



B Liberal Arts & Sciences
University College Maastricht
Maastricht Science Programme
University College Venlo
Maastricht University

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Summary: Limited Programme Assessment and integrated assessment of Small-scale and intensive education at University College Maastricht and Maastricht Science Programme

Standard 1. Intended learning outcomes

The Liberal Arts and Sciences programme of Maastricht University (MSLAS) has a clear Liberal Arts and Sciences profile. It offers a broad, open curriculum that opens up opportunities for undergraduate students who want to explore different disciplines and perspectives and design their own academic curriculum. Within MSLAS, students have three distinctive college options. They can opt for a very broad curriculum with optimal freedom of choice in humanities, social sciences and (a carefully selected array of courses in) sciences (University College Maastricht, UCM), or they can choose for a more framed broad programme focused on a theme (University College Venlo, UCV) or a strong emphasis on the sciences (Maastricht Science Programme, MSP). According to the panel, this set-up of a LAS-programme with three sub-programmes is enriching. Although MSLAS consists of three colleges, they are organised and managed in a way that clearly reflects their shared nature. This offers exciting opportunities for students, which will continue to grow as the three colleges are actively seeking for more opportunities to collaborate and benefit from each other. The panel encourages the steps already taken in this direction.

The panel concludes that all three colleges within MSLAS have well-developed and distinctive profiles and ILOs. The common and college-specific ILOs reflect the (above-average) ambitions and requirements of a Dutch Liberal Arts and Sciences programme and meet national and international requirements. Paired with curriculum and course requirements, the ILOs offer a firm framework for the development of the students. The ILOs focus not only on achieving an above-average level in academic and professional skills, but also on the development of personal attitudes and skills.

Without detracting from the panel's positive judgment, the panel has one recommendation and a couple of suggestions to support future development. The panel recommends that MSLAS more explicitly and clearly conceptualise what it aims for and is actually doing in terms of multi-, inter- and transdisciplinary, and how it is doing this. The panel suggests that UCV invest more systematically in relationship building by starting a Stakeholders Advisory Group. As another suggestion, MSP and UCV may wish to make the role of humanities and social sciences more explicit in its profile and ILO 1.1, because this role was apparent from the interviews but not so clear from the documents. Finally, the panel suggests defining the wording on level in the ILOs more explicitly. For that, it might be useful to first explore which educational framework (e.g. Bloom, Miller, Fink etcetera) best suits the ILO's and the programme.

Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment

The panel studied the curricula of the three colleges and concludes that they are well-designed with rigorous curriculum and course requirements, concentrations (for UCM and UCV) and a wide array of relevant courses. The panel is convinced that the curriculum design sufficiently enables students to develop a curriculum according to their own interests and to achieve the shared and college-specific intended learning outcomes. The modules on offer at UCM are interesting, varied and relevant to the broad profile of this college. The panel also appreciates the availability of a large variety of research opportunities in the catalogue (e.g. the 'Maastricht Research Based Learning' (MaRBLe) and the project Applied Research & Internship (ARI)). Students are actively invited to look beyond the borders of their primary field of interest and to broaden their academic perspectives, e.g. through the requirement that they take at least two general education modules outside their chosen concentration. UCM's dual degree with UCF is carefully organised and an asset, although it could do with higher enrolment numbers.

The curriculum of MSP is also well-designed with an adequate choice of courses from different disciplines and a reasonable array of interdisciplinary designed sections. The requirement that students complete the core curriculum in their first year provides a solid foundation of understanding in the disciplines covered by the programme. The panel also appreciates that elements of communication of sciences, humanities and social sciences are often integrated into the projects.

UCV's curriculum is interesting and unique in the context of a Liberal Arts and Science Programme. This college is relatively young and still continually developing itself with new courses. The panel noted with satisfaction that the MARBLE project has recently been opened to UCV students. It encourages UCV to continue to actively promote this opportunity to students. The panel recommends that UCV verifies and ensures that communication on and facilitation of exchange opportunities are in order, thereby removing unclarities for students.

MSLAS uses problem-based learning as its educational method. The panel established that students and staff are enthusiastic about PBL. The panel agrees that PBL works well in operationalizing the ILOs and the small-scale and intensive education that MSLAS is aiming for. Students confirmed that their classes are small and that within PBL, active participation is required from all students. The buildings and facilities of UCM, UCV and MSP are sufficiently tailored to the needs of the three colleges, including PBL. All three colleges offer an impressive amount of curriculum-related and social extracurricular activities. The majority of them is student-led and enthusiastically supported by MSLAS's staff. The three study associations of MSLAS take a very active role in the organisation of events and new initiatives are encouraged and facilitated.

The expertise, didactic and research skills of teaching staff are adequate. Teachers are all trained in providing small scale and intensive PBL education and – when applicable – in acting as an academic advisor. Students are satisfied about the accessibility and enthusiasm of their teachers. Enrolment of the most suitable students for the programme is supported with a well-developed admissions procedure that takes into account academic achievement, English language proficiency and motivation for the small-scale, intensive and PBL approach at MSLAS. The combination of the curriculum, a fine-grained guidance structure, careful admissions process and small scale education results in drop-out numbers that are relatively low as compared to other UM programmes. The panel established that there is sufficient attention for the special needs of MSLAS students with a disability.

Standard 3. Student assessment

The panel concludes that MSLAS has a clear assessment philosophy that matches with PBL/CCCS and the ambition of the programme to educate students that are able to bridge perspectives and collaborate with students with different disciplinary backgrounds. Assessment is designed carefully with an eye for constructive alignment and other important quality requirements for assessment. The programme uses a variety of assessment methods. Consistent with the UM vision, peer feedback, peer assessment and group work are frequently part of assessment which fosters ILO-related skills such as critical thinking and collaboration. Students have sufficient possibilities to take resits. The programme has taken several actions in response to the risks of GenAI for assessment, but rules and measures should be part of an MSLAS policy on GenAI (see Standard 2). The panel concludes that the BoE properly carries out its tasks and responsibilities and is working hard to (re)develop new working methods now that the three BoE's have merged into one MSLAS BoE. The assessment forms for the final projects are clear and transparent.

Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes

The panel concludes that students realize the ambitious intended learning outcomes of the programme, and achieve the high level and broadening required for programmes with small-scale and intensive education. The graduation rates are appropriate to a programme with the special feature 'Small-scale and intensive education'. The panel Capstones and theses of MSLAS are of a high level, and cover topics that are relevant to the three college programmes. Graduates perform well; they continue with interesting and challenging master's programmes and PhD projects, and have good career prospects.

Score table

The panel assesses the programmes as follows:

Bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences

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

The panel assesses the Distinctive Feature Small-scale and Intensive Education of the bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University College Maastricht as follows:

Criterion A: Intended learning outcomes	meets the standard
Criterion B: Curriculum – contents	meets the standard
Criterion C: Curriculum – learning environment	meets the standard
Criterion D: Intake	meets the standard
Criterion E: Staff	meets the standard
Criterion F: Facilities	meets the standard
Criterion G: Achieved learning outcomes	meets the standard
General conclusion	positive

The panel assesses the Distinctive Feature Small-scale and Intensive Education of the bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences at the Maastricht Science Programme as follows:

Criterion A: Intended learning outcomes	meets the standard
Criterion B: Curriculum – contents	meets the standard
Criterion C: Curriculum – learning environment	meets the standard
Criterion D: Intake	meets the standard
Criterion E: Staff	meets the standard
Criterion F: Facilities	meets the standard
Criterion G: Achieved learning outcomes	meets the standard
General conclusion	positive

Summary: Distinctive Feature Small-scale and Intensive Education at University College Venlo

Criterion A: Intended learning outcomes

UCV has a clearly described profile, which stands out from other Liberal Arts and Sciences programmes and other programmes with a thematic focus on nutrition, food, business and health. The multi- and interdisciplinary integration of (life) sciences with social sciences and humanities courses challenges students to look at issues from different perspectives and collaborate beyond disciplinary boundaries. The common MSLAS ILOs and the college-specific UCV ILOs are ambitious and, respectively, reflect the requirements of a Dutch Liberal Arts and Sciences programme and UCV's profile. The ILOs focus not only on achieving an above-average level in academic and professional skills, but also on broadening and the development of personal attitudes and skills. They include skills on problem solving, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, self-directed learning, and research.

Criterion B: Curriculum – contents

The panel concludes that the curriculum at UCV is well-designed and in line with the college-specific ILOs of UCV, including the level of broadening as formulated in them. UCV organises a wide array of curriculum-related and social activities that students can participate in. Given the much more thematic focus of UCV compared to the other two colleges of MSLAS, this is a good achievement. Together, UCV students and staff form a close-knit community, with shared responsibility for the organization of extracurricular activities. Because UCV is the youngest of the three MSLAS colleges, there is room for improvement beyond the panel's positive conclusion. The panel recommends that UCV improves communication on and facilitation of exchange opportunities. The panel also recommends that UCV sets up a Stakeholder Advisory Board to further expand curriculum opportunities and strengthen the visibility of UCV.

Criterion C: Curriculum – learning environment

The panel concludes that the combination of PBL, small classes and the requirement of active participation result in a challenging learning environment. Collectively, the learning environment, curriculum and extracurriculars enable nominal study progress.

Criterion D: Intake

The panel concludes that the admission process is well-designed and includes an evaluation of academic and personal achievements, English language skills, as well as a motivation for PBL and the small-scale and intensive education model at UCV.

Criterion E: Staff

The panel concludes that the student:staff ratio at UCV is favourable. Workload is relatively high because UCV is a small and relatively young programme; teachers wear multiple hats and are busy with (re)designing courses. The panel established that staff are taken seriously on this and that workload is carefully monitored. At the moment, the number of staff are sufficient in terms of providing small-scale and intensive education. The staff have the right expertise and didactic skills, and also demonstrably command the expertise and skills to provide PBL education, guidance and tutoring in a small-scale setting. The programme actively monitors that teachers hold the required qualifications and, if necessary, ensures that teachers are trained in these aspects.

Criterion F: Facilities

The panel found that UCV has its own infrastructure which offers suitable facilities for small-scale and intensive education and the Brightlands Campus Greenport Venlo with access to advanced laboratories and a recently built state-of-the-art greenhouse. The recommendation of the previous assessment panel on psychological support in Venlo has been followed. The panel concludes that facilities of UCV are adequate and in line with the requirements of Criterion F.

Criterion G: Achieved learning outcomes

The panel concludes that students realize the ambitious intended learning outcomes of UCV, and achieve the high level and broadening required for programmes with small-scale and intensive education. The graduation rates are appropriate to a programme with the special feature 'Small scale and intensive education'. The UCV Capstones are of a high level, and the topics clearly reflect the thematic focus of the programme. Graduates perform well; they continue with interesting and challenging master's programmes and PhD projects, and have good career prospects.

Score table

The panel assesses the Distinctive Feature Small-scale and Intensive Education of the bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University College Venlo as follows:

Criterion A: Intended learning outcomes	meets the standard
Criterion B: Curriculum – contents	meets the standard
Criterion C: Curriculum – learning environment	meets the standard
Criterion D: Intake	meets the standard
Criterion E: Staff	meets the standard
Criterion F: Facilities	meets the standard
Criterion G: Achieved learning outcomes	meets the standard
General conclusion	positive

Em. prof. dr. Ton van Haaften, panel chair

Adrienne Wieldraaijer-Huijzer MA, panel secretary

Date: 6 March 2025

Introduction

Procedure

Assessment

On 25, 26 and 27 November 2024, the bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences (MSLAS) of Maastricht University was assessed by an independent peer review panel as part of the cluster assessment Liberal Arts and Sciences. MSLAS is offered by the University College Maastricht, the Maastricht Science Programme and University College Venlo. The assessment cluster consisted of 8 bachelor's programmes, offered by University College Twente (University of Twente), Leiden University College (Leiden University), Amsterdam University College (University of Amsterdam/Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam), University College Roosevelt, University College Utrecht and the School of Liberal Arts (Utrecht University), Erasmus University College (Erasmus University Rotterdam), University College Groningen (University of Groningen), University College Maastricht, University College Venlo and the Maastricht Science Programme (Maastricht University) and University College Tilburg (Tilburg University). The assessment followed the procedure and standards of the NVAO Assessment Framework for the Higher Education Accreditation System of the Netherlands (valid from 1 April 2024). It also applied the Criteria Pertaining to Distinctive Feature of Small-scale and Intensive Education (also published in the 2024 Uitvoeringsregels Accreditatiestelsel Hoger Onderwijs Nederland).

Quality assurance agency Academion coordinated the assessment upon request of the cluster Liberal Arts and Sciences. Fiona Schouten acted as coordinator and panel secretary. Peter Hildering, Irene Conradie and Adrienne Wieldraaijer-Huijzer also acted as panel secretaries in the cluster assessment. They have all been certified and registered by the NVAO. Adrienne Wieldraaijer-Huijzer acted as panel secretary for the assessment of the programme of Maastricht University.

Preparation

Academion composed the peer review panel in cooperation with the institutions and taking into account the expertise and independence of the members as well as consistency within the cluster. On 19 April 2024, the NVAO approved the composition of the panel. The coordinator instructed the panel chair on his role in the site visit according to the Panel chair profile (NVAO 2016).

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

The programme at University College Maastricht and the Maastricht Science programme provided the coordinator with a list of graduates over the academic year 2023-2024; the programme of University College Venlo provided the coordinator with a list of graduates over the academic years 2021-2022, 2022-2023 and 2023-2024. In consultation with the coordinator, the panel chair selected 15 theses of the Maastricht Science Programme, 15 Capstones of the University College Venlo, and 16 Capstones of the University College Maastricht (including one from the dual degree programme with the University of Freiburg). Hence, the panel selected 46 theses in total. They took into account diversity of final grades and the examiners as well as the different possible routes to graduation in each programme (see appendix 4 for an overview of selected theses). Prior to the site visit, the programme provided the panel with the theses and the accompanying assessment forms. They also provided the panel with a self-evaluation report and additional materials (see appendix 4).

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

Panel member Stéphanie Balme was unable to attend the preparatory meeting and the site visit due to unforeseen personal circumstances. After discussion, it was agreed to proceed with the visit by all parties involved (panel, institution, and secretary). The coordinator informed the institution and the NVAO on 7 November 2024 of this agreement. After the visit, the panel member in question was informed of the outcome of the site visit and resumed participation in the preparation of the report.

Site visit

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

After the site visit, the secretary wrote a draft report based on the panel's findings. This report is structured along the four NVAO standards, and integrates the seven criteria of the distinctive feature Small-Scale and Intensive Education in the discussion of the respective standards for the bachelor programme of the University College Maastricht, the Maastricht Science Programme and University College Venlo. The report was first submitted to the coordinator at Academion for peer assessment and then to the panel for feedback. After processing this feedback, the secretary sent the draft report to Maastricht 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 finalised the report, and the coordinator sent it to University College Maastricht, Maastricht Science Programme and the University College Venlo and Maastricht University.

Panel

The following panel members were involved in the cluster assessment:

- Em. prof. dr. T. (Ton) van Haaften, professor emeritus at the Leiden University Centre for Linguistics of Leiden University [panel chair];
- Em. prof. dr. L. (Laurent) Boetsch, professor emeritus in Romance Languages at Washington and Lee University in Virginia (United States) and founding executive co-director and president emeritus of the European Consortium of Liberal Arts and Sciences (ECOLAS) [panel chair Leiden University];
- Dr. S. (Samuel) Abraham, rector/president of and professor in Political Science at the Bratislava International School of Liberal Arts (Slovakia);
- Prof. dr. M.K. (Marlies) Van Bael, professor in Chemistry at Hasselt University (Belgium);
- Prof. dr. S.B. (Stéphanie) Balme, director of the Center for International Studies (CERI) of the research university Sciences Po (France);
- Prof. dr. W.J.P. (Wim) Beenakker, professor in High Energy Physics at Radboud University;
- Prof. dr. H. (Helen) Brookman, professor of Liberal Arts & Interdisciplinary Education at King's College London (United Kingdom);

- Em. prof. dr. G. (Gerda) Croiset, professor emeritus and former dean of Education and Training in Health and Life Sciences at the University of Groningen;
- Dr. M.M.T.E. (Maud) Huynen, assistant professor at the Maastricht Sustainability Institute of Maastricht University;
- Dr. W.D.B.H.M. (Wim) Lambrechts, associate professor at the Faculty of Management of the Open University;
- Dr. B. (Bente) Nørgaard, associate professor at the Center for Problem-based Learning in Engineering Science and Sustainability of Aalborg University (Denmark);
- Em. prof. dr. J. (Janneke) Plantenga, professor emeritus in Economics of Public Welfare at Utrecht University;
- Dr. Ing. S. (Sabine) Sané, lecturer in Earth and Environmental Sciences at University College Freiburg (Germany);
- Prof. dr. J. (Jenny) Slatman, professor in Medical & Health Humanities at Tilburg University;
- Prof. mr. dr. H.S. (Sanne) Taekema, professor in Jurisprudence at the Erasmus University Rotterdam;
- Prof. dr. J. (Jolanda) Vanderwal-Taylor, professor in Dutch and German at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (United States);
- Prof. UAS. dr. J.I.A. (Irene) Visscher-Voerman, professor of applied sciences in Innovative and Effective Education at Saxion University of Applied Sciences;
- Prof. dr. H. (Henrik) von Wehrden, professor of Normativity of Methods at Leuphana University Lueneburg (Germany);
- N.B. (Nara) Coutinho, bachelor's student Liberal Arts and Sciences at University College Venlo (Maastricht University) [student member];
- M. (Milan) Gomes BSc, master's student Educational Science and Technology at University of Twente [student member].
- B.L. (Borbála Lucy) Karvalits, bachelor's student Liberal Arts and Sciences at Erasmus University College (Erasmus University Rotterdam) [student member];
- J.G. (Jamie) Wolvekamp, bachelor's student Liberal Arts and Sciences at University College Tilburg (Tilburg University) [student member].

The panel assessing the bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University College Maastricht, the Maastricht Science Programme and University College Venlo of Maastricht University consisted of the following members:

- Em. prof. dr. T. (Ton) van Haften, professor emeritus at the Leiden University Centre for Linguistics of Leiden University [panel chair];
- Prof. dr. M.K. (Marlies) Van Bael, professor in Chemistry at Hasselt University (Belgium);
- Prof. dr. S.B. (Stéphanie) Balme, director of the Center for International Studies (CERI) of the research university Sciences Po (France);
- Em. prof. dr. G. (Gerda) Croiset, professor emeritus and former dean in Education and Training in Health and Life Sciences at the University of Groningen;
- Prof. dr. H. (Henrik) von Wehrden, professor of Normativity of Methods at Leuphana University Lueneburg (Germany);
- B.L. (Borbála Lucy) Karvalits, bachelor's student Liberal Arts and Sciences at Erasmus University College (Erasmus University Rotterdam) [student member].

Information on the programmes

Name of the institution:	Maastricht University
Status of the institution:	Publicly funded institution
Result institutional quality assurance assessment:	Positive
Programme name:	Liberal Arts and Sciences
RIO number:	50393
Level:	Bachelor
Orientation:	Academic
Number of credits:	180 EC
Colleges:	University College Maastricht Maastricht Science Programme University College Venlo
Locations:	Maastricht, Venlo
Mode of study:	Fulltime
Language of instruction:	English
Submission date NVAO:	1 May 2025

Description of MSLAS

Organization

The Liberal Arts and Sciences programme of Maastricht University (MSLAS) is offered by the Faculty of Science and Engineering (FSE). It consists of three colleges: University College Maastricht (UCM), the Maastricht Science Programme (MSP), and University College Venlo (UCV). The three colleges each have their own programme director and operations manager. The programme directors jointly form the LAS Programme Board and are also part of the education and research management teams of the faculty; the operations managers are part of the operations management team of FSE. Together, the directors and managers constitute the management team of MSLAS.

Each college has its own academic and support staff. Exchange and collaboration take place where beneficial or necessary. Since the 2019 re-accreditation procedure, the programme has been working to increase collaboration between the three colleges on an administrative level to stimulate cooperation and exchange of practices between colleges. As a result, there is now a centralised International Relations Office and one Board of Examiners (BoE) for all three colleges. The Educational Programme Committee (EPC) consists of three separate chambers (one for each college), but also has a general chamber (MSLAS EPC). All aspects concerning the quality and operations of the programme, including the annual reports of the BoE and EPC, are reviewed in periodical PDCA meetings between the programme directors and the vice-dean education of FSE. In the upcoming years, MSLAS aims to further strengthen collaboration between the three colleges while also keeping their specific profiles and communities. An example of this is the plan to further integrate the three course catalogues into one document to facilitate increasing student mobility between the colleges.

Details of the MSLAS assessment

All three university colleges of MSLAS have the special feature of Small-scale and intensive education. UCM and MSP already passed the practice-based assessment of this feature in the 2019 re-accreditation. For these colleges, the 2024 assessment panel examined whether the programme still meets the conditions for the granting of the distinctive feature. In line with the NVAO Guidelines, the panel checked whether small-scale and intensive education has evolved into a quintessential feature of the programme at these two colleges. UCV is a relatively young college and had not yet completed the practice-based assessment. The practice-based assessment of UCV is part of this review. The results are presented in a separate chapter of this report.

Limited Programme Assessment and integrated assessment of Small-scale and intensive education at University College Maastricht and Maastricht Science Programme

Previous accreditation panel's recommendations

In 2019, the general conclusion about the programme was positive. The 2019 accreditation panel did not issue conditions, but gave several recommendations for further development.

With regard to Standard 1, the 2019 accreditation panel recommended reflecting on the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) in the light of the model in which the three colleges fall under the umbrella of MSLAS. Additionally, this panel concluded that the ILOs needed to be made more measurable and that communication and research skills ought to be added. In response, MSLAS introduced a layer of programme-wide ILOs, incorporated communication, and research skills in them and fine-tuned the college-specific ILOs. The 2019 panel also noted that UCV's focus could be sharpened. The 2024 panel studied the ILOs and the focus of the colleges. It concludes that the recommendations of the previous assessment panel on the ILOs have been satisfactorily addressed. UCV's thematic focus on food nutrition and health in the (life) sciences and social sciences is clear and distinctive. Looking to the future development of the programme, the 2024 panel formulated one new recommendation in relation to Standard 1.

Standards 2 and 3 of the 2019 assessment report highlight that MSLAS could benefit from further strengthening the links between the three curricula and sharing of examples of good practice between the three campuses. The 2024 panel found that the programme has been working hard on this, e.g. by streamlining the organizational structure between the colleges to facilitate more collaboration; establishing one Board of Examiners; improving accessibility to all three course catalogues; aligning thesis procedures and creating connections between research groups in the three colleges. Evidently, this recommendation is part of a continuous process of reflection and improvement; the programme has planned several actions to further strengthen the links in the near future. For example, MSLAS plans to further integrate the course catalogues and will allow students to enrol for any course from any college, granted they meet the pre-requisites.

The 2019 panel also made some college-specific recommendations for UCV and MSP. For UCV, the panel recommended monitoring of the effects of growth on health and safety measures; realization of direct access to psychological support; and development of courses on logistics, food technology and plant biology. For MSP, the panel recommended that the curriculum pay more attention to the role of ethics within science. The panel looked into the curricula and concludes that all the aforementioned recommendations have been taken up. The 2024 panel has two new college-specific recommendations for UCV and no college-specific recommendations for UCM and MSP (see below). From both the MSLAS documentation and interviews, the picture emerges of an ambitious organization that continually evaluates itself, is very open to feedback from all stakeholders involved, and takes actions accordingly.

Standard 1. Intended learning outcomes

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

Findings

Profile and aims

The Maastricht School of Liberal Arts and Sciences (MSLAS) seeks to attract students with a commitment to understanding the world through various perspectives. It offers students an open bachelor's programme with courses in a wide range of topics in the sciences, social sciences, and humanities. Although the three colleges of MSLAS differ in their focus and disciplinary mix, they share the ambition to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to become discerning analysts, creative problem solvers, and impactful leaders capable of making significant societal contributions. The panel concludes that MSLAS has a clear objective that reflects the ambitions of a modern Liberal Arts and Sciences programme.

The panel examined the vision and profile of the programme on two levels: that of each of the three colleges and that of MSLAS as a whole. It found that within MSLAS, the University College Maastricht (UCM) has the broadest profile. This college offers students a rich academic canvas in the social sciences, humanities, and sciences. Unlike other LAS-programmes in the Netherlands, UCM does not offer tracks or majors but advocates a radically open and student-led curriculum. Students have a maximum freedom of choice. The curriculum includes a wide variation of courses in many disciplines. Coherence in the curriculum is ensured by curriculum requirements, 'concentrations' (rough thematic groupings of courses) and the development of a personal 'curriculum narrative' (see Standard 2). The programme also has a strong focus on creating a solid academic community where students have many research opportunities, learn to navigate through academia and take perspectives from different disciplines.

University College Venlo (UCV) also has an open curriculum with 'concentrations', but combines this with a specific thematic focus on food, nutrition and health. This focus also includes sustainability and humanities courses on the one hand and business, logistics and entrepreneurship courses on the other hand. In the view of the panel the specific thematic focus of the UCV programme is unique in the field of Liberal Arts and Sciences Programmes in the Netherlands. The profile also clearly deviates from typical nutrition and psychology programmes because of the multi- and interdisciplinary integration of (life) sciences with social sciences and humanities courses. Although the travel distance between UCV and the primary Maastricht University location poses some challenges (see Standard 2), the location of UCV at the Brightlands Campus Greenport Venlo is a perfect match with UCV's profile offering the opportunity to develop educational initiatives in triple helix collaborations with the industry and the public sector. The panel found that UCV has been expanding its relationships with local companies and research institutes over the last couple of years, e.g. with the Brightlands Future Farming Institute, the Centre for Healthy Eating & Food Innovation, Brightlands NovaBite and the Food Claims Centre Venlo. However, there is still unused potential and demand in this respect; students are actively asking for more interactions with the local environment (e.g. through an extended list of UCV partners and an internship as part of the Capstone, see Standard 2), which will become even more relevant when considering the ambitious growth plans in terms of student numbers at UCV. According to the panel, a more systematic and extensive focus on relationship building with local stakeholders could strengthen the quality and visibility of UCV in the future. The panel recommends UCV to invest in this, e.g. by starting a Stakeholders Advisory Group.

Maastricht Science Programme (MSP) offers a broad open curriculum in the natural sciences (incl. biology, chemistry, and physics), while facilitating combinations with Social Sciences and Humanities in the elective courses. During the site visit, the panel explored the role of humanities and social sciences in the curriculum of MSP. Both staff and students stressed the importance of the humanities and social sciences for a modern scientist in addressing contemporary societal issues. The panel learned that communication of science and collaboration across disciplines are actively addressed throughout the programme. In addition, many courses and projects have an interdisciplinary societal component; students are required to take at least one humanities and/or social science course which can be at UCM/UCV. The panel concludes that MSP has an attractive and well-designed profile with a logical choice of disciplines, and that it could indeed be characterised as a Liberal Arts and Sciences programme. As a suggestion, the programme may wish to make the role of humanities and social sciences more explicit, because this role was apparent from the interviews but not so clear from the documents. During the site visit, the panel heard that the MSLAS is planning to further integrate the three course catalogues of the three university colleges. The panel encourages the programme to continue with this, as it would promote humanities and social sciences to UCV and UCM students but would also encourage UCV and UCM students to benefit more from the broad array of science courses at MSP.

Looking at the colleges as a whole, the panel concludes that MSLAS has a clear vision and profile with three distinctive but complementary self-directed curricula for undergraduates who want to explore and connect various disciplines. Collectively covering all academic disciplines in MSLAS, UCM offers the broadest focus and UCV and MSP have a more framed open curriculum. During the interviews and from the documentation, the panel found that all three programmes are multidisciplinary in their approach: students choose their courses from various disciplines, combining content to reach their final academic goals. At all three colleges there are also (intermediate and advanced) modules that have an inter- and/or transdisciplinary focus. Nevertheless, further enquiry on this topic also revealed some unclarities on how the concepts of multi-, inter-, and transdisciplinary are understood by the programme and, consequently, how they relate to one another, build up during the programme, and are assessed in relation to the ILOs. The panel therefore recommends that MSLAS more explicitly and clearly conceptualise what it aims for in terms of multi-, inter-, and transdisciplinary, and how it is actually doing this. In the panel's view, this is also relevant in the broader academic context, in which other multi- and interdisciplinary programmes are increasingly emerging.

Programme learning outcomes

Following the previous accreditation, MSLAS introduced a shared set of intended learning outcomes (ILOs), as an umbrella to the college-specific ILOs of UCM, UCV and MSP. The shared ILOs cover academic and professional skills on problem solving, critical thinking, communication, learning and research. They also include personal and social skills, namely: reflective skills; ethical skills; decision-making skills; collaborative skills and intercultural skills. The college-specific ILOs are more detailed and in-depth, covering the three different profiles of the colleges. See Appendix 1 for an overview.

The panel studied the ILOs. It concludes that they are adequately tailored towards the expectations of the field of Liberal Arts and Sciences and are in line with national and international standards for undergraduate programmes, e.g. the Dublin descriptors. With the development of a set of shared MSLAS ILOs, the programme sufficiently addressed the recommendation of the previous review panel to reflect on the MSLAS umbrella and, as a result, clarified the common ambitions of the three colleges in educating their students. The panel also concludes that the ILOs are ambitious and level up to the standards commonly accepted for a Liberal Arts and Sciences programme. Their emphasis on collaboration and comparative methodology fosters cross-cultural understanding and critical analysis of systems and practices. The ILOs do not only focus on obtaining a high level in academic disciplines, but are also clearly geared towards the development

of personal attitudes and skills, e.g. of self-directed learning skills and of intercultural and collaborative skills. Finally, the ILO's of UCM, UCV and MSP are well-connected to the college-specific profiles, cover the essential competences for a LAS programme and are well in line with international and national standards.

The 2019 panel recommended to make the college-specific recommendations more measurable and to add communication and research skills to them. The 2024 panel found that communication and research skills have been added to the common MSLAS-ILOs. The panel also found that the college-specific ILOs were sharpened, but to a limited extent. During the site visit, the panel heard that MSLAS has struggled with the recommendation of the 2019 panel to improve the measurability of the ILOs; the ILOs have deliberately been crafted in a generic way to match with the broad and open orientation of the curriculum. To ensure that all students have a maximum of freedom to design their own programme and that they meet all the curriculum requirements, the MSLAS has chosen to pair the more generically formulated ILOs with a set of carefully drafted curriculum and course prerequisites. To enable constructive alignment, the programme also matched the MSLAS and college-specific ILOs with the courses of offer. The panel studied the ILOs in combination with the curriculum and course requirements. It follows the reasoning of MSLAS and agrees with the chosen set-up.

The general ILOs and college-specific ILOs are subject to continuous review and (if necessary) improvement. In the light of this, the panel has a couple of suggestions for further improvement. In relation to the recommendation on multi-, inter- and transdisciplinary mentioned in the previous paragraph, the panel suggests taking a look at the wording of the ILOs of all three colleges on these concepts: what exactly is intended and what level should students achieve in it? The panel also noticed that the college-specific ILOs include words such as 'elementary', 'advanced' or 'proficient', yet these are not clearly explained and differentiated. Therefore, the panel suggests defining the wording on level in the ILOs more explicitly, e.g. by referring to an educational framework for taxonomy levels. Specifically for UCV and MSP, the panel suggests a rephrasing of ILO 1.1 to make it more clear that the role of the humanities in these curricula is somewhat different than that of the sciences and social sciences. ILO 1.1 should make clear that UCV and MSP students do not obtain deep knowledge of theories, central concepts and methods in the humanities but they broaden their knowledge in science and/or social sciences with humanities courses, therewith learning how to look at academic topics from different perspectives.

Considerations

MSLAS has a clear Liberal Arts and Sciences profile. It offers a broad, open curriculum that opens up opportunities for undergraduate students who want to explore different disciplines and perspectives and design their own academic curriculum. Within MSLAS, students have three distinctive college options. They can opt for a very broad curriculum with optimal freedom of choice in humanities, social sciences and (a carefully selected array of courses in) sciences (UCM), or they can choose for a more framed broad programme focused on a theme (UCV) or a strong emphasis on the sciences (MSP). According to the panel, this set-up of a LAS-programme with three sub-programmes is enriching. Although MSLAS consists of three colleges, they are organised and managed in a way that clearly reflects their shared nature. This offers exciting opportunities for students, which will continue to grow as the three colleges are actively seeking for more opportunities to collaborate and benefit from each other. The panel encourages the steps already taken in this direction.

The panel concludes that all three colleges within MSLAS have well-developed and distinctive profiles and ILOs. The common and college-specific ILOs reflect the (above-average) ambitions and requirements of a Dutch Liberal Arts and Sciences programme, and meet national and international requirements. Paired with curriculum and course requirements, the ILOs offer a firm framework for the development of the students.

The ILOs focus not only on achieving an above-average level in academic and professional skills, but also on the development of personal attitudes and skills.

Without detracting from the panel's positive judgment, the panel has one recommendation and a couple of suggestions to support future development. The panel recommends that MSLAS more explicitly and clearly conceptualise what it aims for and is actually doing in terms of multi-, inter- and transdisciplinary, and how it is doing this. The panel suggests that UCV invest more systematically in relationship building by starting a Stakeholders Advisory Group. As another suggestion, MSP and UCV may wish to make the role of humanities and social sciences more explicit in its profile and ILO 1.1, because this role was apparent from the interviews but not so clear from the documents. Finally, the panel suggests defining the wording on level in the ILOs more explicitly. For that, it might be useful to first explore which educational framework (e.g. Bloom, Miller, Fink etcetera) best suits the ILO's and the programme.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences meets standard 1 of the NVAO framework.

The panel concludes that the bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences of the University College Maastricht and the Maastricht Science Programme meet criterion A of the framework for the Distinctive Feature "Small-scale and Intensive Education".

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

Educational approach, learning environment and feasibility

Education at MSLAS is based on the problem-based learning (PBL) method of Maastricht University (UM), where students collectively analyse and discuss problems, exchange knowledge and cultural experience and learn how to formulate solutions for scientific and social issues. PBL includes the application of student-centred educational methods based on four principles (CCCS):

1. Learning is based on cases in a context meaningful to the student (Contextual learning);
2. Active knowledge acquirement through student engagement, which builds new knowledge on/in their existing frame of reference (Constructive learning);
3. Learning from and with others (Collaborative learning);
4. The learners select, manage and assess their own learning activities (Self-directed learning).

During the site visit, the panel examined how the PBL/CCCS approach works out in practice. The panel found that PBL is highly valued by students and academic staff throughout MSLAS. They feel that PBL is helpful in a university college setting as it encourages students to explore views, knowledge and skills within a group and integrates learning of key ILO skills such as problem-solving, communication, collaboration and decision-making. To safeguard a high level of participation and preparation of all students in the group, PBL involves peer, self and supervisor review. According to the students, this is very helpful in creating a truly interactive classroom. Although PBL does not have a long tradition in the sciences, the panel heard that it works well in science courses as well. All coordinators and tutors are trained in the PBL-method and, if necessary, it is possible to make additions to the PBL method, for example by adding extra lectures for

courses with a larger theoretical component that require more direct instructions by the teacher. While some modules closely follow the more traditional PBL method, others follow newer and innovative student-led education methods. An example of this is known as Research-Based Learning (RBL). RBL encourages students to carry out research alongside academics to address scientific or societal questions as part of their standard education. The panel concludes that the PBL/CCCS approach fits well with the profile of MSLAS and is helpful in operationalising the ILOs.

Once admitted, MSLAS students enrol in a rigorous and intensive study programme including 10-17 contact hours per week. Most of these contact hours take place in small student-centred tutorial groups with a maximum of 15 students. The number of students in projects is kept low with 6-15 students per project. In tutorial groups emphasis is placed on collaborative work and self-directed learning. Students spend their self-study hours studying the learning goals they have set for their next tutorial. The panel established that students have a lot of interactions with academic staff in their courses, but also through academic advising, individual feedback sessions and extra-curriculars (see below). Students are positive about the approachability of their lecturers and describe the UCM, UCV and MSP colleges as close-knit learning communities with many opportunities to develop themselves academically, socially, and personally. The panel established that drop-out rates are relatively low. Between 2018-2022, the average MSLAS drop-out rate in the first year was 10.3% (compared to an average of 21.2% for the UM). Between 2018-2021, MSLAS drop-out after the first year was 1.9% (compared to an average of 4.2% for the UM). Broken down to the different colleges drop-out rates after the first year (for the 2021-2022 cohort) were: 1.9% for UCM; 2.0% for MSP; and 3.6% for UCV. The panel noticed a healthy culture where students do not compare or compete with each other, but each follow their own study path. Graduation rates (see Standard 4) also confirm that PBL, the curriculum structure and the well-guided small-scale and intensive learning environment ensure nominal study progress.

Educational approach to Generative Artificial Intelligence

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) has substantial impact on higher education. It poses questions on the design and execution of teaching, learning and assessment within educational programmes, both in terms of possibilities as well as threats. During the site visit, the panel explored with students, staff, and management how they view the impact of GenAI on education at MSLAS and how they have been anticipating on it. It found that the colleges have taken action in several ways in response to GenAI. On the risk-side, unauthorized use of GenAI is considered as fraud and reported to the BoE. Furthermore UCM introduced a presentation defense moment and organized additional formative evaluation moments as part of the final work. At the other two colleges, the thesis process also includes other than written elements, namely a defense at UCV and an outreach video and internal presentation at MSP. On the opportunities side, MSLAS coordinators are allowed to use GenAI in their education, and staff members have the possibility to follow trainings on GenAI tools.

Despite several actions in response to GenAI, the panel found that it is not always clear to students and teaching staff when they are allowed to use GenAI and when they are not. At the same time, GenAI is already widely used by students and they see many opportunities for it, for example for formative evaluation of their own learning process. The panel heard that MSLAS is still waiting for a UM-wide policy. This UM-wide policy will be out in January 2025 and will then be used as framework for the MSLAS policy on GenAI. One of the reasons to wait for the UM-wide policy is that MSLAS cooperates a lot with other faculties of UM. The panel understands this, but also notes that the lack of MSLAS policy has created many different practices, ad hoc responses and ambiguity for students. The panel recommends that MSLAS (also) develop its own AI policy, while continually evaluating and adapting it to further developments in GenAI and MSLAS's external educational environment.

Curriculum structure MSLAS

MSLAS is a full-time, undergraduate programme of 180 EC. Education at all colleges of MSLAS is structured in six semesters, each consisting of two course periods with two content courses (5 EC each) and one skills training (2.5 EC). Each semester ends with a project period (5 EC) in which students are required to complete a full-time (research) project. The final semester of MSLAS is dedicated to a Bachelor thesis of 30 EC at MSP or, at UCM and UCV, to a Capstone (20 EC) and two courses (5 ECTS each).

The MSLAS curriculum consists of three types of modules:

1. Content courses, aimed at acquiring knowledge. In these courses, students have interactive lectures and/or recorded knowledge clips and meet twice a week in tutorial groups to discuss problems according to the PBL methodology.
2. Skills training, helping students to develop academic and professional skills. Depending on the addressed skill, it includes a lecture and one tutorial meeting per week (typically UCM/UCV) and/or laboratory work (typically MSP).
3. Projects, bringing together students of different academic interests, different years in their studies, as well as different cultural and societal backgrounds. Projects aim to teach students how to function in multidisciplinary teams using the varying knowledge and background of all team members.

All the modules of MSLAS are listed in the separate course catalogues of the colleges. These courses are pre-approved by the Educational Programme Committee and aligned with the curricula of the three colleges. The course catalogues are accessible to all students within MSLAS. Recently, MSLAS added pre-approved cross college courses to the course catalogue to make it easier for student to follow courses at a different college than the one that they are in. The panel encourages plans to further integrate the course catalogues in the near future. The panel studied the courses, skills training, and projects on offer. It found that, in 2024-2025, MSLAS has over 500 modules of different levels on offer. To ensure that all students meet the ILOs, MSLAS developed rigorous course and graduation requirements for each college. These include that all students must complete a core curriculum and a minimum number of content, skills, and project modules on introductory (1000), intermediate (2000), and advanced (3000) level. The panel is convinced that the content and the requirements ensure achievement of the ILOs.

As of 2024-2025, FSE is piloting a shorter academic year as part of the national programme 'Smarter Academic Year' by the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. This means that the academic calendar of FSE will finish three weeks earlier than before. The pilot influences the length of the projects (now 3 weeks instead of 4) and the reflection weeks at MSLAS. During the site visit, students from different colleges expressed worries about the impact of the pilot on the quality of the projects and their workload. Shortening of the projects implies changes in the design and content of these modules, including the organization of lab work. The panel established that concerns are shared by staff members, discussed in the EPC, and taken seriously by the programme. As a suggestion, the panel advises to thoroughly evaluate the impact of the shortening of the academic year, with special attention to the projects.

UCM Curriculum

In 2024-2025, the UCM course catalogue included 151 content courses, 23 skills courses and 20 projects. The courses and projects cover a wide array of topics in the social sciences (psychology, economics, etc.), humanities (philosophy, history, etc.) and sciences (biology, health science, sustainability sciences etc.). The panel found that the course catalogue provides concise but clear information on course content, level, pre-requisites and assessment. The modules are interesting, varied and relevant to the broad profile of UCM. The

course catalogue is continuously evaluated and updated. Since the previous accreditation, UCM included many new modules in the curriculum. An example is the module 'Data Analysis and Visualisation for the Humanities and Social Sciences'. The panel especially appreciates the availability of a large variety of research opportunities in the catalogue (e.g. the 'Maastricht Research Based Learning' (MaRBL) and the project Applied Research & Internship (ARI)). In the 'Maastricht Research Based Learning' (MaRBL) project, students develop their own research topic within a pre-defined research programme and conduct independent research under the guidance of a senior researcher. In the Applied Research & Internship (ARI) project, students will apply their academic knowledge and skills to a case presented by an external client (e.g. a company, an NGO or a governmental organisation). Another elective project worth mentioning is 'Think Tank' where students write a recommendation for a company or organisation.

All UCM students are required to complete a core curriculum. This core is aimed towards the development of students as well-rounded educated citizens (by studying recent historical events and politics) and academics (by addressing scientific philosophy and reasoning). It consists of four content courses (Philosophy of Science; Contemporary World History; Political Philosophy; and Science, Reason and Human Progress), four skills courses (Academic Skills I and II and Research Methods I and II) and two projects (Introduction to Academic Communication and Research Project). Students are free to complete the core modules at any given time during their programme. The panel studied the core courses and concludes that they guarantee a solid methodological grounding upon which students can build with more complex courses.

In their first year, UCM students explore modules in different disciplines and areas of interest. From the second year onwards, students are asked to define their primary focus of interest and to design their curriculum accordingly. To aid students in this process, they are assigned an academic advisor (see paragraph on 'Guidance, support and studying with a disability'). The primary focus of interest is defined by choosing a 'concentration'. Possible concentrations are the humanities, social sciences or sciences. With approval of the Board of Examiners students can also opt for an interdisciplinary concentration (a mix of courses from two different concentrations). During the site visit, the panel heard that students appreciate the concentrations as functional thematic clusters of courses that aid them in picking the right courses, while not being restrictive. The panel was pleased to find that students are also actively invited to look beyond the borders of their primary field of interest and to broaden their academic perspectives, e.g. through the requirement that they take at least two general education modules outside their chosen concentration.

The UCM curriculum concludes with a semester long independent research project (Capstone, 20 EC). The Capstone guidelines give room for several forms, such as a thesis, research paper or a documentary. Students are free to choose a topic that suits their academic profile and find their own research supervisor (Capstone Advisor), who usually is a UM academic staff member. The whole Capstone process is overseen by the Capstone Coordinator. Students also participate in tutorial groups consisting of fellow Capstone students. Here, they provide each other with formative feedback. The tutor groups are supervised by a Capstone Tutor. The final product is assessed by the Capstone Advisor, as well as a second reader. The panel concludes that the Capstone process is well-designed, with clear manuals for students. The Capstone Advisor and the Capstone Tutor provide for sufficient guidance and feedback moments during the process.

Dual degree programme with the University of Freiburg

Since 2014, UCM students have the opportunity to enrol in a dual degree programme with the University College at the University of Freiburg (UCF) in Germany. Each year, a maximum of five students from each institution can enrol. The panel established that enrolment numbers are relatively low. In 2023-2024 the dual degree was followed by two students from UCM. No students went from UCF to UCM (which was exceptional).

The panel studied the dual degree agreement between UCM and UCF. It established that it provides clear information on the curriculum of incoming and outgoing students, on admission, quality assurance, graduation requirements and the awarding of degrees. Students can apply for the dual degree programme in their second year. Outgoing UCM students must have at least a progress rate of 0.9, a grade point average of 8.0, and A2 level in German language skills. Incoming UCF students must have obtained at least 54 ECTS credits in their first year of study and have an average grade of at least 2.0. Students follow the admission procedure at their home institution. In both places, this process includes a letter of motivation. Once admitted, students study four years in total (240 EC). They spend their first, second and fourth year at their home institution (180EC). In their third year, students study at the partner university (60 EC). Students fulfil the graduation requirements of both programmes through mutual recognition of credits and an individually approved transfer of courses. They are required to produce two separate Capstones, one at each institution. The panel is pleased with the arrangements made. It studied the programme and Capstone of a dual degree graduate (see Standard 4). The panel is convinced that both incoming and outgoing dual degree students are enabled to fulfil the graduation requirements of UCM.

Curriculum UCV

As is the case for UCM, the UCV course catalogue is detailed and consists of all necessary information that students need to make their choices. The panel found that the courses on offer are attractive and varied. UCV has 55 content courses, 16 skills courses and 13 projects on offer. They mainly cover the (life) sciences and social sciences, with a particular focus on the connections between food, nutritional sciences, health, sustainability, business, and entrepreneurship. As was recommended by the 2019 accreditation panel, UCV has now included courses on food technology, plant biology and supply chain management. The number of humanities modules is relatively limited (13 in total). In the panel's view, this makes sense because of the profile of the programme. To broaden their academic knowledge and have them think from different perspectives, students are required to take at least one humanities course as part of the general education courses. They also follow Philosophy of Science and 'World Orientation: An Introduction to Cultural Studies' in their core curriculum. At UCV, students are free to complete this core curriculum at any given time prior to graduation. Recently, the programme added information literacy to the core courses and the ILOs. The panel applauds this decision.

As is the case at UCM, UCV students declare their primary focus of interest by picking a 'concentration' at the end of year one. UCV students can opt for a concentration in 'social science', '(life) science' or (after approval by the Board of Examiners) an interdisciplinary concentration. As for the skills training and projects, the panel was pleased to find opportunities on science communication and leadership skills. UCV students can also enrol in the elective 'Think Tank' project with UCM students, where students of different academic backgrounds work on a project with real world clients. Inter- and transdisciplinary research is also part of other UCV projects and skills modules, for example in the module 'Food Forest'. The UCV curriculum concludes with a semester long independent research project (Capstone, 20 EC). This is organised similarly to the Capstone process at UCM.

The panel concludes that the curriculum at UCV is well-designed and in line with the college-specific ILOs of UCV. However, as UCV is still relatively young and small, there is also room to further strengthen the curriculum and opportunities for students. First, the panel established that UCV could expand its honours education. At the moment, UCV offers a 10 EC PEERS-programme for students with a GPA of 7 and higher who want to increase their proficiency in the steps of the academic research cycle. During the site visit, the panel heard that UCV is currently exploring access for UCV students to MaRBLe and that this should be in place within two years. The panel encourages this initiative. Second, students expressed that they would like

to have more exchange opportunities and would like to have the opportunity to do an internship as part of their Capstone. The panel agrees that both would be a good addition. As for the exchange opportunities, the panel found that opportunities are there but that it is difficult to arrange the exchange in practice because of unclarities in the support structure and difficulties in communication with exchange partners. Therefore, the panel recommends that UCV improves communication on and facilitation of exchange opportunities. As for the internship as part of the Capstone, the panel heard that UCV is already considering an internship as part of the Capstone and is exploring how it can integrate this in the programme. This exploration includes careful selection of internship partners. The panel encourages UCV to continue on with this.

Curriculum MSP

The 2024-2025 course catalogue of MSP includes 83 content courses, 46 skills courses and around 170 project courses. They cover biology, chemistry, mathematics and physics, and also include interdisciplinary courses. In recent years the catalogue has been diversified with additions such as archaeology, geology, and astronomy.

As is the case with UCM and UCV, the MSP curriculum consists of a core curriculum, general education, content courses, skills trainings, projects and a final project. Different at MSP is the obligation to complete all core courses in the first year of the programme. This is to ensure that all students are on the same level in Biology, Chemistry and Physics before proceeding with more advanced courses. The MSP core curriculum also includes an Introduction to Liberal and Arts and Sciences module that addresses philosophy of science and science communication. The panel agrees with the requirement that students finish the core curriculum in their first year and believes that the core provides a solid foundation of understanding in the disciplines covered by the programme. In the general education modules, students are required to enrol in at least one humanities or social sciences course. During the site visit, students told the panel that communication of sciences, humanities and social sciences elements is also often integrated in their multi- or interdisciplinary projects. Students and staff highly value this. They believe that it is essential for the scientist of the future, and that the ability to take and communicate different perspectives sets MSP graduates apart from graduates of other science bachelor programmes. The panel agrees with this and sees it reflected in the courses. The course catalogue consists of an adequate choice of courses from different disciplines, with a reasonable array of interdisciplinary designed sections.

MSP does not work with the concept of concentrations, because it is a concentration on the (natural) sciences in itself. Apart from the core curriculum and general education courses, students are given almost complete freedom in designing their own curriculum. Students can also follow courses at UCM and UCV. To ensure that students meet the ILOs, MSP sets requirements in the minimum number of courses, skills trainings and projects that need to be taken at each level. In addition, many content courses have a co-requisite skills course to safeguard that theory and practice develop in unison. Contrary to UCM and UCV, the final project at MSP is a Bachelor Thesis Research (BTR) project of 30 EC, where students join a research group at UM or another university, research institute or company. The supervisor is a member of this institution, while an internal MSP advisor monitors that the MSP procedures and quality requirements are fulfilled. According to the panel the curriculum design of MSP is well-thought out.

Extracurricular activities

Extracurricular activities are an essential feature of MSLAS, as is in line with the special feature of small scale and intensive education. Extracurriculars at MSLAS facilitate learning and personal development, but also contribute to community-building. Each college has its own study association: 'Universalis' for UCM, 'BEET' for UCV and 'Aperture' for MSP. During the site visit, the panel learned that the study associations are very active and have an important role in organising extracurricular events at the three colleges. Most activities

are initiated by and/or organised by the study associations and other students, with support of the staff. If necessary, these activities are financially supported by MSLAS. The panel examined the extracurricular activities at the three colleges. At UCM, recent extracurricular activities include guest lecturers, a diplomat visit, a speech competition, an Indonesian culture night, a meet your future event, a chocolate tasting event and an Open Mic Night. At UCV, examples of extracurriculars are the Book Club, Chess Club, Business Fair, academic workshops and a Sports & Wellness Club. At MSP, examples of activities are talks by lecturers on specific course-related topics (at least once a month), an art club and pancake nights. Apart from student-led activities, MSLAS also offers other extracurricular opportunities. Examples are the 'Honours Research Programme' (MSP), 'MaRBLe' (UCM), exchanges and business visits (all three colleges) and participation in the worldwide 'iGEM' competition (MSP).

The panel concludes that all three colleges organise a wide array of curriculum-related and social activities that students can participate in. New initiatives are actively encouraged and facilitated. Staff is very supportive and attend events where appropriate and feasible. Together, students and staff at all three colleges form a healthy community, with shared responsibility for the organization of extracurricular activities. Although relatively young with a smaller student body, this is also the case at UCV, where due to the growing student numbers this is likely to increase in the future. Recently, the study associations of the different colleges have started to meet. They plan to organise more joint MSLAS events, while at the same time preserving the local sense of community with college-specific activities. The panel encourages this step; knowing students from other colleges will make it easier for them to opt for a module at one of the other colleges.

Language of instruction

MSLAS has an English name and the language of instruction and formal communication at all three colleges is English. These choices are in line with the UM policy on internationalization and MSLAS's profile that embraces exposure to a wide variety of perspectives and cultures, and aims to teach students to weigh these perspectives, discuss them constructively, and work together to jointly formulate ways to approach academic and societal problems. To ensure that students and staff are able to fulfil this ambition, the student body of MSLAS is highly international and brings together students from over more than 50 countries. The admissions procedure for MSLAS includes demonstration of adequate proficiency in English. This is also demanded of staff; teaching staff must demonstrate English language proficiency at C1-level and support staff at B2-level. The panel concludes that the use of English language is an inseparable part of the programme's profile, ambitions and community, and supports the choice by the programme for English as language for communication and instruction.

Intake and selection procedure

MSLAS is open for enrolment every September. In 2023-2024, 323 students enrolled at UCM; 38 at UCV; and 262 at MSP. As of the academic year 2024-2025, the programme stopped the possibility of February enrolment to ease scheduling and provide relief for staff. To be eligible for enrolment, students need to have a Dutch VWO secondary education diploma or an equivalent thereof. Students must also provide a certificate that proves sufficient English language proficiency or prove that they are native speakers. The admissions procedure also includes a written statement of motivation and a personal interview with an academic staff member or a Board of Admissions member. Students apply per college, and are thus not admitted to the programme as a whole but to the college they applied for. During the visit, the panel heard that it is sometimes possible for students to switch colleges during their programme if their interest is nevertheless more towards the profile of another college. The panel concludes that the admission requirements and procedure are appropriate and well-designed. The motivation and interview include an assessment of

suitability for the programme, college profile, and interest in PBL and the small-scale and intensive educational concept and community of MSLAS.

Guidance, support and studying with a disability

Each college has its own system of academic guidance and counselling in place, which is organised in a similar way. Upon enrolment, students are matched with an academic advisor based on their interests and needs as expressed during the admissions process. The academic advisor meets with the students at least once a semester and more often when needed. In principle, students keep the same academic advisor during their programme at MSLAS. All new academic advisors follow a compulsory training in September and receive instructions on what is expected from them. The academic advisor helps students to translate their interests into curriculum choices, and advises on issues concerning academic and personal growth.

At each college, the academic advising system is overseen by an Office of Academic Advising. This office also organises workshops for students on important curriculum choices and other relevant matters, and supports students in the organisation of extra-curricular activities. The three offices are in frequent contact with each other to align practises and are exploring options for further integration. In the student chapters, students noted that they are not always happy with the quality of their academic advisors. The panel discussed this issue with students, staff, academic advisors and management. It found that there can sometimes be a mismatch between the academic advisor and the student. Reasons for this may be personal but can also relate to a mismatch with the needs of students or changed curriculum interests. In these cases, students can contact the Office of Academic Advising and they will arrange a change in advisors. During the site visit, students told the panel that academic advisors, and tutors in general, are very accessible. Workshops organised by the Office of Academic Advising are useful, and the programme is open to requests for additional information sessions or support when needed by the students. During the COVID-19 global pandemic, a study buddy system encouraged students to support each other. This system no longer exists, but the programme still has a peer help system in place. As part of this system, MSLAS students meet each other and share experiences and best practices, e.g. on making curriculum choices.

Next to Academic Advising, students also have access to study advisors for consultation on personal situations that might hinder them in their study progress. When necessary, students are referred to UM-wide student counsellors and psychologists. Students with a disability can apply for special accommodations with the central UM Disability Support Office, which advises Boards of Examiners on provisions needed. Decisions are tailor-made to the student's individual needs. The panel examined facilities for students in the buildings of MSLAS. It found that all buildings include special classrooms for students who are offered exam-taking exceptions. In terms of educational facilities, MSLAS may offer adaptations to the format in which teaching material is offered, adjusted deadlines for exams and assignments, altered education schedules, or a customized classroom, e.g. with dedicated audio facilities for hearing impaired students. Accessibility of the buildings is managed by the Facilities Services Department of UM. The panel found that measures have been taken in all three buildings, but that it remains a challenge to make e.g. the older UCM buildings fully wheelchair accessible. Students explained to the panel that the small-scale community is very helpful in this respect. When necessary, students help each other or staff re-arranges room schedules to ensure accessibility for all.

The panel concludes that MSLAS has a solid support and guidance structure. The accessibility of education for students with disabilities is adequately supported.

Teaching staff

The teaching staff consists of core staff employed by each college of MSLAS, and external staff from other UM faculties and research departments. Internal staff not only function as course coordinators, lecturers and

tutors, but are also involved in recruitment, admissions, academic advising and extracurricular activities. The external staff bring in additional expertise that allows the colleges to teach a broad range of subjects and offer students a large(r) variety of research possibilities.

In 2023-2024, the students to internal (academic and support) staff ratio was 21,1 for UCM, 24,7 for MSP and 8,9 for UCV. The panel discussed these ratios and workload with staff of the three colleges. It found that workload is generally high in all three colleges, but that staff feel that they are taken seriously and are well supported by management. The current ratios adequately enable teachers to provide MSLAS's small-scale PBL teaching. Staff members at UCM and MSP expressed that they rely on a mature organisational structure, curriculum and team which helps a lot. Because UCV is still relatively young and small, this is less the case there. Teachers at UCV still spend a lot of time developing new courses and fulfil multiple roles at the same time. UCV staff feel they are taken seriously and supported enough on the topic of workload, but because of the development phase of the programme and UCV's considerable growth ambition, workload is a permanent attention point here.

From the lists of staff members of UCM, UCV and MSP, the panel concludes that expertise and didactic skills of MSLAS internal and associated staff are adequate. The teaching staff consists of experts in their respective fields and are all required to have passed, or be in the process of obtaining, a University Teaching Qualification. Beyond this qualification, staff are expected to engage in further educational professionalization for at least 16 hours per academic year and to follow all trainings needed to fulfil their roles, such as the training for new academic advisors.

Staff also perform well in terms of research output and do a lot of research with students. At UCM, the percentage of staff with a PhD is lower (51%) than at UCV (82%) and MSP (88%). The management explained that this is because UCM employs tutors (i.e. staff without coordination tasks) as scientific staff members, instead of relying on PhD (or master) students. UCM determines minimum teacher requirements for each course, discipline and role separately to ensure the right match between courses and teaching staff. UCM coordinators usually have a PhD, unless a special exception is made. Tutors and academic advisors can also have a master's degree. Finally, the panel heard that it is sometimes difficult to create coherent research networks within MSLAS because of the broad range of topics covered. An idea could be to create research peer networks within MSLAS that staff can use for interpersonal feedback and reflection on the process and progress. A best practice at MSP that could also work in facilitating research at the other two colleges, is that teaching staff have an education free period during which they can fully concentrate on education development and research.

Student evaluations and the student chapters in the self-evaluation report confirm the positive impression of the panel about the quality of the staff. Students are generally satisfied with their teachers and describe them as accessible, knowledgeable and supportive.

Facilities

UCM, UCV and MSP have their own buildings. The panel visited all three buildings and examined available facilities. It found that facilities of MSLAS are adequate and sufficiently tailored to the needs of the three colleges. All buildings include a lecture hall, study spaces, classrooms suitable for the PBL method, as well as common areas where students can meet each other. Students at UCM and MSP have access to the university library facilities. The buildings also have college-specific facilities. At UCM, this includes an arts and multi-purpose research lab. MSP has multiple buildings that include dry labs a bio-hazard lab, chemistry labs, flow-chambers, a dark room and an electronics lab. The panel visited these laboratories and was impressed by how well-organized and equipped they are. Students are taught and facilitated to work independently in the

labs and both students and staff follow obligatory trainings on health and safety measures. Since MSP is located at the Brightlands Health Campus, students can also make use of available facilities of other FSE departments, UM and the MUMC+ hospital. UCM and MSP are non residential, but students receive advice on how to find housing after the admissions process.

UCV is located in the former Labour Council building in the inner city of Venlo, close to the railway station. Next to the University College, it is also home to two UM master's programmes in health, nutrition and business: 'Health Food Innovation Management' and 'Global Supply Chain Management and Change'. The panel established that the UCV building is modern and small-scale. It includes shared areas where students can meet to work on projects or organize social events. Services and teaching staff rooms are close to the common areas, thereby contributing to community building and accessibility of staff for students. The panel was especially pleased to find that UCV also provides on-campus student housing for 28 students. Student apartments are in the educational building and equipped with everything that students need. Students that do not make use of on-campus student housing, confirmed that it is relatively easy to find student housing in Venlo as compared to Maastricht. The study association BEET and the student community also help students who are looking for a place to live. Another positive aspect of the UCV facilities is the connection to the Brightlands Campus Greenport Venlo with access to advanced laboratories and a recently built state-of-the-art greenhouse. The only real challenge of the Venlo Campus is that it is relatively far from Maastricht University (80 kilometres) and that the train connection from Venlo to Maastricht is suboptimal, making it more difficult for students of UCV to follow courses at UCM and MSP, and vice versa.

Considerations

The panel studied the curricula of the three colleges and concludes that they are well-designed with rigorous curriculum and course requirements, concentrations (for UCM and UCV) and a wide array of relevant courses. The panel is convinced that the curriculum design sufficiently enables students to develop a curriculum according to their own interests and to achieve the shared and college-specific intended learning outcomes. The modules on offer at UCM are interesting, varied and relevant to the broad profile of this college. The panel also appreciates the availability of a large variety research opportunities in the catalogue. Students are actively invited to look beyond the borders of their primary field of interest and to broaden their academic perspectives, e.g. through the requirement that they take at least two general education modules outside their chosen concentration. UCM's dual degree with UCF is carefully organised and an asset, although it could do with higher enrolment numbers.

The curriculum of MSP is also well-designed with an adequate choice of courses from different disciplines and a reasonable array of interdisciplinary designed sections. The requirement that students complete the core curriculum in their first year provides a solid foundation of understanding in the disciplines covered by the programme. The panel also appreciates that elements of communication of sciences, humanities and social sciences are often integrated into the projects.

UCV's curriculum is interesting and unique in the context of a Liberal Arts and Science Programme. This college is relatively young and still continually developing itself with new courses. The panel noted with satisfaction that the MARBLE project has recently been opened to UCV students. It encourages UCV to continue to actively promote this opportunity to students. The panel recommends that UCV verifies and ensures that communication on and facilitation of exchange opportunities are in order, thereby removing unclarities for students. The panel encourages plans to open up the MaRBLLe honours programme for UCV students and to integrate the possibility of an internship in the Capstone project. The panel recommends that UCV verifies and ensures that communication on and facilitation of exchange opportunities are in order, thereby removing unclarities for students.

MSLAS uses problem-based learning as its educational method. The panel established that students and staff are enthusiastic about PBL. The panel agrees that PBL works well in operationalizing the ILOs and the small-scale and intensive education that MSLAS is aiming for. Students confirmed that their classes are small and that within PBL active participation is required from all students. The buildings and facilities of UCM, UCV and MSP are sufficiently tailored to the needs of the three colleges, including PBL. All three colleges offer an impressive amount of curriculum-related and social extracurricular activities. The majority of them is student-led and enthusiastically supported by MSLAS's staff. The three study associations of MSLAS take a very active role in the organisation of events and new initiatives are encouraged and facilitated.

The expertise, didactic and research skills of teaching staff are adequate. Teachers are all trained in providing small scale and intensive PBL education and – when applicable – in acting as an academic advisor. Students are satisfied about the accessibility and enthusiasm of their teachers. Enrolment of the most suitable students for the programme is supported with a well-developed admissions procedure that takes into account academic achievement, English language proficiency and motivation for the small-scale, intensive and PBL approach at MSLAS. The combination of the curriculum, a fine-grained guidance structure, careful admissions process and small scale education results in drop-out numbers that are relatively low as compared to other UM programmes. The panel established that there is sufficient attention for the special needs of MSLAS students with a disability.

The panel concludes that Standard 2 and criteria B-F are adequately met. For a more summary description of criteria B-F at UCM and MSP, and a detailed description of the practice based-assessment small-scale and intensive education at UCV, please refer to the separate sections on these topics.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences meets standard 2 of the NVAO framework.

The panel concludes that the bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences of the University College Maastricht and the Maastricht Science Programme meet criteria B, C, D, E and F of the framework for the Distinctive Feature "Small-scale and Intensive Education".

Standard 3. Student assessment

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

Findings

System of assessment

MSLAS embraces the UM vision on assessment, which is an integral part of the UM educational concept of PBL. According to the CCCS principles of PBL (see Standard 2), assessment is a meaningful part of the learning process of the student and should provide opportunities for students to reflect on and learn from their assessments by using timely and specific feedback to steer their own learning process. This means that assessment design is coordinated on a programme level to ensure constructive alignment with the ILOs and teaching and learning activities. Assessment design should embed three types of assessment: assessment of learning (achievement of the ILOs), assessment for learning (using formative evaluation), and assessment as learning (monitoring and reflecting on progress). Finally, assessments should be valid, reliable, transparent

and include possibilities for student engagement (e.g. peer feedback, inspection hours and design of assessments by students).

The panel studied the assessment design of MSLAS. It established that the ILOs have been clearly matched with the different courses, skills trainings, projects and final work. Manuals have clear descriptions of course objectives, assessment and grading. Each course includes at least two assessments. Courses use a variety of assessment methods. These assessment methods match the level and objectives of the courses and include written and oral exams, take-home exams, assignments and papers, lab reports, and presentations. Consistent with the UM vision, peer feedback, peer assessment and group work are frequently part of assessment, which fosters ILO-related skills such as critical thinking and collaboration. The panel found that this is done in a sensible mix with other (more tutor-driven and/or individual) forms of assessment. Students are always offered an exam inspection moment and, if they fail a course, a resit opportunity. During the site visit, the panel discussed the impact of GenAI on assessment. It agrees with several actions taken within the separate colleges of MSLAS. As recommended in Standard 2, the panel feels that requirements to make assessment more AI-proof should be part of a broader MSLAS policy on GenAI.

Because MSLAS offers a large number of courses, the panel discussed with teachers and management how the quality of assessment is maintained at the same level. They explained that the responsibility for assessment in a module lies with the examiner. This is usually the course coordinator. All examiners are appointed by the Board of Examiners and must have obtained their University Teaching Qualification or have the prospect of doing so in the following year. Prior to the education period, course coordinators must file an assessment plan indicating the modes of assessment used, their timing within the education period, and how they relate to the intended learning outcomes, thereby ensuring constructive alignment. At UCM, gaps and redundancies between courses are also overseen by cluster coordinators. Different measures to take care of the quality of courses and assessments are annual reviews of courses by the Educational Programme Committee, discussion of student evaluations and curriculum dialogues. During these curriculum dialogues, courses are clustered into groups and course coordinators in the same group discuss alignments and gaps. The panel concludes that the system of assessment of MSLAS is well-designed, in accordance with UM's assessment vision and MSLAS's profile and the ILOs.

Assessment of the final project

The programme concludes with a semester-long independent research project: a Capstone of 20 EC at UCM and UCV and a Bachelor Thesis Research (BTR) at MSP (30 EC). Throughout the project, students produce intermediate deliverables (e.g. a proposal, midterm review or a presentation) and are provided with feedback from their tutors and/or peers. In response to the emergence of GenAI, MSLAS has assured that the thesis process includes other than written elements (a presentation and organized additional formative evaluation moments at UCM, a defense at UCV and an outreach video and internal presentation at MSP). Suspected unauthorised use of GenAI in assessment is considered as fraud and is reported to the BoE. The programme is continuously looking for new opportunities to counteract the use of GenAI in the final assessment. The panel agrees with the steps that have been taken and encourages the programme to stay on top of new developments. It also established that the assessment procedures and criteria of the Capstone and BTR have been described meticulously in college-specific manuals for students and assessors.

At UCM and UCV, the Capstone is assessed by the Capstone Advisor who grades the final product and the presentation using a standardized rubric. All Capstones are also assigned a second rea

der to ensure validity and reliability of assessment. The system is double-blind, meaning that the identity of the student, supervisor and second reader are not disclosed. The grade given by the supervisor should be within 1.5 points of the grade given by the second reader. There should also be no pass/fail difference. If

these conditions are met, the procedure is slightly different at UCM and UCV. At UCM, the Capstone will receive the grade given by the UCM supervisor. If there is a difference of more than 1.5 points, or if there is a pass/fail difference, the Capstone coordinator will also assess the thesis and/or will ask a third reader to do so. The grade is composed of the weighted grades for the proposal (20%) and the final Capstone (80%). At UCV, the assessment of the Capstone supervisor and the second grader weigh 60:40 towards the final grade.

At MSP, the BTR is assessed by the (often external) research supervisor and an (internal) second assessor. The BTR assessment has four weighted components: 1. a grade and feedback for the research proposal (15%; independently assessed by research supervisor and internal advisor); 2. two grades for the practical research work, given at different points in the cycle (together 50%; research supervisor only). This includes a defense presentation; 3. A grade for the written thesis (25%; independently assessed by research supervisor and internal advisor), and 4. A grade for the outreach video (10%; graded by the internal advisor and peer reviewed by one current thesis student).

The panel studied UCM and UCV Capstones and MSP theses, including the grading rubrics. It found that the assessment procedures of all three colleges are thorough and carefully followed. The panel was particularly enthusiastic about the addition of an 'outreach video' to the BTR, because this is a relevant skill for science students. Assessment rubrics of UCM, UCV and MSP were clear and transparent, and the panel generally agreed with the given grades.

Board of Examiners

As of the academic year 2023-2024, the Board of Examiners (BoE) of the three colleges merged. The idea behind the merger is to share best practices, guidelines and working methods between colleges. The new BoE consists of nine academic staff members from UCM, UCV and MSP and one external member. The BoE is supported by secretaries.

At the time of the site visit, the BoE members were in the process of streamlining and standardising processes, while continuing daily operations. Daily operations of the BoE MSLAS include the appointment of examiners and issuing of rules and regulations; screening of assessment plans by course coordinators; provision of guidelines for examiners on the format of assessment and exams and guidelines for dealing with fraud; delivering feedback to the programme board in semi-annual meetings and an annual report; signalling urgent issues regarding the quality of assessment and examination; and deciding upon student requests. The BoE has also been involved in the development of guiding principles on dealing with GenAI in assessment (see above, Standard 2 and 3).

Considerations

The panel concludes that MSLAS has a clear assessment philosophy that matches with PBL/CCCS and the ambition of the programme to educate students that are able to bridge perspectives and collaborate with students with different disciplinary backgrounds. Assessment is designed carefully with an eye for constructive alignment and other important quality requirements for assessment. The programme uses a variety of assessment methods. Consistent with the UM vision, peer feedback, peer assessment and group work are frequently part of assessment which fosters ILO-related skills such as critical thinking and collaboration. Students have sufficient possibilities to take resits. The programme has adequately anticipated concerning the risks of GenAI for assessment, but rules and measures should be part of an MSLAS policy on GenAI (see Standard 2). The panel concludes that the BoE properly carries out its tasks and responsibilities and is working hard to (re)develop new working methods now that the three BoE's have merged into one MSLAS BoE. The assessment forms for the final projects are clear and transparent.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences meets standard 3 of the NVAO framework.

Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes

The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Findings

Quality of the theses

The panel studied a sample of 16 Capstone projects from UCM (including one from the dual degree programme with UCF), 15 Capstone projects from UCV and 15 theses from MSP. The panel found that the UCM and UCV Capstones and the MSP theses are of a high level across the board. Capstones and theses are well-structured, with good background research and motivation, and focussing on timely and relevant topics. The panel generally agreed with the given grades and concludes that the ILOs are met in the final works of all three colleges.

The UCM Capstones addressed very diverse and interesting topics, started from well-conceived research proposals and included robust strategies for research. The UCV Capstones were also very interesting and good. The panel was pleased to find that the chosen topics really match with the specific thematic focus of this programme. Finally, the panel compliments MSP for the way they set up the BTR. The combination of a bachelor thesis with a video to explain the relevance of the topic to the general public is recommendable and effectively promotes awareness among (future) scientists regarding the importance of communicating their research to a broader, non-specialist audience. The panel was also pleased to find that MSP students include an assessment of good laboratory practices and that their research proposals integrate ethical considerations, with several students demonstrating a high level of maturity in this.

Performance of graduates

Graduation rates of MSLAS are on par with those of other university colleges with the special feature small-scale and intensive education and significantly higher than the UM graduates. Of the 2019-2020 cohort, 88% of MSLAS students graduated within 4 years, as compared to 79.6% at UM. Broken down to the three programmes the percentages are: 90% for UCM, 93.8% for UCV; and 86.2% for MSP.

In 2024, UM's Research Center for Education and the Labour Market conducted a survey amongst MSLAS alumni between 2004-2023. 1164 alumni participated, resulting in a response rate of 34.4%. This research shows that alumni are very satisfied with the programme. Over four in five graduates (88.5%) perceive the programme as helpful in the success of their further studies. A vast majority of students (91.3%) continue their education; 74.4% of this group obtained a master's degree and 22.5% a PhD degree. Of the graduates that obtain a master's degree, one third attended a top 100 university.

The panel also studied qualitative data on education and career choices of MSLAS graduates. It found that graduates have good opportunities. They enrol in a wide variety of attracting disciplinary and interdisciplinary master's programmes, ranging from psychology and life sciences to law and economics. At UCM, almost all disciplines are represented. At MSP, graduates enrol in a master's degree in natural sciences; other areas scoring high are neuroscience, engineering, computer science and physics. At UCV, many students choose life sciences, but here students also often move on to master's in psychology, econometrics and environmental sciences.

After their studies, MSLAS graduates also have interesting professional careers, mostly in research and advisory occupations. For UCV, setting up a Stakeholders Advisory group (as was recommended in Standard 1) can also help to (further) promote awareness of the contribution of UCV graduates in work field of nutrition, food, business and health. Interestingly, at MSP many graduates also continue their professional career as entrepreneurs, which again emphasises the ambition of this programme to educate students who are able to communicate with other disciplines and to connect scientific research to real world problems.

Considerations

The panel concludes that students realize the ambitious intended learning outcomes of the programme, and achieve the high level and broadening required for programmes with small-scale and intensive education. The graduation rates are appropriate to a programme with the special feature 'Small-scale and intensive education'. The panel Capstones and theses of MSLAS are of a high level, and cover topics that are relevant to the three college programmes. Graduates perform well; they continue with interesting and challenging master's programmes and PhD projects, and have good career prospects.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences meets standard 4 of the NVAO framework.

The panel concludes that the bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences of the University College Maastricht and the Maastricht Science Programme meet criterion G of the framework for the Distinctive Feature "Small-scale and Intensive Education".

General conclusion NVAO Framework

The panel has established that the bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences meets all four NVAO standards under consideration: intended learning outcomes, teaching-learning environment, assessment, and achieved learning outcomes. As a result, the panel's overall assessment of the quality of the bachelor programme Liberal Arts and Sciences is positive.

Recommendations

1. (MSLAS) Conceptualise more clearly and explicitly what MSLAS understands as multi-, inter-, and transdisciplinarity, including how these concepts are related to each other and how they are addressed and built up within the college programmes in relation to the ILOs.
2. (MSLAS) Develop an MSLAS policy on the opportunities and threats of Artificial Intelligence, while continually evaluating and adapting it to further developments in GenAI and MSLAS's internal and external educational environment.
3. (UCV) Invest in a more systematic and extensive focus on external relationship building, e.g. by starting a Stakeholders Advisory Group.
4. (UCV) Verify and ensure that communication on and facilitation of exchange opportunities are in order, thereby removing unclarities for students.

General conclusion Distinctive Feature Small-scale and Intensive Education at University College Maastricht and the Maastricht Science Programme

The bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences obtained the distinctive feature Small-Scale and Intensive Education in 2019. The panel performing the 2019 practice-based assessment of University College Maastricht (UCM) and Maastricht Science Programme (MSP) considered that further progress had been made, both in terms of the evaluation criteria and with regard to the points of attention raised by the initial review team. Another six years later, in 2024, the bachelor programme and its distinctive feature are up for re-accreditation. The 2024 assessment panel has looked at whether the programmes at UCM and MSP still meet the conditions for granting the distinctive feature. In line with the NVAO Guidelines, the panel checked whether small-scale and intensive education has evolved into a quintessential feature of the programme. In the core part of this report, the panel has taken into account the criteria of the distinctive feature when assessing the quality of the bachelor's programme. In this section, the panel brings together its specific findings and considerations on these criteria for UCM and MSP and indicates whether an extension of the 'Small-scale and intensive education' distinctive feature is justified for these colleges.

A. Intended learning outcomes

MSLAS offers a student-led curriculum that opens up opportunities for undergraduate students who want to academically explore different disciplines and perspectives. At UCM, students can opt for a very broad curriculum with optimal freedom of choice in humanities, social sciences and (a carefully selected array of courses in) sciences. At MSP, students can choose a strong emphasis on the sciences (MSP). The panel views this set-up of a LAS programme as enriching, offering exciting opportunities for students. The common MSLAS ILOs and the college-specific MSP ILOs are ambitious and, respectively, reflect the requirements of a Dutch Liberal Arts and Sciences programme and the college-specific profiles of UCM and MSP. The ILOs focus not only on achieving an above-average level in academic and professional skills, but also on broadening and the development of personal attitudes and skills. They include skills on problem solving, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, self-directed learning and research.

B. Curriculum: contents

MSLAS offers a large number of courses, skills trainings and projects. The course catalogue of UCM covers almost 200 modules covering a wide array of topics in the social sciences (psychology, economics, etc.), humanities (philosophy, history, etc.) and sciences (biology, health science, sustainability sciences etc.). MSP has around 300 modules, mostly, but not solely, in the natural sciences. The panel found that the modules at UCM and MSP are interesting, varied and relevant to their profiles. The curricula of both colleges are well-designed with a good balance between the freedom for students to design their own curriculum on the one hand, and the requirements that ensure achievement of the ILOs on the other hand. UCM and MSP organize a wide array of curriculum-related and social extracurricular activities for students. Many of them are student-led and the colleges actively encourage new initiatives. Students and staff form a healthy community, with shared responsibility for the organization of extracurricular activities.

C. Curriculum: learning environment

Students of UCM and MSP follow a rigorous and intensive study programme including 10-17 contact hours per week. UCM and MSP adhere to the problem-based learning (PBL) method of Maastricht University (UM). The panel found PBL is highly valued by students and academic staff. They feel that PBL is very helpful in a university college setting as it encourages students to explore views, knowledge and skills within a group and integrates learning of key ILO skills such as problem-solving, communication, collaboration and decision-making. The panel concludes that the PBL/CCCS approach fits well with the profile of MSLAS and is helpful in operationalising the ILOs. Because of the PBL method, most contact hours take place in small

student-centred tutorial groups with a maximum of 15 students. The panel established that students have a lot of interactions with academic staff in their courses, but also through academic advising, individual feedback sessions and extra-curriculars. Students describe the colleges of MSLAS as close-knit and challenging learning communities with many opportunities to develop themselves academically, socially and personally. The panel established that drop-out rates are relatively low. Between 2018-2022, the average MSLAS drop-out rate in the first year was 10.3% (compared to an average of 21.2% for the UM). Between 2018-2021, drop-out after the first year was 1.9% for UCM and 2.0% for MSP (compared to an average of 4.2% for the UM). Graduation rates also confirm the learning environment and curriculum ensure nominal study progress (see criterion G).

D. Intake

In 2023-2024, 363 students enrolled at UCM and 212 at MSP. To be eligible for enrolment, students need to have a Dutch VWO secondary education diploma or an equivalent thereof. Unless they are native speakers, students must also provide a certificate that proves sufficient English language proficiency. The admissions procedure also includes a written statement of motivation and a personal interview with an academic staff member or a Board of Admissions member. The panel concludes that the admission requirements and procedure are appropriate and well-designed, aimed at admitting motivated and academically talented students. The written motivation and interview include an assessment of suitability and interest in PBL and the small-scale and intensive educational concept and community of MSLAS.

E. Staff

The teaching staff at UCM and MSP consists of internal core staff members, and external staff from other UM faculties and research departments. In 2023-2024, the students to internal (academic and support) staff ratio was 21.1 for UCM and 24.7 for MSP. The panel discussed these ratios and workload with staff. It found that these ratios adequately enable teachers to provide small-scale PBL teaching. Staff members at UCM and MSP rely on a mature organisational structure, curriculum and team. From the lists of staff members of UCM and MSP, the panel concludes that expertise and didactic skills of internal and associated staff are adequate. The teaching staff consists of experts in their respective fields and are all required to have passed, or be in the process of obtaining, a University Teaching Qualification. Beyond this qualification, staff are expected to engage in further educational professionalization for at least 16 hours per academic year and to follow all trainings needed to fulfil their roles, e.g. the training for new academic advisors. Staff also performs well in terms of research output and do a lot of research with students. Students are generally satisfied with their teachers and describe them as accessible, knowledgeable and supportive. The panel concludes that the number of staff is sufficient for small-scale and intensive education, including academic advising. Staff have the right expertise to teach in the programme, including the elements of small-scale and intensive education and management and provides training when necessary.

F. Facilities

UCM and MSP have their own buildings. These buildings each have lecture halls, study spaces, classrooms suitable for the PBL method, as well as common areas where students can meet each other. The building of UCM also includes an arts and multi-purpose research lab. The buildings of MSP also contain several dry labs, a bio-hazard lab, chemistry labs, flow-chambers, a dark room and an electronics lab. The panel visited these laboratories and was impressed by how well-organized and equipped they are. Students are taught and facilitated to work independently in the labs and both students and staff follow obligatory trainings on health and safety measures. Since MSP is located at the Brightlands Health Campus, students can also make use of available facilities of other FSE departments, UM and the MUMC+ hospital. The panel concludes that the buildings and facilities of UCM and MSP are sufficiently tailored to the needs of these colleges, including problem-based learning, small-scale and intensive education and extra-curricular social activities.

G. Achieved learning outcomes

The panel found that the UCM Capstones and the MSP BTR theses are of a high level and meet the MSLAS ILOs, as well as the college-specific ILOs of UCM and MSP. Capstones and theses are well-structured, with good background research and motivation, and focussing on timely and relevant topics. The UCM Capstones address very diverse and interesting topics, start from well-conceived research proposals and include robust strategies for research. The MSP theses include an assessment of good laboratory practices and their research proposals integrate ethical considerations, with several students demonstrating a high level of maturity in this.

Graduation rates of UCM and MSP are on par with those of other university colleges with the special feature small scale and intensive education and significantly higher than the UM graduates. Of the 2019-2020 cohort, 90% of UCM students and 86.2% of MSP students graduated within 4 years, as compared to 79.6% at UM. MSLAS graduates have good opportunities. MSLAS alumni research shows that a vast majority of graduates (91.3%) continue their education; 74.4% of graduates obtained a master's degree and 22.5% a PhD degree. Of the graduates that obtain a master's degree, one third attended a top 100 university. At UCM, almost all disciplines are represented in the follow-up programmes. At MSP, about a quarter of graduates enrol in a master's degree in natural sciences; other areas scoring high are neuroscience, engineering, computer science and physics. After their studies, graduates have interesting professional careers, mostly in research and advisory occupations. A significant number of MSP graduates also proceed their careers as entrepreneurs.

Conclusion

The panel has established that the bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences at University College Maastricht and the Maastricht Science Programme meet all seven criteria of the distinctive feature Small-Scale and Intensive Education: intended learning outcomes, programme content, learning environment, intake, staff, material facilities, and achieved learning outcomes. It considers that small-scale and intensive education has become an integral part of the bachelor programme at these two colleges of MSLAS.

As a result, the panel's overall assessment of the distinctive feature Small-Scale and Intensive Education in the bachelor programme Liberal Arts and Sciences at UCM and MSP is positive.

Description of the practice-based assessment for the Distinctive Feature Small-scale and Intensive Education at University College Venlo

Introduction

University College Venlo (UCV) is one of the three university colleges of the Maastricht Liberal Arts and Sciences programme (MSLAS). The other two university colleges of MSLAS are the University College Maastricht (UCM) and the Maastricht Science Programme (MSP). Each college offers a distinctive but complementary curriculum. Collectively covering all disciplines in MSLAS, UCM offers the broadest curriculum and UCV and MSP have a more framed disciplinary mix.

UCV was founded in 2015. It is housed in the former 'Raad van Arbeid' (Labour Council) building in the inner city of Venlo. In 2023-2024, UCV had a student community of 122 students. UCV's curriculum has a thematic focus on food, nutrition and health. Within this focus, students can create their own interdisciplinary programme. In 2024-2025, UCV offers 55 content courses, 16 skills trainings and 13 projects for students to choose from. They can also enrol in other UM and MSLAS modules, given they meet the curriculum and course requirements. UCV students can opt for a concentration in social sciences (psychology, sociology, economics, health management, public health, and law) and life sciences (biology, chemistry, computer science, and physiology), or (with approval of the Board of Examiners) an interdisciplinary concentration. Graduates receive a Bachelor of Arts (BA) or Bachelor of Sciences, depending on their individual study programme.

UCV was awarded the distinctive feature Small-scale and intensive education in 2019. In addition to the regular NVAO Limited Programme Assessment of the bachelor's programme MSLAS, the 2024 panel performed a practice-based assessment at UCV to verify whether the distinctive small-scale and intensive character of this particular college can be reaffirmed. The practice-based assessment of UCV took place in combination with the Limited Programme Assessment. One panel member was specifically trained and appointed by the NVAO to lead the assessment of this Distinctive Feature at UCV according to the NVAO's Assessment Framework for the Distinctive Feature of Small-scale and Intensive Education (also published in the 2024 'Uitvoeringsregels Accreditatiestelsel Hoger Onderwijs Nederland').

For the practice-based assessment, the 2019 panel advised:

- further clarification of the additional value of UCV's combined study of disciplines as linked to its thematic focus (Criterion A);
- offering more courses on logistics, food technology and plant biology and investigating ways to interact with Brightlands Campus Greenport Venlo (Criterion B);
- further enhancement of structural, extracurricular activities related to UCV's curriculum and aims (Criterion B);
- improving the availability of psychological support in Venlo and sufficient study and social space for students at Campus Venlo (Criterion F);
- monitoring of the effects of growth at UCV, including the health and safety measures and requirements for students at the Brightlands Campus Greenport Venlo (Criterion F).

The abovementioned improvement areas will be discussed under the Criteria A, B, C and F. The panel found that all of them have been addressed in a satisfactory manner. Recommendations, advices and suggestions of the 2024 panel are discussed in this report. In addition, the recommendations are also listed in the report on the Limited Programme Assessment. Suggestions are not listed because the panel considers them to be

of a different (non-binding) nature and does not deem it necessary to follow them up in the next panel review.

Criterion A: Intended learning outcomes

The objectives and intended learning outcomes are aimed at achieving an above-average level in one or more academic disciplines and/or professional practices in the domain concerned. In addition, the programme focuses on the broadening and development of related personal attitudes and skills.

Findings

UCV offers an open curriculum that allows students to build their own individual programme with a specific thematic focus on food, nutrition and health. This thematic focus also includes sustainability and humanities courses on the one hand and business, logistics and entrepreneurship on the other hand. The 2019 assessment panel recommended further clarification of the additional value of UCV's combined study of disciplines as linked to its thematic focus. The 2024 panel found that the thematic focus of UCV has been refined. The topics covered by UCV pull from both the (life) sciences and the social sciences, which are then combined in a multi- and interdisciplinary way. UCV students pick a concentration in 'life sciences', 'social sciences' or (with approval of the Board of Examiners) an 'interdisciplinary concentration'. In the view of the panel the specific thematic focus of the UCV programme is clear and makes it unique in the field of Liberal Arts and Sciences Programmes in the Netherlands. The profile also clearly deviates from typical nutrition and psychology programmes. The multi- and interdisciplinary integration of (life) sciences with social sciences and humanities courses challenges students to familiarize themselves with different disciplines and collaborate beyond disciplinary boundaries, while at the same time creating thematic coherence. As part of the Limited Programme Assessment, the panel recommends each college of MSLAS, including UCV, to more explicitly and clearly conceptualise what it aims for in terms of multi-, inter- and transdisciplinary, and how it is actually doing this.

Following the previous accreditation, MSLAS introduced a shared set of intended learning outcomes (ILOs), which are supplemented with college-specific ILOs. The shared ILOs include academic and professional skills on problem solving, critical thinking, communication, learning and research. They also include personal and social skills, namely: reflective skills; ethical skills; decision-making skills; collaborative skills and intercultural skills. The 2019 panel recommended making the college-specific ILOs more measurable and to add communication and research skills to them. The 2024 panel found that communication and research skills have been added to the common MSLAS-ILOs. The college-specific ILOs of UCV are more detailed and in-depth, covering the specific profile of UCV. These ILOs emphasize the development of broad academic knowledge and in-depth academic expertise in a number of related academic fields or disciplines.

The panel studied the shared and college-specific ILOs and found that they are ambitious and, respectively, reflect the requirements of a Dutch Liberal Arts and Sciences programme and the college-specific profile of UCV. In combination, the shared and college-specific ILOs focus not only on achieving an above-average level in academic and professional skills, but also on broadening and the development of personal attitudes and skills. They include skills on problem solving, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, self-directed learning and research. For the purpose of further development of the ILOs the panel suggests to clarify that the role of the humanities is somewhat different than that of sciences and social sciences; UCV students do not obtain deep knowledge of theories, central concepts and methods in the Humanities but they broaden their knowledge in Science and/or Social Sciences with Humanities courses, therewith learning how to look at academic topics from different perspectives. The panel also suggests defining the wording on level in the

ILOs more explicitly. For that, it might be useful to first explore which educational framework (e.g. Bloom, Miller, Fink etcetera) best suits the ILO's and the programme.

Considerations

UCV has a clearly described profile, which stands out from other Liberal Arts and Sciences programmes and other programmes with a thematic focus on nutrition, food, business and health. The multi- and interdisciplinary integration of (life) sciences with social sciences and humanities courses challenges students to look at issues from different perspectives and collaborate beyond disciplinary boundaries. The common MSLAS ILOs and the-college specific UCV ILOs are ambitious and, respectively, reflect the requirements of a Dutch Liberal Arts and Sciences programme and UCV's profile. The ILOs focus not only on achieving an above-average level in academic and professional skills, but also on broadening and the development of personal attitudes and skills. They include skills on problem solving, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, self-directed learning and research.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programme meets criterion A.

Criterion B: Curriculum – contents

The curriculum and the extracurricular activities are inextricably bound. Their contents tie in with the intended level and the broadening as formulated in the intended learning outcomes. Students and staff share responsibility for the organisation of the extracurricular activities.

Findings

UCV has 55 content courses, 16 skills trainings and 13 projects on offer. The panel looked into the course offering at UCV. The panel found that the modules are attractive and varied. It also noticed that the catalogue now includes courses on food technology, plant biology and supply chain management, as was recommended by the 2019 panel. The modules mainly cover the (life) sciences and social sciences. The number of humanities modules is relatively limited (13 in total). In the panel's view, this makes sense because of the profile of the programme. The panel was satisfied to find that all UCV students need to take Philosophy of Science, Introduction to Cultural Studies and at least one other humanities course as part of their curriculum. Recently, the UCV added information literacy to the core courses and the ILO's. The panel applauds this decision.

The panel learned that trainings and projects are diverse and include important ILO skills such as science communication, leadership skills, inter- and transdisciplinary research (e.g. Food Forest and Think Tank). The 2019 assessment panel recommended that UCV would investigate ways to interact with Brightlands Campus Greenport Venlo more. The panel sees that this has been taken up by the programme. UCV has actively expanded its portfolio of research institutes and groups it cooperates with, e.g. with the 'Food Claims Research Centre' and the Centre for 'Healthy Eating and Food Innovation.' At the same time, the panel sees room to expand further activities in this respect. At the moment, UCV offers a 10 EC PEERS-programme for students with a GPA of 7 and higher who want to increase their proficiency in the steps of the academic research cycle. During the site visit, the panel heard that UCV is currently exploring access for UCV students to MaRBL and that this should be in place within two years. The panel encourages this initiative. Other opportunities to strengthen the programme relate to communication, facilitation and relationship building. During the site visit, UCV students expressed that they would like to have more exchange opportunities and would like to have the possibility to do an internship as part of their Capstone. The panel agrees that both would be a good addition. As for the exchange opportunities, the panel found that

opportunities are there but that it is very difficult to arrange the exchange in practice. Therefore, the panel recommends that UCV improves communication on and facilitation of exchange opportunities. The panel also recommends that UCV sets up a Stakeholder Advisory Board to further strengthen relationship building, curriculum opportunities and the visibility of UCV.

The panel examined the extracurricular activities at UCV. It found that UCV offers a wide array of activities, examples of which are: the Book club, Chess Club, Business Fair, academic workshops, business visits and exchanges, potluck dinners, game nights, and a Sports & Wellness Club. Given the much more thematic focus of UCV as compared to the other two colleges of MSLAS, this is a good achievement. Most activities are initiated by and/or organised by the study associations and other students, with support of the staff. If necessary, these activities are financially supported by MSLAS. New initiatives are actively encouraged and facilitated. The panel talked to the students and staff members of UCV about the recommendation of the 2019 panel to advance structural, extracurricular activities. They explained that UCV's study association 'BEET' has become much more active since the previous assessment. BEET board members now also have regular meetings with the UCV programme director. They actively help the programme to build stronger relationships with local companies and research institutes such as Brightlands Future Farming Institute.

Next to BEET, there is also a combined study association for all higher education students in the Venlo: DaVinci. This study association organises parties that UCV students can attend to also get to know students from the HAS University of Applied Sciences and Fontys University of Applied Sciences. Recently, the study associations of the three MSLAS colleges have started to meet. They plan to organise more joint MSLAS events, while at the same time preserving the local sense of community with college-specific activities. The panel encourages this step; knowing students from other colleges will make it easier for them to choose modules from one of the other colleges.

Considerations

The panel concludes that the curriculum at UCV is well-designed and in line with the college-specific ILOs of UCV, including the level of broadening as formulated in them. UCV organises a wide array of curriculum-related and social activities that students can participate in. Given the much more thematic focus of UCV as compared to the other two colleges of MSLAS, this is a good achievement. Together, UCV students and staff form a close-knit community, with shared responsibility for the organization of extracurricular activities. Because UCV is the youngest of the three MSLAS colleges, there is room for improvement beyond the panel's positive conclusion. The panel recommends that UCV improves communication on and facilitation of exchange opportunities. The panel also recommends that UCV sets up a Stakeholder Advisory Board to further expand curriculum opportunities and strengthen the visibility of UCV.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programme meets criterion B.

Criterion C: Curriculum – learning environment

The teaching concept is based on a challenging learning environment, education substantiated in a small-scale and intensive manner, and a learning community of students and staff. The small-scale and intense nature of the education is demonstrated by the level of participation and preparation that is expected from students. The curriculum is structured in such a manner as to ensure nominal study progress by the students, including extracurricular activities.

Findings

UCV students follow a rigorous and intensive study programme including 10-17 contact hours per week. They follow the problem-based learning (PBL) method of Maastricht University (UM). The panel learned that PBL and the small-scale and intensive education profile are explicitly mentioned during the recruitment procedure. Students told the panel that, in the beginning, it takes some time getting used to PBL, but afterwards it is highly valued also because it means that tutorial groups and projects are highly student centred with a maximum of 15 students. PBL also involves multiple moments of formative evaluation (peer, self and supervisor review) to safeguard a high level of participation and preparation of all students in the group. The panel concludes that the PBL/CCCS approach fits well with the profile of UCV and is helpful in operationalising the ILOs. It is especially relevant for UCV ILO 2.3 and 2.4 that underline that graduates have obtained multi- and interdisciplinary skills; they are able to identify the disciplines involved in understanding complex problems, to select research methods for studying different aspects of such problems and develop an integrated viewpoint on incorporating the relevant disciplines.

The panel established that drop-out rates at UCV are relatively low. Between 2018-2021, drop-out after the first year was 3.6% for UCV (compared to an average of 4.2% for UM). Graduation rates also confirm the learning environment and curriculum ensure nominal study progress (see criterion G).

Considerations

The panel concludes that the combination of PBL, small classes and the requirement of active participation result in a challenging learning environment. Collectively, the learning environment, curriculum and extracurriculars enable nominal study progress.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programme meets criterion C.

Criterion D: Intake

The programme has a sound selection procedure in place, aimed at admitting motivated and academically and/or professionally talented students, in which the criteria include suitability for and interest in the small-scale and intensive educational concept, in combination with extracurricular activities.

Findings

In 2023-2024, 38 students enrolled at UCV. The panel found that admission requirements are clearly communicated to students on the UCV programme website and in the Education and Examination Regulations. UCV has the same admission requirements and procedure as the other two colleges of MSLAS. To be eligible for enrolment, students need to have a Dutch VWO secondary education diploma or an equivalent thereof. Unless they are native speakers, students must also provide a certificate that proves

sufficient English language proficiency. The admissions procedure also includes a written statement of motivation and a personal interview with an academic staff member or a Board of Admissions Member. Students apply per college, and are thus not admitted to the programme as a whole but to the college they applied for. During the visit, the panel heard that it is sometimes possible for students to switch colleges during their programme if their interest is nevertheless more towards the profile of another college. The panel concludes that the admission requirements and procedure are appropriate and well-designed. The motivation and interview include an assessment of suitability and interest in PBL and the small-scale and intensive educational concept and community of MSLAS.

Considerations

The panel concludes that the admission process is well-designed and includes an evaluation of academic and personal achievements, English language skills, as well as a motivation for PBL and the small-scale and intensive education model at UCV.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programme meets criterion D.

Criterion E: Staff

The number of staff is sufficient in terms of providing small-scale and intensive education, substantiating close contact between staff and students, and providing individual counselling to students outside the educational context. The staff demonstrably command the specific expertise and skills required to achieve the objectives of small-scale and intensive education. The programme actively monitors that teachers hold the required qualifications and, if necessary, ensures that teachers are trained in these aspects

Findings

In 2023-2024, UCV had an internal core teaching staff of 9.4 FTE and an internal support staff of 4.28 FTE. Internal staff not only function as course coordinators, lecturers and tutors, but are also involved in recruitment, admissions, academic advising and extracurricular activities. In addition, external staff members are used from other UM faculties. External staff bring in additional expertise or act as tutors with courses, under the supervision of a UCV course coordinator.

The panel discussed the student:staff ratio and workload with UCV staff. UCV has a relatively favourable ratio as compared to UCM and MSP. However, staff still feel that the workload is relatively high. UCV is relatively young and small in size. As a result, staff members fulfil many different roles and teachers still spend a lot of time on (re)development of courses. At the same time, UCV staff highly value working at UCV because colleagues and students are ambitious and highly motivated. Staff expressed that, although the workload is high, they feel taken seriously and supported enough by the management. The current ratios adequately enable teachers to provide MSLAS's small-scale PBL teaching. During the site visit, the panel learned that UCV has considerable growth ambitions. Staff members expect that further growth could reduce their future workload because tasks and responsibilities could then be shared among more people. The management reassured the panel that growth of student numbers will be paired with growth of staff members.

The panel studied the list of internal and associated staff members of UCV. It concludes that expertise and didactic skills are adequate. Expertise of staff members aligns with the modules offered in the course catalogue. UCV staff also performs well in terms of research output. The percentage of staff with a PhD is 82%. All teaching staff is required to have passed, or be in the process of obtaining, a University Teaching

Qualification. Beyond this qualification, staff are expected to engage in further educational professionalization, e.g. training for PBL tutors and coordinators and training for new academic advisors. During the site visit and in the student chapter, UCV students described their teachers as very supportive and provide helpful feedback and assistance.

Considerations

The panel concludes that the student:staff ratio at UCV is favourable. Workload is relatively high because UCV is a small and relatively young programme; teachers wear multiple hats and are busy with (re)designing courses. The panel established that staff is taken seriously on this and that workload is carefully monitored. At the moment, the number of staff is sufficient in terms of providing small-scale and intensive education. The staff has the right expertise and didactic skills, and also demonstrably command the expertise and skills to provide PBL education, guidance and tutoring in a small-scale setting. The programme actively monitors that teachers hold the required qualifications and, if necessary, ensures that teachers are trained in these aspects.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programme meets criterion E.

Criterion F: Facilities

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

Findings

UCV is located in the former Labour Council building in the inner city of Venlo, close to the railway station. The panel visited the building and examined available facilities. The panel established that the UCV building is modern and small-scale. Next to the University College, the building of UCV is also home to two master's programmes in health, nutrition and business: 'Health Food Innovation Management' and 'Global Supply Chain Management and Change'. Because these programmes have a similar focus to UCV, this creates a close-knit, challenging learning environment where UCV students encounter not only each other but also master's students with similar interests.

During a tour through the UCV building, the panel visited a lecture hall, study spaces, a library, classrooms suitable for the PBL method, as well as common areas where students can meet each other. Services (e.g. study advice and planning) and teaching staff rooms are close to the common areas, thereby contributing to community building and accessibility of staff for students. The panel was especially pleased to find that UCV also provides on-campus student housing for 28 students. Student apartments are in an educational building and equipped with everything that students need. Students who do not make use of on-campus student housing, confirmed that it is relatively easy to find student housing in Venlo as compared to Maastricht. The study association BEET and the student community also help students who are looking for a place to live. Another positive aspect of UCV is its connection to the Brightlands Campus Greenport Venlo with access to advanced laboratories and a recently built state-of-the-art greenhouse. The only downside of the Venlo Campus is that it is relatively far away from Maastricht University (80 kilometres) and the train connection from Venlo to Maastricht is suboptimal, sometimes making it more difficult for students of UCV to follow courses at UCM and MSP, and vice versa.

The 2019 panel identified two points of improvement. It recommended ensuring availability of psychological support in Venlo and developing sufficient study and social space for students at Campus Venlo. In response

to this, psychological support has been made available at UCV since April 2019. The 2024 panel has determined that sufficient study areas have also been realized. The 2019 panel also recognized a point of attention, namely that a possible growth of UCV could have effects on the health and safety measures and requirements for students at the Brightlands Campus Greenport Venlo. The panel noted that there have been no problems with this yet, as the small-scale set-up of UCV is still in place. The programme reassured the panel that it will monitor this and anticipate accordingly. With a future growth in student numbers, new laboratory facilities in the new Brighthouse building at the Brightlands Campus will be used. Here, all health and safety standards are met.

Considerations

The panel found that UCV has its own infrastructure which offers suitable facilities for small-scale and intensive education and the Brightlands Campus Greenport Venlo with access to advanced laboratories and a recently built state-of-the-art greenhouse. The recommendation of the previous assessment panel on psychological support in Venlo has been followed. The panel concludes that facilities of MSLAS are adequate and in line with the requirements of Criterion F.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programme meets criterion F.

Criterion G: Achieved learning outcomes

The content and the level of the tests and final projects are in line with the level and the broadening as set down in the intended learning outcomes. Graduates are admitted to demanding postgraduate programmes and/or jobs. The success rates are substantially higher than those of other relevant programmes that do not carry the distinctive feature, and are at least on a par with other relevant programmes that have been granted this distinctive feature.

Findings

The panel studied a 15 Capstone projects from UCV. It found that the Capstones are of a high level and meet the shared MSLAS and UCV ILOs. The UCV Capstones were interesting and well-structured, with good background research and motivation. The panel was pleased to find that the chosen topics really match with the specific thematic focus of this programme.

Graduation rates of UCV are on par with those of other University Colleges with the special feature Small-scale and intensive education and significantly higher than the UM graduates. Of the 2019-2020 cohort, 93.8% of UCV students graduated within 4 years, as compared to 79.6% at UM. MSLAS graduates have good opportunities. MSLAS alumni research shows that a vast majority of graduates (91.3%) continue their education; 74.4% of graduates obtained a master's degree and 22.5% a PhD degree. Of the graduates that obtain a master's degree, one third attended a top 100 university.

At UCV, a quarter of students choose for a master's in life science. Students also follow up their studies with master's programmes in psychology, econometrics and environmental sciences. After their studies, MSLAS graduates have interesting professional careers, mostly in research and advisory occupations. For UCV, setting up a Stakeholders Advisory group can help to (further) promote awareness of the contribution of UCV graduates in work field of nutrition, food, business and health.

Considerations

The panel concludes that students realize the ambitious intended learning outcomes of UCV, and achieve the high level and broadening required for programmes with small-scale and intensive education. The graduation rates are appropriate to a programme with the special feature ‘Small scale and intensive education’. The UCV Capstones are of a high level, and the topics clearly reflect the thematic focus of the programme. Graduates perform well; they continue with interesting and challenging master’s programmes and PhD projects, and have good career prospects.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programme meets criterion G.

General conclusion

The panel assesses the Distinctive Feature Small-scale and Intensive Education of the bachelor’s programme Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University College Venlo as follows:

Criterion A: Intended learning outcomes	meets the standard
Criterion B: Curriculum – contents	meets the standard
Criterion C: Curriculum – learning environment	meets the standard
Criterion D: Intake	meets the standard
Criterion E: Staff	meets the standard
Criterion F: Facilities	meets the standard
Criterion G: Achieved learning outcomes	meets the standard
General conclusion	positive

Appendix 1. Intended learning outcomes

1. The UCM-, MSP- and UCV-programmes have a shared set of aims which, however, are operationalized differently in the respective programmes, as specified below.
2. Graduates have highly developed academic and professional skills. These are:
 - 2.1. Problem-Solving Skills: the ability to apply knowledge and understanding to problems within their field of expertise, to formulate solutions and sustain arguments for those solutions in a professional fashion, both independently and in a team.
 - 2.2. Critical Thinking Skills: the ability to reach and support a conclusion in a logically structured fashion based on evidence, in an intellectually honest and reflective fashion.
 - 2.3. Communication Skills: The ability to present scholarly information, and more specifically concepts, methods, research results and scientific theories, in a manner that is tailored to one's audience, such as fellow students, academics, industry representatives, policy makers, or the general public. This includes writing and presentation skills, i.e. the ability to present information, ideas, problems, arguments, and solutions effectively in writing and orally.
 - 2.4. Learning Skills: The ability to gain new knowledge and skills throughout one's professional life as new theories and techniques emerge.
 - 2.5. Research Skills: The ability to formulate research questions, select appropriate methodologies, design, and conduct research to gather data, interpret data, and report and reflect on findings.
3. Graduates obtain highly developed personal and social skills. These are:
 - 3.1. Reflective Skills: ability to reflect on their academic interests, ambitions, strengths, and weaknesses, but also on their own actions and the implications of those actions on society.
 - 3.2. Ethical Skills: ability to analyse ethical issues in academic and social environments in relation to their professional activities.
 - 3.3. Decision-making Skills: ability to make informed and considered choices and decisions concerning their academic and personal development.
 - 3.4. Collaborative Skills: ability to effectively work in a team in solving problems and accomplishing tasks.
 - 3.5. Intercultural Skills: ability to communicate and collaborate effectively and appropriately with people from different socio-cultural and national backgrounds.
4. Graduates are adequately prepared for graduate programmes in the field of their expertise.

University College Maastricht

1. Graduates have broad academic knowledge. More specifically:
 - 1.1. Graduates have knowledge of theories, central concepts, and methods in at least one academic discipline or field within the three main domains of scientific inquiry, i.e., the humanities, the social sciences, and the sciences.
 - 1.2. Graduates have knowledge, at an elementary academic level, of recent historical developments, of fundamental political values and concepts, of the nature of scientific reasoning, and of the epistemology of scientific inquiry.
2. Graduates have in-depth expertise in a number of related academic fields or disciplines.
 - 2.1. Graduates have knowledge at an elementary academic level of laws, prominent theories, central concepts, sub-disciplines, seminal issues, and methods in a number of related academic fields or disciplines.

2.2. Graduates have advanced knowledge of (specialised) topics and developments in a number of related academic fields or disciplines which requires, as a pre-requisite, knowledge and understanding at an elementary academic level. This can entail a mix of subfields linked to advanced research techniques, a multidisciplinary approach to a particular topic, or current developments in a discipline.

2.3. Graduates can place specialised knowledge of a particular field or discipline within a wider academic or societal context. They possess inter- and multidisciplinary skills, i.e., are able to identify the disciplines involved in understanding complex problems, select research methods for studying different aspects of such problems and develop an integrated viewpoint incorporating the relevant disciplines.

2.4. Graduates have proficient academic expertise in a particular topic, issue, or question and in appropriate research methods involved in studying it, pertaining to one or a number of related academic fields or disciplines.

Maastricht Science Programme

1. Graduates have broad academic knowledge. More specifically:

1.1. Graduates have a broad perspective and a high level of academic and intellectual development in the sciences. They understand the nature of academic knowledge and the process of scientific development.

1.2. Graduates have knowledge, at an elementary academic level, of biology, chemistry, physics, and the most relevant tools in mathematics.

1.3. Graduates have in-depth academic expertise in a number of related academic fields or disciplines.

2. Graduates have knowledge at an elementary academic level of laws, theories, central concepts, seminal issues, and methods in a number of related fields or disciplines in the sciences.

2.1. Graduates have advanced knowledge of (specialised) topics and developments of several fields or disciplines in the sciences. They have profound academic expertise in one or more disciplines of the natural sciences.

2.2. Graduates can place specialised knowledge of a particular field or discipline from the sciences in a broader academic or societal context. They are able to apply scientific knowledge, concepts and skills related to mathematics, physics, chemistry, and/or biology to solve mono- and multidisciplinary scientific problems in the natural sciences. They can translate concepts from one discipline of the natural sciences into other disciplines of the natural sciences.

2.3. Graduates have the capability to analyse a practical problem in the natural sciences and assess which expertise, materials, laboratory infrastructure and experiments are required to investigate this problem in an efficient manner through scientific research.

University College Venlo

1. Graduates have a broad academic knowledge.

1.1. Graduates have knowledge of theories, central concepts, and methods in at least one academic discipline or field within the three main domains of scientific inquiry, i.e., the social sciences, the (life) sciences, and the humanities.

1.2. Graduates have knowledge, at an elementary academic level, of the epistemology of scientific inquiry, of the role of theoretical modelling in understanding the world, of human behaviour in relation to culture, and of different aspects of information literacy. At an elementary academic level, graduates have knowledge of laws, theories, and concepts in the humanities.

2. Graduates have in-depth academic expertise in a number of related academic fields or disciplines.

2.1. Graduates have knowledge at an elementary academic level of laws, prominent theories, central concepts, sub-disciplines, seminal issues, and methods in a number of related academic fields or disciplines in the (life) sciences and the social sciences.

2.2. Graduates have advanced knowledge of (specialised) topics and developments of several fields or disciplines in the (life) sciences/ and or social sciences. They have profound academic expertise in one or more disciplines of the (life) sciences and/or the social sciences.

2.3. Graduates can place specialised knowledge of a particular field or discipline within a wider academic or societal context. They possess inter- and multidisciplinary skills, i.e. are able to identify the disciplines involved in understanding complex problems, select research methods for studying different aspects of such problems and develop an integrated viewpoint incorporating the relevant disciplines.

2.4. Graduates have the capability to analyse a practical problem in the (life) sciences and social sciences and assess which expertise, materials, laboratory infrastructure and experiments are required to investigate this problem in an efficient manner through scientific research.

Appendix 2. Programme curriculum

	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6
Year 1 UCM/MSP/UCV	5 ECTS Course 5 ECTS Course 2.5 ECTS Skill	5 ECTS Course 5 ECTS Course 2.5 ECTS Skill	5 ECTS Project	5 ECTS Course 5 ECTS Course 2.5 ECTS Skill	5 ECTS Course 5 ECTS Course 2.5 ECTS Skill	5 ECTS Project
Year 2 UCM/MSP/UCV	5 ECTS Course 5 ECTS Course 2.5 ECTS Skill	5 ECTS Course 5 ECTS Course 2.5 ECTS Skill	5 ECTS Project	5 ECTS Course 5 ECTS Course 2.5 ECTS Skill	5 ECTS Course 5 ECTS Course 2.5 ECTS Skill	5 ECTS Project
Year 3	5 ECTS Course 5 ECTS Course 2.5 ECTS Skill	5 ECTS Course 5 ECTS Course 2.5 ECTS Skill	5 ECTS Project	5 ECTS Course	20 ECTS Capstone	5 ECTS Project
				30 ECTS Thesis		

Note: MSP has a slightly different structure in year three as its Bachelor Thesis Research is worth 30 ECTS rather than the 20 ECTS Capstone at UCM and UCV.

Core modules for the three colleges (2023-2024)

All students are required to complete a core curriculum; MSP students must complete these modules in their first year; UCM and UCV students are free to complete these modules at any time granted they are completed prior to graduation. The core modules vary according to the disciplines of each college.

	UCM	MSP	UCV
Content Courses	Philosophy of Science Contemporary World History Political Philosophy Science, Reason, and Human Progress	Introduction to Biology Introduction to Chemistry Introduction to Physics Introduction to Liberal Arts and Sciences	Modelling Nature Philosophy of Science World Orientation: An Introduction to Cultural Studies Globalisation: World Politics and Economics*
Skills Trainings	Introduction to Academic Skills I Introduction to Academic Skills II* Research Methods I Research Methods II	Introduction to Scientific Research I Introduction to Scientific Research II	Introduction to Academic Skills Research Methods I The Applied Researcher I The Applied Researcher II
Projects	Introduction to Academic Communication* Research Project	Introduction to Project Period	Research methods II The Applied Research III

*Changes to this module will occur in the academic year 2024-25.

University College Maastricht

The UCM section of courses covers the social sciences (psychology, economics, etc.), humanities (philosophy, history, etc.) and sciences (biology, health science, sustainability sciences, etc.)

	Social Sciences	Humanities	(Life) Sciences
University College Maastricht	Sociology	Philosophy	Biomedical Science
	Political Science	History	Mathematics
	International Relations & Conflict Resolution	Art & Literature	Information Science
	International Law	Science & Technology Studies	Cognitive Science
	Psychology	Cultural & Gender Studies	Sustainability Science
	Economics		
	Business & Entrepreneurship		
	Public Policy & Development Studies		

Maastricht Science Programme

The MSP section covers primarily the natural sciences. This includes biology, chemistry, mathematics and physics modules and a diverse list of interdisciplinary courses. This list has diversified in recent years with additions such as archaeology, geology, and astronomy.

	Biology	Chemistry	Mathematics	Physics	Interdisciplinary
Maastricht Science Programme	Zoology	Organic	Mathematics	General	Education
	Ecology	Inorganic	Computing Science	Astronomy	Science Communication
	Microbiology	Physical	Statistics	Particle Physics	Arts
	Genetics and Molecular Biology	Analytical	Calculus	Quantum Physics	Geo Sciences
	Botany	Quantum			Neuroscience
	Evolutionary Biology	Biochemistry			Archaeology

University College Venlo

The UCV section covers courses in the (life) sciences and social sciences, with a particular focus on the connections between food, nutritional sciences, health, sustainability, business, and entrepreneurship. The curriculum catalogue also contains a small number of humanities courses. Compared to the previous accreditation cycle, UCV now offers new courses in sustainability sciences and logistics/supply chain management.

	(Life) Sciences	Social Sciences	Humanities
University College Venlo	Biology	Public Policy	Philosophy
	Chemistry	Law	History
	Sustainability Sciences	Psychology	Ethics
	Food & Nutritional Sciences	Business & Entrepreneurship	Science & Technology Studies
	Public Health	Sociology	

Graduation requirements for the three colleges

	UCM	MSP	UCV
Core curriculum	4 content courses, 4 skills trainings and 2 projects	4 content courses, 2 skills trainings and 1 project	4 content courses, 4 skills trainings and 1 project
General education	2-4 courses, distributed over the concentrations not chosen	Min 1 mathematics course, min 1 humanities or social sciences course	4, distributed over the alternate concentration and humanities courses; min 1 humanities, min 1 alternate concentration
Content courses	14-16 courses; max 4 introductory courses, min 4 advanced courses	14 content courses; min 4 advanced, max 4 introductory (combined with general education courses)	14 content courses; min 4 advanced, max 4 introductory courses
Skills trainings	6 skills trainings; intermediate or advanced	8 skills trainings; max 2 introductory, min 2 advanced	6 skills trainings; intermediate or advanced
Projects	3 projects; max 2 intermediate, min 1 advanced	4 projects; max 1 introductory, min 1 advanced	3 projects; max 2 intermediate, min 1 advanced
Thesis/ Capstone	1 advanced level Capstone project in final semester	1 advanced level bachelor thesis project in final semester	1 advanced level Capstone project in final semester

Appendix 3. Programme of the site visit

Day 1 (Monday 25th November) – University College Maastricht

Location: [Zwingelput 4, 6211 KH](#), Room D0.033

Time	Event	Details
09:00-09:30	Taxi to UCM	Pick up 9:00, outside Hotel Beaumont
09:30-10:00	MSLAS opening	<p><i>Faculty Dean; Professor of polymers for nano(bio)technology and bioelectronics</i></p> <p><i>Vice-dean education; Associate Professor</i></p> <p><i>UCM programme director; Associate Professor</i></p> <p><i>MSP programme director; Professor of Experimental particle physics</i></p> <p><i>UCV programme director; Professor of Planetary health</i></p>
10:00-10:45	Panel discussion	
10:45-11:15	UCM management	<p><i>Vice-dean education; Associate Professor</i></p> <p><i>UCM programme director; Associate Professor</i></p> <p><i>UCM manager of operations</i></p>
11:15-11:45	Panel discussion	
11:45-12:30	UCM staff	<p><i>UCM Curriculum Committee; Assistant Professor; FASoS</i></p> <p><i>Capstone Co-coordinator; Professor of Liberal arts and sciences education; Former UCM programme director</i></p> <p><i>Chair of UCM EPC; Teacher; PhD Student</i></p> <p><i>Professor of Foreign policy analysis and transatlantic relations</i></p> <p><i>Assistant Professor</i></p> <p><i>Member of UCM EPC; Teacher</i></p> <p><i>Teacher; PhD Student</i></p>
12:30-13:15	Lunch and panel discussion	
13:15-14:00	UCM students and alumni	<p><i>6 UCM Students</i></p> <p><i>UCM Alumnus, Class of 2009</i></p> <p><i>UCM Alumnus, Class of 2014</i></p>
14:00-14:30	Panel discussion	
14:30-15:00	Facilities tour	<p><i>Capstone Co-coordinator; Teacher</i></p> <p><i>UCM Student</i></p> <p><i>UCM Student</i></p>

Time	Event	Details
15:00-15:45	Board of Examiners	<i>Board Member - UCM Representative; Teacher</i> <i>MSLAS Chair & UCV Representative; Associate Professor</i> <i>Board Member - MSP Representative; Associate Professor</i> <i>Board Member - MSP Representative; Teacher</i> <i>Board Member - UCV Representative; Post-doc</i> <i>Board Member - UCM Representative; Assistant Professor</i>
15:45-16:30	Panel discussion	
16:30-17:00	Closure UCM management	<i>Vice-dean education; Associate Professor</i> <i>UCM programme director; Associate professor</i> <i>UCM manager of operations</i>
17:00-17:30	Taxi to Hotel Beaumont	Pick up at 17:15, outside Zwingelput 4
18:00	Dinner	Cinq Cörversplein 5, 6221 EZ

Day 2 (Tuesday 26th November) – University College Venlo

Location: [Nassastraat 36, 5911 BV](#), Room 1.17

Time	Event	Details
08:30-10:00	Taxi to UCV	Pick up 8:30, outside Hotel Beaumont
10:00-10:30	UCV management	<i>Vice-dean education; Associate Professor</i> <i>UCV programme director; Professor of planetary health</i> <i>UCV manager of operations</i>
10:30-11:00	Panel discussion	
11:00-11:45	UCV Staff	<i>Chair of UCV EPC; Teacher</i> <i>Professor of Youth, food, and health</i> <i>Capstone Co-coordinator; Assistant Professor</i> <i>UCV Board of Admissions; Teacher</i> <i>Academic Advising Coordinator; Member of UCV EPC; Teacher</i> <i>Capstone Co-coordinator; Assistant Professor</i> <i>Member of Board of Examiners; Post-doc</i>
11:45-12:30	Lunch and panel discussion	
12:30-13:15	UCV students and alumni	<i>5 UCV Students</i> <i>UCV Alumnus, Class of 2022</i>

Time	Event	Details
		<i>Student representative of UCV EPC; UCV Student</i>
13:15-13:45	Facilities tour	<i>UCV manager of operations Representative of UCV Study Association; UCV Student</i>
13:45-14:00	Break	
14:00-14:30	Academic advising	<i>Coordinator of UCM Academic Advising; Teacher UCV Academic Advisor; Teacher MSP Academic Advisor; Assistant Professor Coordinator of UCV Academic Advising; Teacher Coordinator of MSP Academic Advising; Assistant Professor UCM Academic Advisor; Teacher</i>
14:30-15:15	Panel discussion	
15:15-15:45	Closure UCV management	<i>Vice-dean education; Associate Professor UCV programme director; Professor of planetary health UCV manager of operations</i>
15:45-16:00	Break	
16:00-17:30	Taxi to Hotel Beaumont	Pick up 16:00, outside Nassaustraet 36
18:00	Dinner	Restaurant Pakhoes Waterpoort 4-6, 6221 GB

Day 3 (Wednesday 27th November) – Maastricht Science Programme

Location: [Paul-Henri Spaaklaan 1, 6229 EN](#), Room B4.011 & [Duboisdomein 30, 6229 GT](#)

Time	Event	Details
08:30-09:00	Taxi to MSP	Pick up 8:30, outside of Hotel Beaumont
09:00-09:30	MSP management Room B4.011	<i>Vice-dean education; Associate Professor MSP programme director; Professor of experimental particle physics MSP manager of operations</i>
09:30-10:00	Panel discussion	
10:00-10:45	MSP staff Room B4.011	<i>Chair of MSP EPC; Project Period Coordinator; Teacher Associate Professor</i>

Time	Event	Details
		<p><i>Professor of vertebrate paleontology and evolution; Former MSP programme director</i></p> <p><i>Assistant Professor</i></p> <p><i>Member of MSP EPC; Teacher</i></p> <p><i>Associate Professor</i></p>
10:45-11:00	Break	
11:00-11:45	MSP students and alumni Room B4.011	<p><i>4 MSP Students</i></p> <p><i>Student representative of MSP EPC; MSP Student</i></p> <p><i>MSP Alumnus, Class of 2017</i></p>
11:45-12:30	Lunch and panel discussion	
12:30-13:15	Facilities tour Room B4.011	<p><u>Tour of Paul-Henri Spaaklaan by:</u></p> <p><i>Student Affairs Officer</i></p> <p><i>2 MSP students</i></p> <p><u>Tour of Duboisdomein by:</u></p> <p><i>Member of the Board of Examiners; Supervisor the UM iGEM team; Assistant Professor</i></p> <p><i>2 MSP Students</i></p>
13:15-14:00	Panel discussion	
14:00-14:30	Closure MSP management Room B4.011	<p><i>Vice-dean education; Associate Professor</i></p> <p><i>MSP programme director; Professor of experimental particle physics</i></p> <p><i>MSP manager of operations</i></p>
14:30-15:00	Panel discussion	
15:00-15:30	MSLAS overall judgement Room B0.001	<p><i>Faculty Dean; Professor of polymers for nano(bio)technology and bioelectronics</i></p> <p><i>Vice-dean education; Associate Professor</i></p> <p><i>UCM programme director; Associate Professor</i></p> <p><i>MSP programme director; Professor of experimental particle physics</i></p> <p><i>UCV programme director; Professor of planetary health</i></p> <p><i>UCM manager of operations</i></p> <p><i>MSP manager of operations</i></p> <p><i>UCV manager of operations</i></p> <p><i>All participants in accreditation are welcome to attend.</i></p>

Time	Event	Details
15:30-16:30	Development dialogue Room B4.011	<p><i>Vice-dean education; Associate Professor</i></p> <p><i>UCM programme director; Associate Professor</i></p> <p><i>MSP programme director; Professor of experimental particle physics</i></p> <p><i>UCV programme director; Professor of planetary health</i></p> <p><i>UCM manager of operations</i></p> <p><i>MSP manager of operations</i></p> <p><i>UCV manager of operations</i></p> <p><i>Project leader, Minute-taker</i></p>
16:30-17:30	Drinks	<p>Bar Bistro SAAM</p> <p><i>Forum 100, 6229 GV Maastricht</i></p>
17:30	Taxi to Maastricht Station on request	

Appendix 4. Materials

Prior to the site visit, the panel studied 45 theses of the bachelor's programme Liberal Arts and Sciences: 15 for University College Maastricht, 15 for the Maastricht Science Programme and 15 for University College Venlo. Information on the theses is available from Academion upon request. The selection took into account the various disciplinary specializations per programme.

UCM	Discipline	# of theses selected
	Humanities I - Art, Literature, Culture, Sociology, Philosophy, (History)	4
	Social Sciences II - Economics, Business, Management, Trade and (Sustainable) Development	2
	Social Sciences III - International Relations, Politics and Law	5
	Social Sciences IV - Psychology and Human Physiology	2
	Sciences V - Science and Technology (STEM)	2

UCV	Discipline	# of theses selected
	Social Sciences	3
	Sciences	7
	Interdisciplinary	5

For MSP, which has no predefined specializations, the selection spanned a broad variety of thesis topics.

The panel also studied other materials, which included:

MSLAS

Self Evaluation Report

Domain Specific Reference Framework

NVAO Assessment Framework

Course Evaluations (IWIO CHE1011, IWIO CHE1011 open-ended questions, IWIO VSS2101, IWIO VSS2101 open-ended questions)

MSLAS Education and Examination Regulations (EER)

MSLAS Rules & Regulations (R&R)

MSLAS Intended Learning Outcomes

UM Vision on Assessment

UM Vision on Education

UM Policy Plan Studying with a Disability or Chronic Disease

Board of Examiners Annual Report 2023

UCM EPC Annual Report 2023

MSP EPC Annual Report 2023

UCV EPC Annual Report 2023

FSE Plan-Do-Check-Act Policy 2023
Problem Based Learning Video
FSE Corporate Video
UCM programme website
MSP programme website
UCV programme website
Website Brightlands Research and Innovation Centre
Graduation Rates (MSLAS, UCM, UCV, MSP, UM)

UCM

Overview Internal Staff
Overview External Staff
Staff-Student ratio
Capstone Student Manual
Capstone Advisor Manual (+ Rubrics)
Capstone Tutor Manual
Admissions data
Student Figures
Exchange data
UCM Course Catalogue
UCM-UCF Dual Degree Agreement
Courses:

Chinese International Relations and Foreign Policy

Course Manual
Course Materials
Assessment Plan
Exams & Assignments

Science and Technology Studies 1: Living in a Technological Culture

Course Manual
Course Materials
Assessment Plan
Exams & Assignments

Writing in an Academic Context: Improving Argumentation and Style

Course Manual
Course Materials
Assessment Plan
Exams & Assessment

Think Tank

Course Manual
Course Materials
Assessment Plan
Exams & Assignments

UCV

Overview Internal Staff
Overview External Staff
Staff ratio
Capstone Syllabus (+ Rubrics)

Capstone Advisor Manual

Admissions data

Student Figures

Exchange data

UCV Course Catalogue

Courses:

Psychology of Eating

Course Manual

Course Materials

Assessment Plan

Exams & Assignments

Video Assignment

Sports Nutrition and Physiology

Course Manual

Course Materials

Assessment Plan

Exams & Assignments

Supply Chain Management

Course Manual

Course Materials

Assessment Plan

Exams & Assignments

The Applied Researcher I (Skill), II (Skill) & III (Project)

Course Manuals

VSK1000 – Applied Researcher I

VSK1004 – Applied Researcher II

VPR1002 – Applied Researcher III

Course Materials & Assignments

VSK1000 – Applied Researcher I

VSK1004 – Applied Researcher II

VPR1002 – Applied Researcher III

Assessment Plans

VSK1000 – Applied Researcher I

VSK1004 – Applied Researcher II

VPR1002 – Applied Researcher III

MSP

Overview Internal Staff

Overview External Staff

Student-Staff Ratio

Bachelor thesis Information Booklet for students

Bachelor thesis Assignment Guidelines

Bachelor thesis Thesis Rubrics

Admissions data

Student Figures

Exchange Statistics & Partnerships

MSP Course Catalogue

Courses:

Introduction to Chemistry
 Course Manual
 Course Materials
 Link to Online Lectures
 Assessment Plan
 Exams & Assignments
Field Skills in Biology
 Course Manual
 Assessment plan
 Assignments
Elementary Particle Physics
 Course Manual
 Course Materials
 Online Course Materials
 Assessment Plan
 Exams & Assignments
Research Project Period
 Course Manual
 Assessment Plan
 Exams & Assignments