiosity, be pro-active and motivate an opinion	applying knowledge and understanding
		8	be critical, self-reflective and operate according to explicit academic codes of conduct and professional ethical standards	communication learning skills
		9	operate in individual and group work settings and to be responsible for all related outcomes	applying knowledge and understanding
		10	design and plan under supervision his/her own learning path, based on continuous evaluation upon personal knowledge, skills and performance	Learning skills

## Master's programme Landscape Architecture and Planning

### Intended Learning Outcomes MLP and Dublin Descriptors:

Type	Core areas	Learning outcomes (After successful completion of this BSc programme graduates are expected to be able to)	Dublin descriptors
Domain specific learning outcomes	Planning and Design	1a. For Landscape Architecture specialisation: develop <u>research based</u> landscape designs on interrelating spatial scales and with different temporal horizons using state-of-the-art representational techniques	Applying knowledge and understanding
		1b. For Landscape Architecture specialisation: reflect on different design practices, theories and methods and place the own discipline in an international multidisciplinary and multicultural perspective	Knowledge and understanding
		2a. For Spatial Planning specialisation: conduct scientific analyses on landscapes and effectiveness of steering mechanisms, using scenario studies, impact assessments, and other spatial-temporal analysis tools	Applying knowledge and understanding
		2b. For Spatial Planning specialisation: understand processes of decision-making and plan formation, involving various types of stakeholders and within various cultural and legislative settings	Knowledge and understanding
		3. Evaluate the social, environmental and economic implications of planning and design processes	Formulating judgements
Nature of the landscape	4. Understand the characteristics of complex global landscape challenges and their underlying processes	Knowledge and understanding	
	5. Carry out an advanced analysis of the physical and social dimensions of landscapes and their development in order to understand the multidimensional aspects of landscapes and to assess the impact of proposed landscape interventions on people's lives	Applying knowledge and understanding Formulating judgements	
General academic learning outcomes	Science and research	6. Identify and critically engage with the ethical implications of planning and design interventions in relation to themes like gender, equity, multiculturalism, and sustainability	Formulating judgements
		7. Execute landscape research: develop a research proposal and formulate research questions adopting adequate theoretical and methodological approaches, and work in compliance with academic codes of conduct	(applying) Knowledge and understanding
	Academic skills and attitudes	8. Present and defend research findings and planning and design findings in a clear and concise manner, both in writing and verbally, geared towards various audiences	Communication
		9. Function in multi-disciplinary and international teams in complex planning and design contexts	Applying knowledge and understanding
		10. Design and plan own learning process based on continuous reflection on personal knowledge, skills, attitudes and performance in order to prepare for a professional career and to comply with professional ethical standards	Learning skills

# Appendix 2. Programme curriculum

## Bachelor's programme Landscape Architecture and Planning

BSc Landschapsarchitectuur en Ruimtelijke Planning		Common part Specialisation A - Landscape Architecture										2024-2025
		Period 1 (12 EC) week 1-8 04/9 - 23/10	Period 2 (12 EC) week 9-16 30/10 - 18/12	Period 3 (6 EC) week 19-22 8/1 - 29/1	RE-A 23 05-Feb	Period 4 (6 EC) week 24-27 12/2 - 4/3	Period 5 (12 EC) week 28-35 11/3 - 29/4	RE-B 36 06-May	Period 6 (12 EC) week 37-40 13/5 - 03/6	week 41-44 10/6 - 01/7	RE week 45-48 08/7 - 15/7	
Jaar1	MO	Ecology 1 PEN10503	Mathematics 1 RO1 MAT14803	Integrated LUP12803	Water 1 HWM10303	Theory and Methodology of Planning and Design LUP13306	Landscape Geography SGL23312		Geo- Information Science for Planning and Design GRS10806	Studio Planning B. (wk. 40-41) LUP1803		
	AF	Introduction Environmental Sciences YWU-10803	Integrated Studio 1 LAR14803	Human Geography GEO-10306	Introduction Soil Sciences SGL11303					Studio Design B. (wk. 42-43) LAR12803		
Jaar2	MO	Planting, Construction and Representation 1 LAR29806	Studio Site Design LAR25806	Landscape Engineering LAR24306		Research Methodology for Human Environment Interactions YRM21306	Planting, Construction and Representation 2 LAR27806		Concepts and Approaches for Landscape Architecture LAR28806			
	AF	Mathematics 2 MAT14903	Statistics 2 MAT15403	Landscape Economics and Politics AEP22306			Cultural and Hist. Geography RO2 GEO23306		Studio Urban Design LAR28306			
Year3	MO	Optional part Choose 30 credits of electives. You can either choose a minor or your own coherent set of electives.				History of Ideas in Land- scape arch. and Planning LAR29306	Studio Regional Design LAR37809		BSc Thesis Landscape Architecture LAR81912			
	AF	Students who want to orientate themselves on the job market can choose the BSc Internship Landscape Architecture (LAR71318 - 18 ects) If you do so, you need 12 credits of electives next to the internship.					Landscape Aesthetics LAR38303					

BSc Landschapsarchitectuur en Ruimtelijke Planning		Common part Specialisation B - Spatial Planning										2024-2025
		Period 1 (12 EC) week 1-8 04/9 - 23/10	Period 2 (12 EC) week 9-16 30/10 - 18/12	Period 3 (6 EC) week 19-22 8/1 - 29/1	RE-A 23 05-Feb	Period 4 (6 EC) week 24-27 12/2 - 4/3	Period 5 (12 EC) week 28-35 11/3 - 29/4	RE-B 36 06-May	Period 6 (12 EC) week 37-40 13/5 - 03/6	week 41-44 10/6 - 01/7	RE week 45-48 08/7 - 15/7	
Jaar1	MO	Ecology 1 PEN10503	Mathematics 1 RO1 MAT14803	Integrated LUP12803	Water 1 HWM10303	Theory and Methodology of Planning and Design LUP13306	Landscape Geography SGL23312		Geo- Information Science for Planning and Design GRS10806	Studio Planning B. (wk. 40-41) LUP1803		
	AF	Introduction Environmental Sciences YWU-10803	Integrated Studio 1 LAR14803	Human Geography GEO-10306	Introduction Soil Sciences SGL11303					Studio Design B. (wk. 42-43) LAR12803		
Jaar2	MO	Public Administration and Environmental Law PAP20806	Concepts and Approaches in Planning Practices LUP24306	Landscape Engineering LAR24306		Research Methodology for Human Environment Interactions YRM21306	Mobility & Network Infrastructures LUP35806		Planning and Research Methods LUP20306	Studio Participative Planning LUP30806		
	AF	Mathematics 2 MAT14903	Statistics 2 MAT15403	Landscape Economics and Politics AEP22306			Cultural and Hist. Geography RO2 GEO23306					
Jaar3	MO	Optional part Choose 30 credits of electives. You can either choose a minor or your own coherent set of electives.				History of Ideas in Land- scape arch. and Planning LAR29306	Studio Strategic Planning LUP37312		BSc Thesis Spatial Planning LUP80812			
	AF											

# Master's programme Landscape Architecture and Planning

MSc Landscape Architecture and Planning, specialisation Landscape Architecture  
professional career track

Applicable to students starting academic year 2024-2025 and beyond

part of r	MO	Period 1 (12 EC)	Period 2 (12 EC)	Period 3 (6 EC)	Resit A	Period 4 (6 EC)	Period 5 (12 EC)	Resit B	Period 6 (12 EC)	Resits C1 & C2
Y-1	MO	Reflections on Planning and Design Practices LAR37306	Landscape Theory and Analysis LUP36806	Research Methodology for Planning and Design GEO37806		Elective	Research and Design in LAR LAR-37003		Atelier Landscape Architecture and Planning LUP60309	
	AF	Master Studio Park Design: A Narrative Approach LAR39306	Restricted Optional				Master Studio Regional Landscape Architecture: A Systems Approach LAR37509		Modular Skills Training YMC60300	
Y-2		MSc thesis Landscape Architecture								LAR80430
		Design Practice Landscape Architecture								LAR71824
		Professional Profile Course								YWU31806

MSc Landscape Architecture and Planning, specialisation Spatial Planning  
professional career track

2024-2025

part of r	MO	Period 1 (12 EC)	Period 2 (12 EC)	Period 3 (6 EC)	Resit A	Period 4 (6 EC)	Period 5 (12 EC)	Resit B	Period 6 (12 EC)	Resits C1 & C2
Y-1	MO	Reflections on Planning and Design Practices LAR37306	Landscape Theory and Analysis LUP36806	Research Methodology for Planning and Design GEO37806		Political Dilemmas of Spatial Planning LUP32806	Elective		Atelier Landscape Architecture and Planning LUP60309	
	AF	Spatial Planning and Scarce Resources LUP37806	Restricted optional				Elective		Modular Skills Training YMC60300	
Y2		Internship Land Use Planning LUP70424		Thesis Land Use Planning		LUP80436				

MSc Landscape Architecture and Planning, specialisation Landscape Architecture  
professional career track

Applicable to students starting academic years 2021-2022 up to 2023-2024

part of r	MO	Period 1 (12 EC)	Period 2 (12 EC)	Period 3 (6 EC)	Resit A	Period 4 (6 EC)	Period 5 (12 EC)	Resit B	Period 6 (12 EC)	Resits C1 & C2
Y-1	MO	Reflections on Planning and Design Practices LAR37306	Landscape Theory and Analysis LUP36806	Research Methodology for Planning and Design GEO37806		Elective	Elective		Atelier Landscape Architecture and Planning LUP60309	
	AF	Master Studio Park Design: A Narrative Approach LAR39306	Restricted Optional				Master Studio Regional Landscape Architecture: A Systems Approach LAR38806		Modular Skills Training YMC60300	
Y-2		MSc thesis Landscape Architecture								LAR80430
		Design Practice Landscape Architecture								LAR71824
		Professional Profile Course								YWU31806

NB: Work for LAR38806 Master Studio Regional can only be resubmitted in the academic year 2024-2025. The course code will no longer be available after that.

MSc Landscape Architecture and Planning, specialisation Landscape Architecture  
 professional career track

Applicable to students who started *before* academic year 2021-2022

		Period 1 (12 EC)	Period 2 (12 EC)	Period 3 (6 EC)	Resit A	Period 4 (6 EC)	Period 5 (12 EC)	Resit B	Period 6 (12 EC)	Resits C1 & C2
Y-1	MO	LAR37306 Reflections on Planning and Design Practices	LUP36806 Landscape Theory and Analysis	GEO37806 Research Methodology for Planning and Design		Elective	Elective		LUP60309 Atelier Landscape Architecture and Planning	
	AF	LAR39306 Master Studio Park Design: A Narrative Approach	Restricted Optional				LAR38806 Master Studio Regional Landscape Architecture: A Systems Approach		YMC60300 Modular Skills Training	
Y-2		LAR70424 Internship Landscape Architecture		Thesis Landscape Architecture		LAR80436				

## Appendix 3. Programme of the site visit

### Monday 2 December 2024

11.30	11.45	Welcome	
11.45	12.30	Preliminary meeting assessment panel (incl. lunch)	
12.30	13.30	Meeting with programme management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dean of Education WU</li> <li>• Representative Board of Education</li> <li>• Chair Programme Committee (PC)</li> <li>• Student, master specialization LA, member Daily Board PC</li> <li>• Programme Director</li> </ul>
13.30	14.30	Poster exposition	
14.30	15.00	Panel meeting	
15.00	15.45	Meeting with BSc students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student, year 2, specialization SP</li> <li>• Student, year 3, specialization LA</li> <li>• Student and PC member, year 3, specialization LA</li> <li>• Alumnus, specialization LA</li> <li>• Student, year 2, specialization SP</li> <li>• Student and member PC, year 3, specialization SP</li> </ul>
15.45	16.30	Meeting with BSc teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecturer Cultural Geography</li> <li>• Lecturer Landscape Architecture</li> <li>• Lecturer Land Use Planning, thesis coordinator, PC member</li> <li>• Lecturer Landscape Architecture, educational coordinator LSP cluster</li> <li>• Lecturer Land Use Planning</li> <li>• Lecturer Land Use Planning</li> <li>• Lecturer Soil Geography, PC member</li> </ul>
16.30	17.00	Break	
17.00	17.45	Meeting with Examining Board EBEL and student advisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair Examining Board and lecturer in bachelor</li> <li>• Secretary Examining Board</li> <li>• Member Examining Board</li> <li>• Study advisor</li> <li>• Study advisor</li> </ul>

### Tuesday 3 December 2024

09.00	09.30	Panel meeting	
09.30	10.15	Meeting with MSc students and alumni	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student, year 2, specialization SP</li> <li>• Alumnus, specialization SP</li> <li>• Student, year 2, specialization LA</li> <li>• Alumna, project officer at Stimuland</li> <li>• Alumnus, member External Advisory Committee, Landscape Designer at Land-ID</li> <li>• Alumnus, Chair External Advisory Committee, Sustainability Consultant at Royal HaskoningDHV</li> </ul>

10.15	11.00	Meeting with MSc teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecturer Land Use Planning</li> <li>• Lecturer Landscape Architecture, thesis coordinator</li> <li>• Lecturer Landscape Architecture</li> <li>• Lecturer Land Use Planning</li> <li>• Lecturer Land Use Planning, educational coordinator LSP cluster</li> <li>• Lecturer Landscape Architecture</li> <li>• Lecturer Cultural Geography, PC member</li> <li>• Lecturer Cultural Geography</li> </ul>
11.00	11.30	Break	
11.30	12.15	Thematic session bachelor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecturer Landscape Architecture, PC member</li> <li>• Lecturer Land Use Planning, thesis coordinator, PC member</li> <li>• Lecturer Landscape Architecture, educational coordinator LSP cluster</li> <li>• Lecturer Soil Geography, PC member</li> <li>• Student, year 3, specialization LA</li> <li>• Study advisor</li> <li>• Programme Director</li> <li>• Student, year 1, specialization SP, PC member</li> </ul>
12.15	13.00	Thematic session master	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecturer Landscape Architecture, thesis coordinator</li> <li>• Lecturer Land Use Planning</li> <li>• Lecturer Landscape Architecture</li> <li>• Lecturer Land Use Planning</li> <li>• Study advisor</li> <li>• Student, specialization LA, member Daily Board PC</li> <li>• Alumna, specialization SP, former PC member</li> <li>• Lecturer Cultural Geography</li> <li>• Programme Director</li> </ul>
13.00	14.15	Lunch and panel meeting	
14.15	15.00	Final meeting with programme management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dean of Education WU</li> <li>• Representative Board of Education</li> <li>• Chair Programme Committee (PC)</li> <li>• Student, master specialization LA, member Daily Board PC</li> <li>• Programme Director</li> </ul>
15.00	16.00	Composing findings (panel)	
16.00	16.30	Oral feedback	

## Appendix 4. Materials

Prior to the site visit, the panel studied 15 theses of the bachelor's programme Landscape Architecture and Planning and 15 theses of the master's programme Landscape Architecture and Planning. Information on the theses is available from Academion upon request.

The panel also studied other materials, which included:

- Cover Letter
- General information WU
  - Governance structure and the organisation of WU Degree Programmes
  - WU Vision for Education 2017
  - Education and Examination Regulations WU 2024-2025 (general part)
  - Framework for education WU 2024-2025
  - Assessment policy WU 2023
  - Study Advice Service level commitment
  - Studying with a disability at WU
  - General Safety course
  - Language of MSc programme
  - UTQ Policy and registration Sep 2024
- General information BLP & MLP
  - Assessment Matrices
  - Administrative data of the programmes
  - SWOT report BPL-MLP Lecturers
  - Panel report 2018 BLP and MLP
  - Panel report 2018 BLP and MLP – reflections and developments
  - Help reduce RSI\_CANS within BLP\_MLP
  - IFLA Letter of Recognition
  - IFLA recognition – observations and recommendations
  - Lecturers BLP MLP 2024-2025
  - ILO BLP MLP + Dublin descriptors
  - LSP programma van eisen definitief
  - The new EAC BLP MLP – Structure and approach
  - BLP MLP open answers NSE2024
  - Education Monitor + doorstroom en instroom BLP MLP 2024
- Examining Board
  - Annual reports from 2020-2023
  - MSc theses reviews EBEL 2023
- Programme Committee: annual reports from 2021-2024
- Bachelor's programme
  - Course materials from 3 selected courses
  - BLP profile
  - Study handbook
  - BLP Scheduling 2024-2025
  - Student chapter – SWOT report
  - SWOT report BLP - extended reflections
  - NSE 2024

- NSE 2023
- BLP Staff Event – outcomes
- BLP Skills Profile
- BLP graduates flow table
- BLP Hoe overleef ik mijn eerste jaar
- BLP-LAR Internship evaluation
- Genius Mail Week 4
- Master's programme
  - Course materials from 3 selected courses
  - MLP Profile
  - WU Study Handbook
  - MLP Scheduling 2024-2025
  - Student chapter – SWOT report
  - NSE 2024
  - NSE 2023
  - MLP Admission webpage
  - Evaluation form Graduation year Landscape Architecture
  - Graduation year – student feedback session 2024
  - LinkedIn Survey MLP 2024
  - MLP-LAR-WIMEK graduate school honours research programme
  - MLP-LUP-WASS graduate school programme
  - Alumni MLP Factsheets
  - Admission policy MLP explanation for accreditation committee
  - Study information MLP 2024-2025