

Site visit report

Bachelor's programme
GLOBAL STUDIES

Maastricht University

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (anchor faculty)

Faculty of Law

Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences

Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience

Faculty of Science and Engineering

School of Business and Economics

Site visit: 25-26 February 2025
Date final report: 23 April 2025

Contents

1. Summary	5
1.1 Bachelor's programme Global Studies	5
1.2 Distinctive feature small-scale and intensive education	7
2. Introduction	9
2.1 Assessment framework	9
2.2 Panel	9
2.3 Working method	9
3. Characteristics of the programme	11
3.1 Administrative data.....	11
3.2 Organization.....	11
3.3 Recommendations previous assessment.....	12
4. Strong points	13
5. Recommendations	13
6. Assessment Report on the standards of the framework for existing programmes	15
Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes.....	15
Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment.....	18
Standard 3: Student assessment.....	26
Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes.....	30
7. Assessment Report on the standards of the distinctive feature Small-scale and intensive education	33
Standard A: Intended learning outcomes.....	33
Standard B: Programme - contents.....	34
Standard C: Programme - learning environment	35
Standard D: Intake	37
Standard E: Staff	38
Standard F: Facilities	40
Standard G: Achieved learning outcomes	41
Appendices	43
Appendix 1: Intended learning outcomes.....	44
Appendix 2: Schematic overview programme.....	45
Appendix 3: Site visit programme	46
Appendix 4: Theses and documents studied by the panel.....	47

1. Summary

1.1 Bachelor's programme Global Studies

Intended learning outcomes

The panel finds that the English-taught interdisciplinary BSc Global Studies (BSc GS) is a rich, varied and contemporary programme that focuses on relevant topics in today's world. The direction and ambition of the programme corresponds to labour market needs and equips graduates to pursue a master's programme, should they wish to do so. The panel finds that there is a clear tie-in between the programme intended Learning outcomes (PILOs) and the programme level and orientation. To support the programme in its further development, the panel makes a few recommendations that are aimed at encouraging the BSc GS team to be more precise and explicit in defining global citizenship/global studies and its goals regarding interdisciplinarity and graduate attributes. Lastly, the panel finds that the programme would benefit from a professional field advisory council of sorts to ensure systematic engagement from external stakeholders in developing the programme.

Teaching-learning environment

The programme and staff provide a teaching-learning environment for the students that enables them to achieve the intended learning outcomes. The BSc GS integrates diverse perspectives and crosses disciplinary boundaries. The programme also emphasizes integrating skills and methods into the exploration of thematic content, with courses on methods, and skills providing students with a toolbox to study thematic content. The curriculum supports students to develop increasingly complex and integrated levels of mastery related to the different PILOs. Students can tailor the curriculum to their specific interests through semester projects, the field study (or minor), the 21st Century Learning project, language preference, and the final thesis. The interconnected curriculum is, however, challenging to students, in particular as they do not always recognize the coherence of specific learning lines and different curriculum components until later in the programme.

The teaching staff is knowledgeable, motivated and approachable, and students are very appreciative of them. The programme faces staffing challenges due to the complexity of six faculties working together, but actively works on finding solutions. Education is taken seriously, and tutors and lecturers receive adequate support and professionalization opportunities. The staff is appropriately trained to execute small-scale and intensive teaching. They have all completed the mandatory tutor training focusing on the key features of Problem-Based Learning, which is the didactic approach the programme adheres to. All course coordinators have a University Teaching Qualification. Furthermore, the programme of Continuous Professional Development enables staff to continuously develop their teaching skills.

Student assessment

The programme has a system of assessment that is properly supported by the overall culture (i.e., international, small-scale, short lines between students and staff) that the panel encountered during the site visit. It applies a great variety of different formative and summative assessment methods. The course assessments are of a satisfactory level and support the students' learning process. The panel finds that students are generally provided with good quality, helpful and comprehensive oral and written feedback on their academic progress and achievements. The thesis assessment is sound, and examiners use the assessment forms well.

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASoS) has a Board of Examiners (BoE) that is responsible for all programmes offered by the faculty, including the BSc GS. The BoE annually examines quantitative data and trends regarding individual courses as presented in the grade reports and education plans for all FASoS programmes, including the BSc GS (alignment PILO-CILO). The panel appreciates the education plan cycle, which allows programme management to reflect on last year's performance (including on programme/course evaluations through various channels and by different bodies) as well as suggest improvements and future developments.

The BoE has a faculty-wide responsibility and proactively executes its task well. However, the current approach and scope of the BoE leads to a long cycle in which BSc GS exams and final works are up for sampling every six years. The panel finds that this does not provide the BoE with enough input to specifically monitor the quality of the assessment of courses, and the field study, 21st Century Learning Project and theses in particular. Considering the BSc GS is a unique programme with a special status, it calls for (even) more dedicated attention from the BoE. The panel, therefore, recommends reimagining the way in which the BoE organises its role with regards to sampling in the BSc GS.

Achieved learning outcomes

The final thesis is of sound academic quality and meets the expectations for a bachelor's degree, reflecting a high, above-average academic level. The panel recommends that the programme be explicit in its expectations regarding interdisciplinarity and the global focus of the thesis, the field study and the 21st Century Learning Project, as these characteristic features of the programme were not always present in the sample that the panel reviewed.

The alumni are satisfied with the programme as a preparation for their future careers. The panel finds that their attitude, way of thinking, and the master's programmes they enrolled in are testaments to the high quality of the programme. The alumni function as ambassadors of the programme.

The panel assesses the standards of the *assessment framework for existing programmes* as follows:

Bachelor's programme Global Studies

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

1.2 Distinctive feature small-scale and intensive education

Intended learning outcomes

The panel considers the programme intended learning outcomes (PILOs) to be clearly defined and in line with the high level and orientation of the programme and professional expectations. The PILOs have a broader aim as defined in the requirements for the BKKI feature and exceed the level described in the Dublin descriptors, especially for – but not limited to - interdisciplinarity, global citizenship and interpersonal competencies.

Programme – contents

The panel concludes that the programme offers a highly motivating and attractive curriculum that includes interesting extracurricular activities in which students and staff collaborate. However, some improvements can be made to ensure more staff participation in the organizing and monitoring of activities, and to encourage all students to join in the activities. The panel, therefore, makes several recommendations to further strengthen the inextricable relationship between the curriculum and the extracurricular activities.

Programme - learning environment

The programme is intensive regarding student-staff contact hours, study load, and degree of individual guidance, which is firmly grounded in Problem-Based Learning. There is a high level of student-teacher interaction and much supervision. The BSc GS is intensive, well-structured and demanding, but not too demanding as is shown by the high percentage of students that completed the programme nominally. The panel makes a recommendation concerning the rules on (mandatory) attendance and active participation.

Intake

The programme has a sound admission and selection procedure aimed at admitting academically talented students who are motivated to enter and actively participate in the BSc Global Studies programme. The panel is positive about the programme proactively revising its intake procedure to become more inclusive. The panel suggests that the revision include addressing the impact of generative AI on written application materials and the candidate's motivation to engage in extracurricular activities.

Staff

The teaching staff is appropriately trained to provide small-scale and intensive teaching. They have all completed the mandatory tutor training focusing on the key features of PBL. All course coordinators have a University Teaching Qualification or are in the process of acquiring this certificate. Furthermore, the programme of Continuous Professional Development enables staff to continuously develop their teaching skills.

Students commend the expertise and motivation of their tutors and receive quality guidance and feedback. The programme has managed to establish a positive learning climate and a learning community in which lecturers and students work well together.

Facilities

The facilities enable the programme to provide small-scale and intensive education. Students use the anchor faculty's infrastructure, and the physical spaces are adequate with respect to support of the programme's didactic approach. Basic facilities are available to further support students in their academic endeavours, and also to create a community of learners, for instance, via a dedicated room exclusively for BSc GS students and the offices of the core staff members. The panel suggests that a dedicated space for staff could be helpful in facilitating staff members that hail from all faculties.

Achieved learning outcomes

The panel concludes that graduates achieve the intended learning outcomes, reflecting a high, above-average academic level. This is evidenced by the outcomes of several programme components, such as the theses and various projects, and the achievements of the alumni.

The completion rates have been consistently good and above average since the start of the programme. The panel discussed a slight drop with the programme management, and is satisfied that it closely monitors the development of success rates and takes action, if necessary, to ensure consistent and higher-than-average success rates, as this is an important aspect concerning the distinctive feature.

The panel assesses the standards of the *distinctive feature Small-scale and intensive education* as follows:

Standard A: Intended learning outcomes	meets the standard
Standard B: Programme - contents	meets the standard
Standard C: Programme - learning environment	meets the standard
Standard D: Intake	meets the standard
Standard E: Staff	meets the standard
Standard F: Facilities	meets the standard
Standard G: Achieved learning outcomes	meets the standard

General conclusion positive

The chair, prof. Carl Gombrich, and the secretary, drs. Linda te Marvelde, of the panel hereby declare that all panel members have studied this report and that they agree with the judgements laid down in it. They confirm that the assessment has been conducted in accordance with the demands relating to independence.

Date: 23 April 2025

2. Introduction

2.1 Assessment framework

This advisory report contains findings, considerations and judgements about the Bachelor of Science Global Studies (GS) of Maastricht University. The Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) bases its accreditation decision on this report.

The assessment is based on the NVAO's Assessment Framework for the Higher Education Accreditation System of the Netherlands (2024) and consists of two parts:

- Accreditation of existing programmes
- Distinctive feature of "Small-scale and intensive education"

2.2 Panel

The NVAO has approved the composition of the panel on October 1st, 2024. The panel that assessed the bachelor's programme Global Studies consisted of:

- Prof. Carl Gombrich (chair), Dean at the London Interdisciplinary School (London, UK).
- Prof. Jeroen Jansz, Academic Director of the Community for Learning & Innovation and Full Professor of Communication and Media at Erasmus University Rotterdam.
- Drs. Lucy Wenting, Director of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of Amsterdam.
- Prof. John de Wit, Professor of Interdisciplinary Social Science: Public Health.
- Viviane Schoen BA (student member), Bachelor Urban Studies at Leiden University.

The panel was supported by drs. Linda te Marvelde, who acted as secretary.

2.3 Working method

Approximately five weeks before the site visit (January 17th, 2025), the panel received the documentation, including a self-assessment report and a selection of fifteen recent bachelor's theses including their evaluation forms (see Appendix 4). These documents formed the basis for both the assessment of the generic quality achieved and the distinctive feature small-scale and intensive education. The panel studied the documents and organised an online panel meeting a week prior to the site visit (February 20th, 2025). In this meeting, the panel discussed its initial findings and provisional conclusions regarding the quality achieved on the four standards of the programme assessment framework and the seven criteria of the BKKI framework. Part of the meeting was a (online) consultation opportunity for students and lecturers who wanted to engage in conversation with the panel. No one took advantage of the opportunity to speak with the panel about the programme.

The site visit took place on 25-26 February 2025 in Maastricht (see Appendix 3). At the end of the visit, the panel drew up findings and recommendations. The panel's chair presented these orally to stakeholders of the programme.

After the visit, the secretary drew up the advisory report. This report (presented here) contains the assessment of the programme's generic quality on the four standards of the framework and the criteria of the BKKI framework. After processing the panel's feedback, the secretary sent the advisory report

to the programme for the purpose of fact-checking the text. The secretary has corrected factual inaccuracies identified by the programme in the final version. The Board of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASoS) received the final report on 23 April 2025.

3. Characteristics of the programme

3.1 Administrative data

Name of the programme:	Global Studies
CROHO number:	59339
Level of the programme:	Bachelor's
Orientation of the programme:	Academic
Number of credits:	180 EC
Location:	Maastricht
Mode of study:	Full-time
Language of instruction:	English
Submission deadline NVAO:	1 May 2025
Distinctive feature:	Small-scale and intensive education
Initial assessment decision:	10 October 2019
Name of the institution:	Maastricht University
Status of the institution:	publicly funded institution
Result institutional quality assurance assessment:	positive

3.2 Organization

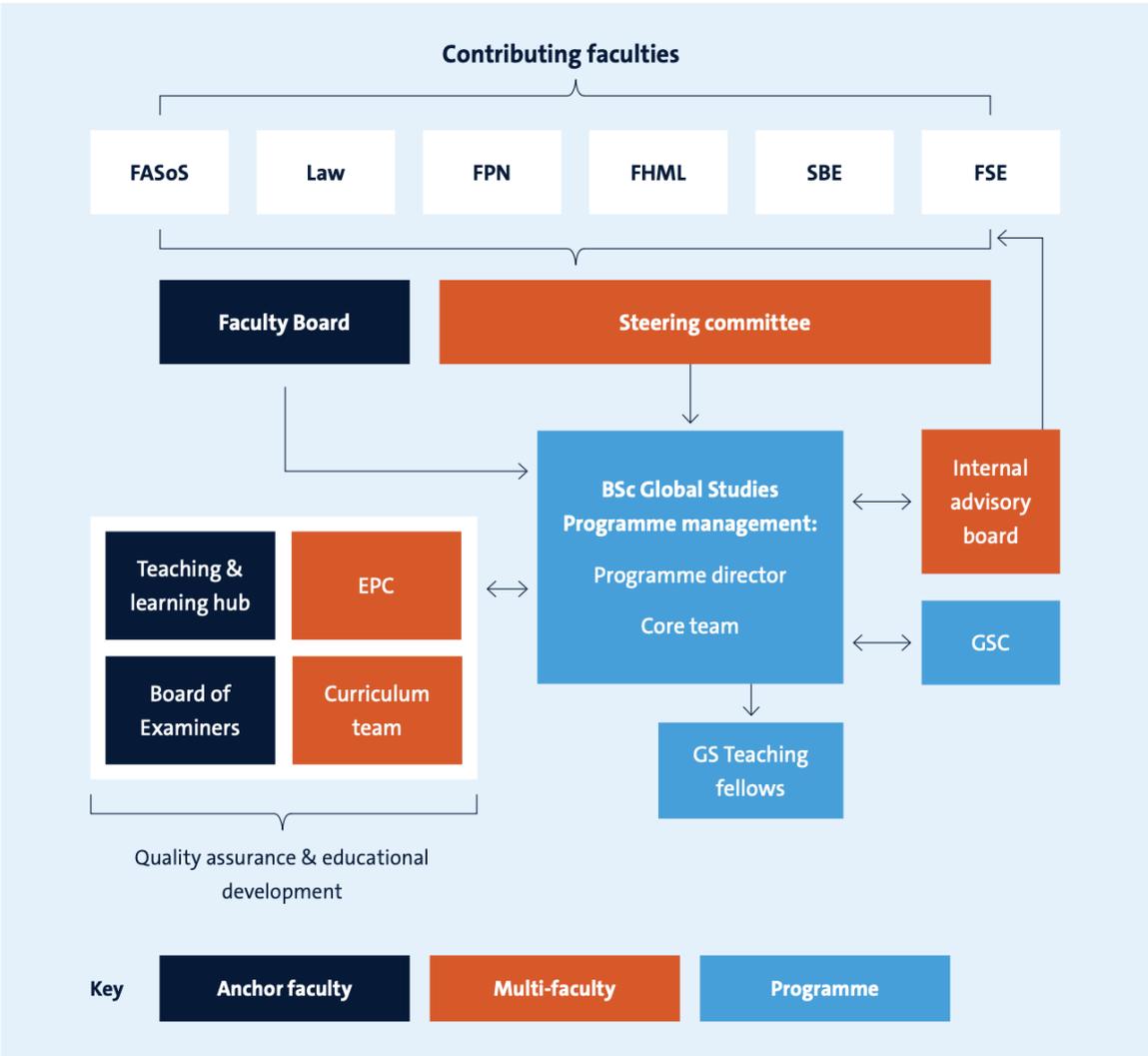
The bachelor's programme Global Studies (BSc GS) is administratively anchored in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASoS) and has been jointly developed, funded, and delivered by all six UM faculties: FASoS, the Faculty of Law; Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences; Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience; Faculty of Science and Engineering, and; School of Business and Economics. The programme holds the distinctive feature 'Small-scale and intensive education' (Bijzonder kenmerk 'Kleinschalig en intensief onderwijs'; hereafter: BKKI).

A collaboration agreement is in place that describes the roles, responsibilities, and commitments of the contributing faculties. A Steering Committee (SC), comprised of the deans of all contributing faculties, is involved in decisions regarding major changes in the design of the curriculum, the budget, and the operational results of the programme. The SC mandates and delegates the responsibility for operational management, implementation, and quality assurance of BSc GS to the anchor faculty FASoS and the BSc GS programme director. The FASoS Faculty Board is responsible for ensuring educational quality assurance, conducted with the support of both anchor faculty-specific bodies (e.g., Board of Examiners/BoE) and bodies that represent staff from all contributing faculties (e.g., Educational Programme Committee/EPC, Curriculum Team/CT).

The programme director is supported by the BSc GS core team, which includes an educational coordinator, student care officer, thesis coordinator, field study coordinator, community liaison, and administrative support, all of whom are based in the anchor faculty. The BSc GS management is further supported by FASoS's Teaching and Learning Hub (TLH), Assessment Support Team (AST), and BoE. The TLH provides guidance on annual education plans, implementing and monitoring evaluations, and supporting programme management and staff on education and assessment policies. The AST is

responsible for drafting the faculty assessment policy and reviews and provides feedback and advice on the programme’s assessment environment.

The EPC and CT are supported by the anchor faculty and include staff from different faculties. The EPC includes representatives from each of the faculties plus students from each year of the programme, and it exclusively serves the BSc GS through monitoring the quality of education and educational staff. The CT reviews the curriculum and provides recommendations to the programme director and to course coordinators on needed improvements to curriculum coherence. The CT includes a chair, teaching staff from different faculties who analyse specific learning tracks, the programme director, and members of the Global Studies core team (when needed).



3.3 Recommendations previous assessment

The previous assessment panel (initial assessment) did not have any specific recommendations for the Global Studies programme concerning either the regular programme assessment or the BKLI.

4. Strong points

The panel identified numerous strengths with the key strengths listed below.

- The BSc Global Studies is a relevant and contemporary programme that is well-placed at Maastricht University, a university that has an international outlook.
- The programme offers an attractive curriculum, designed around current 'wicked problems' and geared towards finding real solutions to these problems, using an interdisciplinary approach.
- The programme places a strong focus on tying global issues to regional and local situations.
- The programme provides small-scale education, allowing for ample (personal) guidance and feedback and uses a great diversity of teaching and assessment methods.
- Students reap the benefits from an international classroom and a strong sense of community.
- The field study and the 21st Century Learning Project allow students to work with external stakeholders and directly apply and integrate knowledge and skills in real situations.

5. Recommendations

The panel makes several recommendations to aid with the further development of the programme. These do not detract from the positive assessment of the generic quality of the programme and the distinctive feature.

With regards to the profile and intended learning outcomes (Standard 1) the panel recommends that the programme:

- formulates an explicit and shared definition of what global studies is and what global citizenship entails (meta-level);
- is explicit in its view on interdisciplinarity and how this is operationalised in the curriculum; and
- further clarifies graduate attributes.

With regards to the teaching-learning environment (Standard 2), the panel recommends that the programme:

- considers and articulates the role and type of quantitative methods that are relevant to the programme;
- makes a clear choice and ensures consistent application of rules concerning (mandatory) attendance and active participation, taking into consideration the PBL approach, the BKKI status of the programme, and the importance of group work and project in the BSc GS (this also applies to BKKI Standard C.);
- increases insight into the coherence of the programme and how the individual components relate to and build on each other (to students and staff). The panel suggests that some more easily accessible visuals (i.e. besides the existing curriculum map) could be helpful in creating more clarity.;
- develops an explicit strategy to feed Global Studies related research into the programme.

With regards to safeguarding the quality of the programme, the panel recommends that the programme:

- considers a professional field advisory council of sorts to ensure that external partners are systematically and explicitly engaged and contribute to the development of the PILOs and the programme (Standard 1);
- the Board of Examiners provides more dedicated attention to the BSc GS to ensure a shorter sampling cycle, which is warranted by the complex organisation of the programme, its interdisciplinary nature and its BKKI status (Standard 3);

With regards to the achieved learning outcomes (Standard 4), the panel recommends that the programme:

- ensures that there is a collective understanding of if and how interdisciplinarity and a global focus are reflected in the thesis, the field study and 21st Century Learning Project.

In addition to the recommendations mentioned above, the panel has three further recommendations exclusively geared towards the distinctive feature 'Small-scale and intensive education'. The panel recommends that the programme:

- facilitates and stimulates staff in co-organising extra-curricular activities by providing them dedicated time;
- explicitly monitors and promotes the interrelationship between the curriculum and the extracurricular activities, including encouraging all students to participate in the extracurricular activities; and

6. Assessment

Report on the standards of the framework for existing programmes

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

Ambitions and characteristics of the programme

The BSc Global Studies (BSc GS) is an English-taught, interdisciplinary, three-year bachelor's programme that aims to educate graduates who can analyse complex global problems from multiple perspectives. The BSc GS engages scholars and teachers from all faculties, including the humanities (e.g., history, philosophy), social sciences (e.g., sociology, anthropology, economics, law), life and health sciences (e.g., global health, psychology), and technical sciences (e.g., data science). Students' exposure to different disciplines enables them to examine inter-related factors that shape 'wicked problems' (e.g., climate change), to identify tensions between global and local processes and problem owners, and to identify entry points for change. The BSc GS aims to train students to think creatively to explore solutions, using structured intervention-thinking and both hard and soft skills to effectively support the possible implementation of these solutions.

The programme has four relevant key characteristics:

1. **Interdisciplinary anchoring.** The programme is organized around semester themes in which students learn about different interpretative frameworks, including theories, concepts, methodologies, and tools from multiple disciplines; see how interpretative frameworks can be integrated to complement and extend each other; are introduced to the tensions between different perspectives on issues, and; select and synthesize different perspectives to create novel insights and approaches that become greater than the sum of their disciplinary parts.
2. **Dedicated focus on hard and soft skills.** The programme emphasises the development of academic and professional skills such as academic writing, presentation, and argument development, which is complemented by a focus on global citizenship skills, such as intercultural communication, conflict resolution, negotiation skills, and language skills.
3. **Moving from problems to solutions.** The programme focuses on specific global challenges and their (regional and) local dimensions through the specific semester themes as vehicles for students to learn, practice, and consolidate the skills and methods needed to effectively analyse, diagnose, and act on complex problems.
4. **Global scholarship.** To understand global issues and connections between the global and the local, the programme aims to bring together a diversity of voices from different world regions.

The panel describes the BSc GS as a rich and varied programme that is well-placed at Maastricht University, which has long had an international outlook. Furthermore, the panel finds that the programme is relevant and contemporary, examining real problems and exploring real solutions. In

discussing the programme's ambitions and key characteristics, the panel suggests that a concise and explicit description of what global studies/global citizenship is (according to the programme management) would be helpful in developing the programme further. This could be a definition of sorts, as is common for traditional discipline-based programmes, as well as for more recent thematic or otherwise interdisciplinary programmes. The panel argues that the programme would also benefit from being more explicit about what interdisciplinarity entails exactly, and how this is operationalized in the curriculum (see Standard 2). The panel encourages the programme to align all (internal and external) stakeholders regarding their understanding of its key characteristics and remain cognizant of the (overarching) goals of the programme. The complex governance structure of the programme adds to this challenge for programme management. The panel concludes that a clear, explicit and collective understanding of interdisciplinarity, globality and global citizenship and increased clarity of graduate attributes will help the programme in its further development and make a clearer distinction between the BSc GS and other interdisciplinary programmes, such as Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Intended learning outcomes

The panel finds that the ambitions of the programme are appropriately reflected in the 25 programme intended learning outcomes (PILOs) covering four categories: knowledge and insight, academic attitude, global citizenship, and interpersonal competencies (Appendix 1). The PILOs are aligned with the Dublin descriptors and clearly describe and reflect the level (bachelor) and orientation (academic) of the programme and its international (global) orientation. The PILOs are well designed to support students in integrating insights from multiple disciplines to tackle complex global challenges. They offer a combination of theoretical knowledge and practical skills, including academic, professional, and global citizenship competencies and have a strong focus on personal growth and critical thinking.

Quality assurance

Through continuous monitoring and input from e.g. the curriculum team and student feedback, the PILOs are regularly adjusted to remain relevant and aligned with academic and societal developments. The PILOs clearly reflect current and emerging professional expectations. A professional field advisory council of sorts could be considered to ensure that the programme systematically and structurally engages external stakeholders to develop the programme further, besides the (informal) information gathering via external stakeholders who are already partners in the execution of the programme (through internships, field studies etc.). The programme is still new and has delivered two graduating cohorts so far. The panel agrees with the programme that it is imperative to explicitly monitor the extent to which programme content meets the needs and expectations of further education and employers.

Considerations

The panel concludes that the interdisciplinary BSc Global Studies is a rich, varied and contemporary programme that focuses on relevant topics in today's world. The direction and ambition of the programme corresponds to labour market needs and equips graduates to pursue a master's programme, should they wish to do so. The panel finds that there is a clear tie-in between the PILOs and the programme level and orientation. To support the programme in its further development, the panel makes a few recommendations that are aimed at encouraging the BSc GS team to be more precise and explicit in defining global citizenship/global studies and its goals regarding interdisciplinarity and graduate attributes. Lastly, the panel finds that the programme would benefit

from a professional field advisory council of sorts to ensure systematic engagement from external stakeholders in developing the programme.

Conclusion

The panel finds that the bachelor's programme Global Studies 'meets the standard'.

Recommendations

The panel recommends that the programme:

- formulates an explicit and shared definition of what global studies is and what global citizenship entails (meta-level);
- is explicit in its view on interdisciplinarity and how this is operationalised in the curriculum.
- further clarifies graduate attributes;
- considers a professional field advisory council of sorts to ensure that external partners are systematically and explicitly engaged and contribute to the development of the PILOs and the programme.

Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment

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

Findings

The bachelor's programme Global Studies is offered in full-time mode only. A schematic overview of the programme is provided in Appendix 2.

Curriculum

The PILOs are translated into concrete learning outcomes (goals) per course, which are included in the course descriptions. A curriculum map shows how the learning outcomes per course are related to the PILOs, demonstrating that all PILOs are addressed in the curriculum and thus ensuring that the curriculum enables students to achieve them. All courses are designed specifically for the BSc GS curriculum, except for language courses and minors. The panel has reviewed course materials and concludes that they are of sufficient quality.

The first four semesters are each made up of four types of courses (theme, methods, skills, and languages), some of which are part of specific learning lines across semesters (e.g., global citizenship skills, qualitative methods, languages). The panel finds that the curriculum format is clear and relevant to the programme. The curriculum is diverse and attractive and is innovatively structured around interdisciplinary themes that effectively integrate knowledge, methods and skills. Furthermore, the panel finds that the thematic organization of semesters is an appealing approach to support a cross-disciplinary focus. The courses within each semester are organised around a phenomenon or 'wicked problem' (theme); the theme course introduces students to key concepts, theories, and data related to the topic from the perspective of two to three focal disciplines (e.g., history, economics, anthropology).

The methods courses provide students with quantitative and qualitative methodological approaches, methods, and tools that allow them to critically evaluate, produce, and communicate knowledge related to the semester theme. The panel was informed that students seem to shy away from using quantitative methods, which is unfortunate as many public data sets are available that students could work with. The panel finds that a more explicit articulation of the role and type of quantitative methods relevant to the programme would be helpful. This issue is also recognised by the programme and is currently being addressed in the further development of the curriculum.

In skills courses, students develop academic skills (e.g., related to giving presentations, writing academic texts), professional skills (e.g., related to managing conflicts, working in teams), and global citizenship skills (e.g., related to intercultural communication, empathy). The panel finds the explicit inclusion and strong positioning of not only academic but also professional and, especially, global citizenship skills highly valuable.

In the language track, students learn a non-native language (other than English) in a relatively short time. Students informed the panel that their experiences with the language track vary greatly, depending on the chosen language and their own pre-existing knowledge. The panel finds that the

language track seems somewhat disconnected and the reasons for its inclusion could be argued more convincingly, including the selection of language options.

The panel is appreciative of Semesters 5 and 6, which are dedicated to a field study or a minor, the 21st Century Learning project, and the thesis. The field study requires that students use theories, concepts, and data learned in the classroom to shape their behaviours and practices in the field before integrating these elements in a final research report. The 21st Century Learning project requires students to work in small groups to solve a dilemma or challenge provided by a 'challenge owner', which is an external stakeholder (e.g., private company, NGO, educational institute) working on a topic linked to the curriculum. Students learn about project management, actively practice global citizenship skills (e.g., collaboration, empathy), employ different methodologies and academic skills to research the challenge, and creatively employ different communication formats they experimented with throughout the programme to develop and pitch a prototype intervention to solve the challenge.

The programme concludes with an individual bachelor's thesis. During the proposal development process, students follow a full programme of lectures (e.g., on problem definition, literature review, research designs, ethics) and tutorials (e.g., on finding focus, writing research questions, reading strategies, writing exercises). In the writing phase, students participate in small-scale thesis circles, coached by a tutor, in which students jointly explore and support each other in different aspects of the research. Students may also follow optional academic writing workshops and method-specific workshops. The panel is positive about the structured approach to the thesis.

The panel is positive about the content of the current curriculum and its theme-based approach, and identifies a few issues that the programme could take into consideration in its further development (e.g., regarding quantitative methods, language track). The panel encourages the programme to be more explicit on how topics like integration of methods, epistemological differences between disciplines and the value of non-academic knowledge are addressed in the curriculum. Also, given the reliance on external stakeholders (e.g., for the field study and 21st Century Learning Project), the programme is advised to manage and expand partnerships to avoid dependency on a limited network.

Coherence and cumulative learning

The panel finds that the notion of progressive learning and learning across courses, themes and semesters is conceptually well-developed, including through a detailed alignment of PILOs and course-level ILOs (CILOs). Yet, the progressive mastery of PILOs through attainment of CILOs throughout the curriculum and the application of learning across course components is not immediately evident (but not absent) to students or the panel. The same is true for the coherence of specific learning lines (e.g., global citizenship skills). The panel suggests that some more easily accessible visuals (i.e. besides the existing curriculum map) could be helpful in creating more clarity.

All courses in the digital learning environment Canvas include information on how different courses relate to each other. Also, meetings are held with staff involved with all courses being offered in the same semesters to help them understand what students are simultaneously learning, how learning connects to previous courses, and how they can explain to students how specific knowledge applies across courses. The panel appreciates all the efforts the programme makes in aligning the curriculum. Nevertheless, the panel agrees with the programme that additional signposting can be done for

students to recognize connections in learnings between curriculum components. The panel concludes that, in practice, achieving interdisciplinarity (in particular) is challenging and needs continuous attention and effort.

Didactic approach

As all programmes at Maastricht University, Global Studies adheres to the didactic approach of Problem-Based Learning (PBL), a teaching method grounded in four guiding principles, according to which learning is approached as a constructive, self-directed, collaborative and contextual process (CCCS). Students use previous knowledge (constructive learning) and apply it to specific contexts (contextual learning) while working collaboratively (collaborative learning) in small-scale tutorials in which students guide discussions and problem analysis (student led). The panel appreciates that all students receive PBL-training at the start of their first year of study and that new staff members are offered PBL-training at least twice a year to help them understand and apply the specifics of this approach.

A characteristic of PBL is that it places emphasis on dialogue and collaboration, which is facilitated through small-scale educational set-ups (tutorial groups of max. 12 participants). The panel finds that the maximum class size of 12 for the smaller group classes is excellent in the context of much higher education today and will provide students with appropriate opportunities for personal interactions and support. Tutorials may follow the PBL method or make use of adapted forms, such as debates, simulations, workshops, or other formats that require students to work together on a puzzle that builds on previous knowledge. Tutorials are supported by tutors who guide the students through the PBL sessions. Tutorial tasks require students to use concepts, theories, and ideas from different disciplines to interrogate and examine the case.

Tutorials and self-study are complemented by lectures (theme and methods track), workshops and skills training. The combination of tutorials and lectures allows students to explore different disciplinary perspectives before integrating them to develop interdisciplinary insights. Lectures provide students with disciplinary perspectives in different ways. Some lectures are divided into short components delivered by disciplinary experts who use their distinct expertise to examine the theme. Some lectures are delivered from one disciplinary perspective, and lecturers representing other focal disciplines provide a short commentary in the lecture to tease out how their own disciplines converge or diverge from the one that is central. From this, a discussion ensues on how disciplines can be brought together to form new propositions or perspectives, often through tutorial tasks.

The panel is impressed with the amount of coordination activities that take place. Course coordinators and tutors have regular joint meetings during which the course coordinators lead in determining questions to be discussed in PBL tutorials. The tutors also have weekly meetings to discuss how the sessions progress and how to prepare for the next sessions.

Most teaching takes place on campus to ensure that students can engage with each other and with the teachers. Some asynchronous features are offered through the Canvas online learning platform, such as knowledge clips, discussion forums, and tools such as FeedbackFruits that support student feedback and feedforward on assignments. Students are expected to complete specific preparations for each weekly tutorial meeting and actively participate in meetings. The panel has had discussions

with several stakeholders on the formal requirements regarding (mandatory) attendance and active participation, particularly in relation to PBL, and the importance of group work and projects, especially in relation to the BKKI status of the programme. During the site visit, it became clear that rules on (mandatory) attendance and active participation currently seem tutor/lecturer specific and are not universally agreed on or consistently adhered to, including the practice of awarding or deducting 0.5 points from a grade. The observed differences in assessment criteria for active participation seems to reflect the ongoing development phase of the programme (moving from a new programme to entering a 'consolidation phase'). The panel notes that the programme needs to make clear choices on (mandatory) attendance and the assessment of active participation and should ensure that all involved observe the rules as agreed to create a uniform culture of practice. An important aspect will be to achieve consistency in how to assess participation.

International classroom and language of instruction

The BSc GS is a selective programme that admits students based on academic and professional skills and motivation (see Standard D. BKKI). The programme strives to have a diverse student population that succeeds in an international classroom and supports the learning of global citizenship skills. Since 2020-2021, the programme admitted students from 70 countries, representing all world regions and countries of varying levels of development. While most students have one or more EU/EEA nationalities, there have been students from non-EEA countries such as China, India, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Philippines, Uruguay, and Zimbabwe. The programme has also admitted a stateless student (i.e., from the Palestinian territory) and several from refugee/forced displacement backgrounds. Many students enter the programme immediately after secondary education (e.g., high school), yet the student population also includes professionals who decided to return to education in the hopes of switching fields and older learners re-entering university education.

The number of students is stabilising at 110-120 students per year, which the programme is happy with. The cohort starting in 2024-2025 consists of 113 students, which is slightly fewer than anticipated and is possibly influenced by external developments such as the current adverse political climate regarding internationalisation. Furthermore, as of 2023-2024, a higher tuition fee has come into effect, which may restrict programme access. The programme addresses these issues in advisory sessions with prospective students, in online sessions or pre-recorded presentations for open days, and through working with high school counsellors to provide information on the BSc GS to their students.

Maastricht University explicitly embraces the international classroom where students and staff from different backgrounds meet and interact. The student intake and current population of the BSc Global Studies is intentionally internationally diverse, supporting the exchange of insight and experiences in a classroom characterised by members with distinct lived experiences. The explicit desire of the Dutch Minister of Education to restrict international student intake is therefore considered a serious external threat to the programme. The panel shares the concerns about restricting the admission of international students and emphasizes that the English-taught programme Global Studies is well suited to be offered at Maastricht University, which has long had an explicit international outlook, ambition and position.

The panel notes that the choice of English as the language of instruction is valid and sound. The content of the programme has an international orientation, addresses complex global issues, and has a focus

on connecting global phenomena to regional and specific local contexts. English is an obvious common language that grants access to diverse learning resources from multiple world regions. Also, the labour market focus is internationally oriented, and language skills are highly valued by employers. Alumni are prepared for entry into international master's programmes or careers with global institutes and companies in the Netherlands, Europe, and beyond. The choice of English as the language of instruction is in line with the Maastricht University Code of Conduct on language. The FASoS and Maastricht University language policy ensures that staff are equipped to provide education in English.

Student guidance

Students receive several forms of personalised guidance throughout their studies. Each student is assigned a mentor to assist them throughout their time in the programme. The mentor monitors a student's progress, provides feedback on goals and how the student is working toward them and can raise concerns to the programme management. The panel is particularly positive about the student guidance provided by the programme's student care officer, who is also part of the core team. The student care officer has a comprehensive understanding of the programme structure and how students may navigate it given (unanticipated) personal circumstances that can affect their learning trajectories. Students are monitored, and if they fail one or more courses, they are invited to make an appointment with the student care officer. If needed, the student care officer works with the student on an individualised study plan that respects the student's capacities and needs while still supporting timely graduation. Low-threshold support is also offered by tutors, who may signal concerns about a student's attendance or behaviour.

Students with disabilities or chronic illnesses are supported, including options such as additional exam time and access to specialised software. Specific support for students (e.g., related to psychological support, career advising) is also available at the university level. Students continue to receive guidance until graduation, with the programme regularly promoting and advising students on potential master's degree options, scholarships for further education, and work opportunities (e.g., through career information and networking events).

Teaching staff

The programme staff consist of dedicated teaching fellows and expert academic staff from participating faculties. The teaching fellows are on permanent contracts (100% education-based) and exclusively act as tutors, mentors, and thesis supervisors. They support students in understanding how different programme components interact and connect, and they provide insight into how connections can be made more explicit and where/how differences in faculty/disciplinary approaches can be addressed. The panel notes that the teaching fellows have an essential role in the programme and are well-equipped to guide the students. The panel expresses concern regarding the absence of a research component for teaching fellows who have permanent contracts based on education alone. They cannot contribute to feeding their own research into the programme, and their career prospects seem limited at Maastricht University and other academic institutions.

Teaching staff provided by the faculties have a broader set of roles, including as lecturers, course coordinators, and responsible examiners. Faculties provide teaching staff to the programme to deliver specific courses based on demonstrated (inter)disciplinary experiences, specific topical expertise for the selected courses, and previous teaching experience.

Students commend all teaching staff as visible, approachable, and responsive in their support. The panel finds that the programme has managed to attract staff with mixed levels of experience and diverse backgrounds. An issue that the panel wants to draw attention to is that relatively few senior staff (associate and full professors) are visibly involved in the programme. The panel underscores the programme's wish to hire its own dedicated scientific staff and/or to allocate dedicated teaching time for GS when new staff are appointed. This would contribute to an increased sense of belonging of the staff to the programme, which is beneficial in the long run. This would also provide a way to embed research into the tasks of the dedicated programme staff. The current research input mainly relates to (disciplinary) research in the home faculties. In the further development of the BSc GS, the panel encourages the programme to organise (more) research input into Global Studies-specific themes.

The panel has discussed some challenges regarding teaching staff that can inherently arise in a programme with a complex organizational structure. One challenge is the limited influence that the programme has over staff recruitment by participating faculties. All participating faculties contribute teaching staff to the BSc GS for specific courses, who fill roles such as course coordinators, lecturers, tutors, thesis supervisors, and mentors. The Steering Committee (deans participating faculties) informed the panel that all faculties are fully dedicated to the BSc GS and want to contribute to making the programme a sustained success. The panel appreciates that the programme directly works with the contributing faculties through an Internal Advisory Board (IAB). The IAB consists of one focal point for each faculty, with the task of communicating about programme-specific needs and challenges between programme management and their respective faculties (e.g., related to staffing, education planning, financial reporting). The programme director can ask the IAB and Steering Committee for support in appropriately and efficiently aligning between faculties related to, for instance, staff allocation and time commitments to different teaching roles and communication about disciplinary differences. The panel appreciates the dedication of all deans and supports the plans to update the collaboration agreement to ensure enduring commitment and fertile cooperation between all parties involved.

Another challenge that the programme is aware of is the constant need to better support teaching staff to synthesise/integrate disciplinary perspectives, to organise and deliver education in line with FASoS procedures and aligning varying academic cultures, to ensure consistent communication between coordinators and tutors on aspects like assessment, and to manage grading/feedback within deadlines. These points of improvement primarily reflect staff coming from different faculties, with at times, different working procedures than the anchor faculty. As many staff teach concurrently in the BSc GS and other programmes at other faculties, managing workloads and deadlines may also be affected by different and sometimes conflicting education schedules. The panel appreciates that the programme is addressing these concerns through semester launch events where staff can discuss common challenges and procedures to manage those, written guidelines provided through periodic emails, and discussions between programme management and deans/associate deans of education/education coordinators/department heads about strategically allocating staff to specific courses.

Staff professionalisation

The panel finds that the programme offers appropriate opportunities for professionalisation. All teaching staff take a mandatory two-day PBL course. In line with faculty guidelines, course

coordinators have a university teaching qualification (UTQ). In deviation from other programmes at Maastricht University, tutors in the BSc GS must at least have a master's degree to ensure that they have sufficient academic grounding and preferably also have some professional experience. After one year or in case of a permanent contract, they must also have obtained the UTQ.

Teaching staff in the BSc GS have access to regular Continuous Professional Development (CPD) training, workshops and other activities organised at their own faculties that address specific needs or characteristics, such as how to assess interdisciplinary work, how to support students in arguing with empathy and evidence, and how to develop integrative education that incorporates skills, methods, and theme components.

Quality assurance

The panel is satisfied that the programme continuously calibrates across curriculum components through maintenance meetings. As the still relatively new programme has developed, some content and corresponding CILOs have been adjusted. The curriculum team, established in late 2023, examined how adjusting course content affected the extent to which programme PILOs are being met. The programme and curriculum teams have established a system to provide feedback to coordinators, assessing alignment among CILOs and their corresponding PILOs, and how course activities ensure coherence from course to programme level. The panel noted one issue that the curriculum team might want to clarify, which is how the programme monitors that students meet all PILOs when they choose to do a minor rather than the field study in semester 5. The programme is aware that making the ambitions and outcomes of interdisciplinary education more concrete for students, staff, and external stakeholders, who may all have different understandings of what interdisciplinary education is and looks like in practice, requires continuous effort (see Standard 1).

In 2023-2024, the curriculum team prioritised the skills track and the quantitative methods learning lines for further review and revision. Some changes have already been implemented in the curriculum, such as adjusting the skills track to include specific topics (e.g., learning to read an academic article, academic referencing, structuring logical arguments), and offering additional extracurricular training sessions in preparation for the thesis.

Considerations

The panel concludes that the programme and staff provide a teaching-learning environment for the students that enables them to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

The BSc GS integrates diverse perspectives and crosses disciplinary boundaries. The programme also emphasises integrating skills and methods into the exploration of thematic content, with courses on methods, and skills providing students with a toolbox to study thematic content. The curriculum supports students to develop increasingly complex and integrated levels of mastery related to the different PILOs. Students can tailor the curriculum to their specific interests through semester projects, the field study (or minor), the 21st Century Learning project, language preference, and the final thesis. The interconnected curriculum is, however, challenging to students, in particular as they do not always recognize the coherence of specific learning lines and different curriculum components until later in the programme.

The teaching staff is knowledgeable, motivated and approachable, and students are very appreciative of them. The programme faces staffing challenges due to the complexity of six faculties working together, but actively works on finding solutions. Education is taken seriously, and tutors and lecturers receive adequate support and professionalisation opportunities. The staff is appropriately trained to execute small-scale and intensive teaching. They have all completed the mandatory tutor training focusing on the key features of PBL. All course coordinators have a University Teaching Qualification. Furthermore, the programme of Continuous Professional Development enables staff to continuously develop their teaching skills.

Conclusion

The panel finds that the bachelor's programme Global Studies 'meets the standard'.

Recommendations

The panel recommends that the programme:

- considers and articulates the role and type of quantitative methods that are relevant to the programme;
- makes a clear choice and ensures consistent application of rules concerning (mandatory) attendance and active participation, taking into consideration the PBL approach, the BKKI status of the programme, and the importance of group work and project in the BSc GS;
- increases insight into the coherence of the programme and how the individual components relate to and build on each other (to students and staff). The panel suggests that some more easily accessible visuals (i.e. besides the existing curriculum map) could be helpful in creating more clarity;
- develops an explicit strategy to feed Global Studies related research into the programme.

Standard 3: Student assessment

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

Findings

The panel determined that the programme adheres to the anchor faculty's Assessment Policy (2023), which also details various provisions and measures to promote and monitor the quality of assessment. The assessment policy supports and guides programme directors, examiners, and course coordinators in making sound and substantiated decisions when designing an assessment programme and/or plan. A curriculum map provides an overview of the types of assessments that are used in each course and the PILOs they cover. The Assessment Support Team (AST) is available to consult and advise programme management and teaching staff on further strengthening the quality of assessment.

Course assessments

The panel finds that the programme uses a good range and depth of assessments. Assessments are designed by course teams, using multiple sets of eyes, and evaluated by other members of staff. Course coordinators are required to develop grading rubrics or other grading guidelines. The programme is currently developing templates for different forms of (interdisciplinary) assessment that can be tailored to specific assignments that course coordinators may use, as rubrics have not been systematically available for all assessments.

The programme uses a combination of conventional assessment types (e.g., closed-book invigilated exams, take-home exams, essays, oral exams) and assessment types that engage more with 21st-century skills (e.g., poster presentations, blogs, multimedia webpages, intervention pitches, and student-designed and delivered tutorial sessions). Different formative and summative assessment types are chosen with respect to the level of competence/mastery desired, which are, in turn, often informed by the levels of competence and mode of expression needed for future education or professional pathways. The programme included both individual and group assessments. Group-based assessments are used when the CILOs relate to interpersonal communication, collaboration, conflict resolution, and other competencies that can only be developed or observed through interaction between students (this includes the field study and 21st Century Learning Project).

The panel is satisfied that course coordinators receive appropriate guidance on assessing interdisciplinary work, including through dedicated workshops and written advice following feedback from the Board of Examiners (BoE) and Educational Programme Committee (EPC) on the need to calibrate grading expectations across teachers of different faculties. Course coordinators also hold grading calibration sessions with the grading team in which all graders assess a small number of students' products to discuss interpretation/application of grading criteria and identify and address discrepancies in the application of criteria.

Thesis assessment

The individual thesis (20 EC) is an interdisciplinary research project on a topic of the student's choosing. Two staff members from different disciplinary backgrounds supervise and grade the thesis, which supports interdisciplinarity in the students' research projects. The first supervisor provides guidance, including based on intermediate submissions, throughout the thesis trajectory. The second supervisor, who acts as an independent assessor, is involved at the start of the trajectory, providing feedback on

the proposal, and in the end, co-grading the thesis. Thesis supervisors are matched to students by the thesis coordinator based on the student's topic and the expertise of the available supervisors. The supervisors receive training on thesis supervision through information sessions and specific workshops organised by the thesis coordinator in collaboration with EDLAB, the UM Centre for Teaching and Learning, and the faculty's CPD coordinator.

An assessment rubric guides thesis grading. The rubric includes a checklist of technical requirements and quality assessment criteria. The supervisors complete an evaluation form that includes written feedback and scoring of different criteria (e.g., structure, methodology, analysis and findings) to support the final grade. When two graders cannot agree on a final grade, the thesis coordinator appoints a third reader to come to a majority decision. The thesis coordinator organises annual calibration sessions of supervisors to ensure consistency in the grading approach in view of the interdisciplinary nature of the theses and the different grading cultures that staff of different faculties may be accustomed to for a bachelor-level thesis. The panel found that the examiners used the form well. The feedback provided was clear, sufficiently detailed and critically constructive. Supportive remarks were also made regarding students' achievements and academic/professional development. The examiners provided concise evaluations on all criteria, which were short when possible and more extended when necessary.

The panel did note that some examiners seem overly critical while others are overly generous. This might be related to the beforementioned differences in academic cultures at the examiners' home faculties and requires constant attention. Students did identify concerns about alignment between supervisors across faculties. However, calibration sessions among supervisors from six different faculties showed strong overall alignment among graders. The panel appreciates the programme's efforts to continuously improve, including the evaluation of the thesis procedure in 2023-2024. All feedback gathered informed information sessions for future supervisors and follow-up training.

Board of Examiners

FASoS has a Board of Examiners (BoE) that is responsible for all programmes offered by the faculty, including the BSc GS. The BoE annually examines quantitative data and trends regarding individual courses as presented in the grade reports and education plans for all FASoS programmes, including the BSc GS (alignment PILO-CILO). The panel appreciates the education plan cycle, which allows programme management to reflect on last year's performance (including on programme/course evaluations through various channels and by different bodies) as well as suggest improvements and future developments. The BoE is one of the bodies that is not only informed about the education plan, but that also comments on it from its specific BoE perspective, thus providing valuable feedback.

The BoE also organises internal audits of exams and final works and establishes assessment-related guidance for all faculty programmes. In 2023-2024 the BoE had BSc GS theses reassessed by experienced academic staff members from different faculties, and examined a selection of BSc GS exams from 2022-2023, to check if they were set in accordance with set assessment principles. The BoE provided recommendations, and the programme has acted accordingly. The panel learned in conversation with the BoE that it annually determines which programmes to select for this specific type of sampling, leading to a cycle in which the BSc GS exams and final works are projected to be reviewed every six years. This concerns the panel, as this long cycle leads to a relatively low frequency

of sampling. Considering the complexity of the programme's interfaculty organisation, its interdisciplinary nature and its status as a BKKI programme, the panel recommends that the BoE ensures that sampling is increased for the BSc GS (i.e., a shorter cycle). The panel is satisfied that the BoE has a member that represents the BSc GS, but it did discuss whether it would be desirable to establish a separate GS BoE or a 'GS chamber' for the FASoS BoE. However, the specific form is not of main importance, as long as the BoE ensures that the frequency of sampling activities directly related to the BSc GS increases. The panel trusts that FASoS (in cooperation with the other faculties) will facilitate any measures necessary (time, resources) to ensure that the BoE will be able to do this.

The panel appreciates that the programme director and the BoE enjoy a fruitful collaboration geared towards maintaining high quality standards. During the site visit, it was also discussed that the BoE and the EPC do not have direct contact. The panel would welcome it if the EPC and the BoE established a direct line of communication to raise programme-specific issues more promptly. This suggestion was received positively by both the EPC and the BoE during the site visit.

The BoE is responsible for guidelines on plagiarism that apply to the whole faculty, sharing an anti-plagiarism and anti-fraud campaign with staff and students twice per year. In a recent review, the BoE recommended that the BSc GS ensure a greater share of identity-proof assessments given the increasing accessibility of generative AI (GenAI) tools. A new faculty policy on GenAI was shared in September 2024 that enables course coordinators to decide when and how students may use GenAI tools. Course coordinators should include discussion of the limits, possibilities, and ethical dimensions of GenAI with students when addressing its role in course assessment. The validity and reliability of many of the forms of assessment used in the BSc GS (e.g., presentations, oral exams, audio-visual galleries, simulations) are not threatened by the use of GenAI, and course coordinators may support students to use GenAI in meaningful ways. The importance of proactively addressing GenAI use requires a rethinking of assessment, for which course coordinators receive support from different bodies on university and faculty levels. The panel compliments the overall approach to GenAI and finds it good to see an open but critical approach. The faculty policy contains innovative ideas and shows a willingness to lean into the realities of the emergence of GenAI.

Considerations

The programme has a system of assessment that is properly supported by the overall culture (i.e., international, small-scale, short lines between students and staff) that the panel encountered during the site visit. It applies a great variety of different formative and summative assessment methods. The course assessments are of a satisfactory level and support the students' learning process. The panel finds that students are generally provided with good quality, helpful and comprehensive oral and written feedback on their academic progress and achievements. The thesis assessment is sound, and examiners use the assessment forms well.

The BoE has a faculty-wide responsibility and proactively executes its task well. However, the current approach and scope of the BoE leads to a long cycle in which BSc GS exams and final works are up for sampling every six years. The panel finds that this does not provide the BoE with enough input to specifically monitor the quality of the assessment of courses, and the field study, 21st Century Learning Project and theses in particular. Considering the BSc GS is a unique programme with a special status, it calls for (even) more dedicated attention from the BoE. The panel, therefore, recommends

reimagining the way in which the BoE organises its role with regards to sampling in the BSc GS and possibly opening a line of communication with the EPC to flag up issues in a timely manner, thus 'tightening' the quality assurance loop further.

Conclusion

The panel finds that the bachelor's programme Global Studies 'meets the standard'.

Recommendations

The panel recommends that:

- the BoE provides more dedicated attention to the BSc GS to ensure a shorter sampling cycle, which is warranted by the complex organisation of the programme, its interdisciplinary nature and its BKKI status.

Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes

The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Findings

The programme particularly highlights the thesis and the 21st Century Learning project as outcomes that demonstrate the culmination of student learning, as these elements of the final semester require students to produce insights into global issues and their local manifestations. The panel examined a sample of the theses and their assessment forms of fifteen students, spoke with several alumni and gathered more information on the specifics of the 21st Century Learning Project and the field study during the site visit to determine if the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

The individual bachelor's thesis is an interdisciplinary research project in which students demonstrate their ability to dive deeper into a complex global topic of their interest. The panel is overall positive about the quality of the theses. It found that the final works addressed a diversity of (pressing contemporary) topics, in line with the breadth of the programme. The theses also reflected strong engagement with the relevant literature. Students aimed to draw on concepts, theories or frameworks from various disciplines. The works are generally clearly presented and interesting. Students appear to have been well guided, and the work was well scaffolded. The personal reflections (including positionality statements) are authentic and sincere. All in all, the balance between theory, method and results was appropriate for a bachelor's thesis.

The panel also has some observations for the programme to take into consideration. The panel found that the research components seemed somewhat less developed than the literature review. In some cases, the description of methods and results was limited, as was the amount of data, and the recommendations. Most importantly, the panel draws attention to what might be expected in the theses concerning interdisciplinarity and a global focus. Not all theses in the sample were interdisciplinary or had a global focus. The panel finds that the programme should ensure that there is a collective understanding of how interdisciplinarity and a global focus should be reflected in the theses (see Standard 1). According to the panel, an example of how to achieve a global focus is to consider including a requirement for a comparative analysis, but there may be other ways as well. As the 21st Century Learning Project and the field study are also major curriculum components that are aimed at integration of knowledge and skills, the same recommendation applies to these as well. The aim of this recommendation is to ensure that the intentions of each of these curriculum components is clearer with respect to the PILOs and that it is guaranteed that every student meets the PILOs with these three curriculum components (or any substitutes where that is an option), with the understanding that not all three components need to address the exact same PILOs in the same manner.

Despite having delivered only two graduated cohorts to date, BSc GS students have been recognised for their capabilities in different ways. One student won the UM bachelor student prize for their thesis, and two students received a VSBfonds scholarship to complete further education abroad. In addition, the programme received positive feedback from external partners on the field study and 21st Century Learning Project, which have led to them committing to the programme for multiple years. Furthermore, some of the initiatives and interventions students have worked on with these partners have been adopted by the respective organisations and were put into practice or used to develop

further interventions. This suggests that students attain learning outcomes linked to professional practice and needs.

Alumni

The panel examined the overview of alumni pathways showing that they are admitted to a range of postgraduate programmes at various national and international institutions. Many of these programmes are interdisciplinary (e.g., public policy, development studies, global health, peace and conflict studies), and some are multi-disciplinary or tied to one major field (e.g., corporate sustainability, international trade, management). A substantial minority of graduates has pursued jobs. The extent to which postgraduate programmes and employment are demanding is not explicitly addressed or reflected on by the programme. The panel noted that some students have taken a gap year, and some information on alumni is missing in the overview.

The alumni that the panel spoke with are enthusiastic ambassadors who look back on the programme fondly. They specifically commended that they learned how global challenges manifest in local settings, how to see connections and back them up with theory, how to think in structures and patterns in argumentation and how to use interdisciplinary thinking skills to make sense of how the world works. They also informed the panel that the breadth of the programme, the international classroom, the excellent support structure and the high quality of tutors are real assets. All in all, the BSc GS had given them opportunities to choose a broad variety of master's programmes to progress to.

Current students expressed finding it difficult to frame their competencies when applying for internships and jobs. The broad field of study and the diversity of transferable skills support job market mobility, but they have difficulty locating their profile within conventional professional fields. It is important how the programme links to professional practice during the curriculum. This requires (greater) efforts in, for instance, connecting practitioners and students and in clarifying graduate attributes (see Standard 1). The programme so far conducted two alumni surveys, which provide insight in the academic and professional careers of alumni, thus helping current students recognise the wide variety of options they might have after graduation. The programme also organises career events specific to BSc GS students, where guests from domains and roles connected to the curriculum contribute to career panels, guest lectures, or other exchanges demonstrating how the knowledge and skills gained in the programme connect to professional needs.

The panel appreciates the programme's efforts to showcase graduate attributes, for instance, by developing an online science communication platform in 2024-2025. The platform, led by an editorial team of five students and an academic coordinator, allows BSc GS students to showcase their work to a broader audience. Students connect their works to both local and global phenomena through the platform, building bridges between the programme content/outputs and the wider communities within and outside of Maastricht University. Student projects are presented, and the platform will include a 'thesis talks' podcast, where recent alumni share stories on their theses and how these connect to their postgraduate academic or professional activities.

Community

The panel is positive about the programme's ambition to develop the recent, small alumni community into a large and active one, supporting continuous connections between current and former students.

A growing community can help the programme identify ways to strengthen ties to the professional field and ensure that alumni's professional trajectories provide input to continuously improve the BSc GS programme. An alumni policy was approved in the Spring of 2023. While it is still in the process of being fully implemented, the programme has already taken several concrete steps, including creating an online LinkedIn alumni community to share internship opportunities, vacancies, and news items, organising a first alumni event (2023), and having alumni participate Bachelor Open Days to share their experiences with prospective students.

Considerations

The final thesis is of sound academic quality and meets the expectations for a bachelor's degree. The panel recommends that the programme be explicit in its expectations regarding interdisciplinarity and the global focus of the thesis, the field study and the 21st Century Learning Project, as these characteristic features of the programme were not always present in the sample that the panel reviewed.

The alumni are satisfied with the programme as a preparation for their future careers. The panel finds that their attitude, way of thinking, and the master's programmes they enrolled in are testaments to the high quality of the programme. The alumni function as ambassadors of the programme.

Conclusion

The panel finds that the bachelor's programme Global Studies 'meets the standard'.

Recommendation

The panel recommends that the programme:

- ensures that there is a collective understanding of if and how interdisciplinarity and a global focus are reflected in the thesis, the field study and 21st Century Learning Project.

7. Assessment

Report on the standards of the distinctive feature Small-scale and intensive education

Standard 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

The English-taught, interdisciplinary, three-year BSc Global Studies (BSc GS) is a programme that aims to educate graduates who can analyse complex global problems from multiple perspectives. Students' exposure to different disciplines enables them to examine interrelated factors that shape 'wicked problems' (e.g., climate change), identify tensions between global and local processes and problem owners, and identify entry points for change. The BSc GS trains students to think creatively to explore solutions, using structured intervention thinking and hard and soft skills to effectively support the possible implementation of solutions. The programme has four key characteristics: interdisciplinary anchoring, dedicated focus on hard and soft skills, moving from problems to solutions, and global scholarship.

The panel finds that the ambitions of the programme are appropriately reflected in the 25 programme intended learning outcomes (PILOs) that encompass four categories: knowledge and insight, academic attitude, global citizenship, and interpersonal competencies (Appendix 1). The PILOs are aligned with the Dublin descriptors and clearly describe and reflect the level (bachelor) and orientation (academic) of the programme and its international (global) orientation. The PILOs are well-designed to support students in integrating insights from multiple disciplines to tackle complex global challenges. They relate to a combination of theoretical knowledge and practical skills, including academic, professional, and global citizenship competencies and have a strong focus on personal growth and critical thinking. The panel notes that the programme demonstrably aims at above-average achievements in all four categories, which include integrated outcomes regarding personal attitudes and skills. The BKKI criteria are especially reflected in the programme's interdisciplinary focus and approach (including critical thinking, and developing global and academic competencies), attention to high ethical standards, and personal and professional growth, and opportunities to engage with and practice skills in settings outside the academy.

Considerations

The panel considers the PILOs to be clearly defined and in line with the high level and orientation of the programme and professional expectations. The PILOs have a broader aim as defined in the requirements for the BKKI feature and exceed the level described in the Dublin Descriptors, especially for – but not limited to - interdisciplinarity, global citizenship and interpersonal competencies.

Conclusion

The panel finds that the bachelor's programme Global Studies 'meets the standard'.

Standard B: Programme - 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

The programme offers a diverse and appealing curriculum that is innovatively structured around interdisciplinary themes that effectively integrate knowledge, methods and skills. A variety of extracurricular activities are offered that align with the curriculum and the broader aim of building a strong 'global studies community'. A community manager has been appointed to further strengthen extracurricular community building and professional and academic engagement.

Students can participate in a range of extracurricular activities, such as museum visits, film screenings and linked panel discussions, debates, conferences, workshops on writing CVs, photoshoots for professional CV pictures, and outdoor activities like bike rides through historical and natural environments. The panel finds that many activities invite students to expand their thinking, crossing boundaries, much like the ideals of *Bildung*. The range of events takes considerable organization and dissemination to maintain. The panel encourages the programme to present a clearer picture of the overall ownership and management of all these activities, including how the interrelation between the curriculum and the extracurricular activities is monitored.

Students informed the panel that many initiatives are mainly student-led, with limited participation from staff in organizing the activities. Also, not all students actively participate in extracurricular events. The panel is positive that the recently appointed community manager, responsible for promoting the organisation of extracurricular activities, can play an active role in further strengthening the extracurricular component of the BSc GS.

Considerations

The panel concludes that the programme offers a highly motivating and attractive curriculum that includes interesting extracurricular activities in which students and staff collaborate. However, some improvements can be made to ensure more staff participation in the organising and monitoring of activities, and to encourage all students to join in the activities. The panel, therefore, makes several recommendations to further strengthen the inextricable relationship between the curriculum and the extracurricular activities.

Conclusion

The panel finds that the bachelor's programme Global Studies 'meets the standard'.

Recommendations

The panel recommends that the programme:

- facilitates and stimulates staff in co-organising extra-curricular activities by providing them with dedicated time;
- explicitly monitors and promotes the interrelationship between the curriculum and the extracurricular activities, including encouraging all students to participate in the extracurricular activities.

Standard C: Programme - 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

As all programmes at Maastricht University, Global Studies adheres to the didactic approach of Problem-Based Learning (PBL), a teaching method grounded in four guiding principles, according to which learning is approached as a constructive, self-directed, collaborative and contextual process (CCCS). Students use previous knowledge (constructive learning) and apply it to specific contexts (contextual learning) while working collaboratively (collaborative learning) in small-scale tutorials in which students guide discussions and problem analysis (student led). The panel appreciates that all students receive PBL-training at the start of their first year of study and that new staff members are offered PBL-training at least twice a year to help them understand the specifics of this approach.

A characteristic of PBL is that it places emphasis on dialogue and collaboration, which is facilitated through small-scale educational set-ups (tutorial groups of max. 12 participants). The panel finds that the maximum class size of 12 for the smaller group classes is excellent in the context of much higher education today and will provide students with appropriate opportunities for personal interactions and support. Tutorials may follow the PBL method or make use of adapted forms, such as debates, simulations, workshops, or other formats that require students to work together on a puzzle that builds on previous knowledge. Tutorials are supported by tutors who guide the students through the PBL sessions. Tutorial tasks require students to use concepts, theories, and ideas from different disciplines to interrogate and examine the case.

The panel finds that the curriculum is intensive throughout the three years, including the extracurricular activities. Teaching is predominantly on-site to ensure students can engage with each other and the teachers. The curriculum is built around progressive mastery and cumulative learning, culminating in an individual thesis. Ample opportunity is provided to apply learnings in settings outside the university and work with non-university partners on intensive small group projects that contribute to integrating knowledge, methods and skills and enable personal and professional growth. Extracurricular activities similarly contribute to deepening understanding and linking learnings to social issues.

Students are expected to complete specific preparations for each weekly tutorial meeting and actively participate in meetings. The panel has had discussions with several stakeholders on the formal requirements regarding (mandatory) attendance and active participation, particularly in relation to PBL, and the importance of group work and projects, especially in relation to the BKKI status of the programme. During the site visit, it became clear that rules on attendance and active participation currently seem tutor/lecturer specific and are not universally agreed on or consistently adhered to, including the practice of awarding or deducting 0.5 points from a grade. This seems to reflect the ongoing development phase of the programme (moving from a new programme to entering a 'consolidation phase'). The panel notes that the programme needs to make clear choices on these

issues and should ensure that all involved observe the rules as agreed to create a uniform culture of practice.

Considerations

The programme is intensive regarding student-staff contact hours, study load, and degree of individual guidance, which is firmly grounded in PBL. There is a high level of student-teacher interaction and much supervision. The BSc GS is intensive, well-structured and demanding, but not too demanding as is shown by the high percentage of students that completed the programme nominally (see Standard G). The panel makes a recommendation concerning the rules on (mandatory) attendance and active participation (See Standard 2).

Conclusion

The panel finds that the bachelor's programme Global Studies 'meets the standard'.

Recommendation

The panel recommends that the programme:

- makes a clear choice and ensures consistent application of rules concerning (mandatory) attendance and active participation, taking into consideration the PBL approach, the BKKI status of the programme, and the importance of group work and project in the BSc GS.

Standard 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

The admissions procedure mainly focuses on a letter of motivation in which potential students share their reasons for choosing the BSc Global Studies, and an essay on a topic of societal importance by the applicant that addresses a global issue and its local dimensions. The admissions materials should allow the Board of Admissions (BoA) to assess the student's knowledge of the programme, to determine alignment of the student's aspirations and future goals to the model and content of the programme, and to assess whether the applicant is sufficiently prepared for the specific type of programme. Although students must also provide a copy of their most recent grades transcript and a copy of their diploma, the selection is not focused on grades.

The panel reviewed the intake procedure and concludes that it is aligned with the educational approach and is explicitly focused on fit with the programme, including motivation and skills. The panel noted that the programme has determined that it needs to further refine the selection process to be more inclusive of students with diverse prior education pathways. As students from education systems similar to that of the Netherlands tend to perform better on admissions procedures (e.g., given prior knowledge on how to write compelling letters of motivation), a project to revise the admissions system to be more inclusive of applicants of different prior education pathways and backgrounds will be undertaken in 2024-2025. When revising the admissions procedure, the panel encourages the programme to consider the impact of generative AI on the current admissions materials (i.e., motivation letters and essays). By introducing video submissions, the programme may be able to ensure that students submit their own original materials. Given the programme's BKKI status, the panel considers it appropriate that the admissions procedure would also specifically address a candidate's motivation to participate in extracurricular engagement during their studies. However, the panel emphasises that participating in such activities prior to joining the BSc GS should not be a key criterion of admission, given that students from challenging backgrounds often have less opportunity for such activities.

Considerations

The programme has a sound admission and selection procedure aimed at admitting academically talented students who are motivated to enter and actively participate in the BSc Global Studies programme. The panel is positive about the programme proactively revising its intake procedure to become more inclusive. The panel suggests that the revision include addressing the impact of generative AI on written application materials and the candidate's motivation to engage in extracurricular activities.

Conclusion

The panel finds that the bachelor's programme Global Studies 'meets the standard'.

Standard 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

The programme staff consist of ample dedicated teaching fellows as well as expert academic staff from participating faculties. The teaching fellows exclusively act as tutors, mentors, and thesis supervisors. The panel notes that the teaching fellows have an essential role in the programme and are well equipped to coach the students. Teaching staff provided by the faculties have a wider set of roles, including as lecturers, course coordinators, and responsible examiners. Teaching staff deliver specific courses based on demonstrated (inter)disciplinary experiences, specific topical expertise for the selected courses, and previous teaching experience.

Students commend all teaching staff as visible, approachable, and responsive in their support. The panel finds that the programme has managed to attract staff with mixed levels of experience and diverse backgrounds. An issue that the panel wants to draw attention to is that relatively few senior staff (associate and full professors) are visibly involved in the programme. The panel underscores the programme's wish to hire their own dedicated scientific staff and/or to allocate dedicated teaching time for GS when new staff are appointed. This would contribute to an increased sense of belonging of the staff to the programme, which is beneficial in the long run. This would also provide a way to embed research into the tasks of the dedicated programme staff. In the further development of the BSc GS, the panel encourages the programme to organise (more) research input into Global Studies-specific themes, as the current research input mainly relates to (disciplinary) research in the home faculties.

The panel has discussed some teaching staff challenges that naturally arise in a programme with a complex organizational structure. One challenge is the limited influence that the programme has over recruiting staff by participating faculties. All participating faculties contribute teaching staff to the BSc GS for specific courses, who fill roles such as course coordinators, lecturers, tutors, thesis supervisors, and mentors. However, staff allocation and coordination remain challenging due to interfaculty collaboration and conflicting teaching schedules as well. The panel appreciates the dedication of the Steering Committee (deans participating faculties) to the programme and supports the plans to update the collaboration agreement that lies at the basis of the BSc GS to ensure enduring commitment and a fertile cooperation between all parties involved.

Students receive several forms of personalised guidance throughout their studies. Each student is assigned a mentor to assist them throughout their time in the programme. The mentor monitors a student's progress, provides feedback on goals and how the student is working toward them, and can feed forward concerns to the programme. The panel is particularly positive about the student guidance provided by the programme's student care officer, who is also part of the core team. The student care officer has a comprehensive understanding of the programme's structure and how students may

navigate it given (unanticipated) personal circumstances that can affect their learning trajectories. Students are monitored, and if they fail one or more courses, they are invited to make an appointment with the student care officer. If needed, the student care officer works with the student on an individualised study plan that respects the student's capacities and needs while still supporting timely graduation. Low-threshold support is also offered by tutors, who may signal concerns about a student's attendance or behaviour.

Staff professionalisation

All teaching staff follow a mandatory two-day PBL course. In line with faculty guidelines, course coordinators have a University Teaching Qualification (UTQ). In deviation from other programmes, tutors in the BSc GS must at least have a master's degree, which ensures that tutors have sufficient academic grounding, and preferably also some professional experience. After one year or in case of a permanent contract, they must also have a UTQ.

Teaching staff in the BSc GS have access to regular Continuous Professional Development trainings, as well as programme-specific workshops and trainings that address specific needs or characteristics, such as how to assess interdisciplinary works, how to support students to argue with empathy and evidence, and how to develop integrative education that incorporates skills, methods, and theme components.

Considerations

The teaching staff is appropriately trained to provide small-scale and intensive teaching. They have all completed the mandatory tutor training focusing on the key features of PBL. All course coordinators have a University Teaching Qualification or are in the process of acquiring this certificate. Furthermore, the programme of Continuous Professional Development enables staff to continuously develop their teaching skills.

Students commend the expertise and motivation of their tutors and receive quality guidance and feedback. The programme has managed to establish a positive learning climate and a learning community in which lecturers and students work well together.

Conclusion

The panel finds that the bachelor's programme Global Studies 'meets the standard'.

Standard F: Facilities

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

Findings

The panel toured the facilities to gain an impression of their nature and quality. All tutorials and most teaching activities take place in one building dedicated to the BSc Global Studies. Most lectures are held in the largest lecture hall of the anchor faculty FASoS, which is within walking distance of the programme's building. The dedicated BSc GS building houses the student care officer's consultation room, and offices for the programme director and the core team (education coordinator, student care officer, thesis coordinator, field study coordinator). The building provides a 'common room' (i.e. a rather large physical space) where students and staff can interact and learn, which supports creating a close community in which short physical distance between students and staff reflects short communication distances. Students may use unoccupied classrooms for self-study. To facilitate intensive interaction and to promote community building, the programme has a dedicated room for its students with multifunctional capabilities. Students may use this room for unsupervised teaching, group assignments, and extra-curricular social activities.

Despite the advantage of having a dedicated space for the programme, the building does not fully reflect the programme's values and needs, as it does not meet the desired sustainability standards and will not provide sufficient tutorial and self-study spaces if cohorts grow any larger. The panel deems the programme's facilities as satisfactory, while noting that they seem somewhat dated and might benefit from an upgrade. In addition, the panel suggests that the programme may benefit from a dedicated (work) space for staff members to meet and work, especially since they hail from all faculties of Maastricht University and have their own workspaces in other locations, sometimes at a considerable distance (i.e. 'across the river').

Considerations

The facilities enable the programme to provide small-scale and intensive education. Students use the anchor faculty's infrastructure, and the physical spaces are adequate with respect to support of the programme's didactic approach. Basic facilities are available to further support students in their academic endeavours, and also to create a community of learners, for instance, via a dedicated room exclusively for BSc GS students and the offices of the core staff members. The panel suggests that a dedicated space for staff could be helpful in facilitating staff members that hail from all faculties.

Conclusion

The panel finds that the bachelor's programme Global Studies 'meets the standard'.

Standard 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 BSc GS prepares students to meet the demanding PILOs, which is demonstrated by their ability to complete challenging inter- and transdisciplinary projects (field study, the 21st Century Learning project), an individual thesis, the high graduation rates, and high rates of acceptance of students into challenging further education.

BSc GS students have been recognized for their capabilities in different ways. One student won the UM bachelor student prize for their thesis and two students received a VSBfonds scholarship to complete further education abroad. In addition, the programme received positive feedback from external partners in the field study and 21st Century Learning Project, which have led to them committing to the programme for multiple years. Furthermore, some of the initiatives and interventions students have worked on with these partners have been adopted by the respective organizations and put into practice or used to develop further intervention, suggesting that students attain learning outcomes linked to professional practice and needs.

The alumni are satisfied with the programme as a preparation for their future careers. The panel finds that their attitude and the master's programmes they enrolled in are testaments to the high quality of the programme. They are ambassadors of the programme and carve out appropriate pathways in academia or the labour market.

Success rates

Students progress through the intensive programme as may be expected from a selective, BKKI-designated programme: 89% of the 2020-2021 cohort and 82.9% of the 2021-2022 cohort graduated within three years. By the end of the fourth year, 93% of the 2020-2021 cohort had graduated. The BSc GS has had relatively low dropout rates; on average, 11% dropped out at the end of year 1, comparable to the UM Liberal Arts and Sciences programme which is also BKKI-designated programme. Drop-out is significantly lower than UM programmes in general. Retention and graduation rates suggest that, in addition to the curriculum design, student guidance mechanisms effectively support students in completing the programme nominally.

The panel notes that dropout rates seem to be increasing and completion rates seem to be slightly going down. This was discussed with the programme management, who were aware and informed the panel that this might be because the first two cohorts were not representative, as they were the first-ever students to enrol in the programme. As the programme is now in a consolidation phase, success rates will likely stabilise. The panel is satisfied that the programme closely monitors the development of success rates and takes action, if necessary, to ensure consistent and higher-than-average success rates.

Considerations

The panel concludes that graduates achieve the intended learning outcomes, reflecting a high, above-average academic level. This is evidenced by the outcomes of several programme components, such as the theses and various projects, and the achievements of the alumni.

The completion rates have been consistently good and above average since the start of the programme. The panel discussed a slight drop with the programme management, and is satisfied that it closely monitors the development of success rates and takes action, if necessary, to ensure consistent and higher-than-average success rates, as this is an important aspect concerning the distinctive feature.

Conclusion

The panel finds that the bachelor's programme Global Studies 'meets the standard'.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Intended learning outcomes

<i>Knowledge & Insight</i> D1, D2	Our graduates are able to use academic knowledge to understand global issues pertaining to environment & economy; migration & citizenship; tolerance & beliefs; peace & justice; and 21 st century learning.
<i>Academic Attitude</i> D2, D3, D5	Our graduates have developed a critical, reflective, and culturally aware attitude towards different actors' perspectives on global issues and are able to develop their own perspectives supported by well-researched evidence.
<i>Global Citizenship</i> D2, D4	Our graduates are aware of their intellectual and ethical responsibilities about processes of global influence and can mobilise different languages to understand and communicate about global issues.
<i>Interpersonal Competences</i> D4, D5	Our graduates are able to conduct themselves in a professional manner and create the necessary conditions for inter-cultural, inter- and trans-disciplinary understanding and communication.

D1 Knowledge & Understanding. Students are able to ...	
1	identify and describe the main intellectual roots of the field of Global Studies.
2	describe and contrast the main concepts and theories used in the disciplines of philosophy, political economy, economics, law, sociology, political science, anthropology, cultural studies, history, global health, psychology and data science as related to global issues.
3	recognise the diversity of flows that are entailed in global issues relating to the mobility of people, goods, services, capital and ideas and map these using virtual technologies.
4	identify and explain the ethical aspects of researching global issues and of developing interventions for them.
5	identify the basic claims and assumptions in the way global issues in the topical themes are framed.
D2 Applying Knowledge and Understanding. Students are able to ...	
6	synthesise and integrate knowledge from the above-mentioned disciplines to form an interdisciplinary perspective through which to analyse a global societal challenge related to the topical themes.
7	analyse flows of people, goods, services, capital and ideas entailed in global issues and identify how choices made by actors in one part of the world can cause consequences for regions and communities elsewhere in the world.
8	design and carry out a research project on a global issue in an ethical manner.
9	choose and apply suitable qualitative and quantitative methods to construct a research problem on a global societal issue related to the topical themes.
10	examine the roles of diverse stakeholders relevant for a global issue they are studying, identify their diverse standpoints on the issue and develop a framing of the problem that takes the diversity of standpoints into account.
11	contribute to suitable interventions once the above-mentioned problem has been identified and analysed.
D3 Making Judgements. Students are able to ...	
12	weigh the basic claims and assumptions made in academic and societal debates related to global societal challenges, reflect critically on the way in which these issues are categorised and acted upon and formulate an opinion based on these reflections.
13	assess policies, programs and projects related to global issues by using the conceptual and analytical tools that are relevant in the field of Global Studies.
14	approach a global societal issue with an open, curious and critical attitude, paying particular attention to sustainability and intercultural sensitivities.
15	assess the ethical dimensions of a global issue.
D4 Communication. Students are able to ...	
16	act as truly global citizens in the sense that they have the skills and capacity to act as a bridge-builders between diverse societal actors; this includes inter-cultural awareness, listening and communication, empathy and the ability to communicate their views in a well-reasoned and persuasive manner across cultural and disciplinary boundaries.
17	work effectively in multi- and interdisciplinary teams to resolve complex societal problems.
18	communicate their views convincingly and in a well-reasoned manner across cultural and disciplinary boundaries.
19	communicate effectively using a variety of digital technologies such as social networking tools to share knowledge globally.
20	communicate about global issues in their mother tongue, English and one additional foreign language.
D5 Life-long Learning Skills. Students are able to ...	
21	develop a life-long learning attitude, maintaining an open, curious and critical attitude upon graduation.
22	ask critical questions and test commonly-held assumptions in forming their views on global issues.
23	assess the validity of sources of information and organise information in a well-reasoned argument.
24	identify the ethical dimension of their own decisions and behaviours, be able to adapt and defend the choices they make as a global citizen.
25	use 21 st century technology competently in information gathering, analysis of data, and dissemination of findings.

Appendix 2: Schematic overview programme

	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6	
YEAR 1	SEMESTER 1 – INTRODUCTION TO GLOBAL STUDIES			SEMESTER 2 – ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY			
	Theme	GLO1111 (7,5 ECTS) Introduction to Global Studies I	GLO1211 (7,5 ECTS) Introduction to Global Studies II	GLO1341 (5 ECTS) Project: Choosing an Intervention	GLO1411 (7,5 ECTS) Environment & Economy I	GLO1511 (7,5 ECTS) Environment & Economy II	GLO1641 (5 ECTS) Project: National Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigation Strategy
	Methods	GLO1121 (2,5 ECTS) Research Methods for Global Studies I	GLO1221 (2,5 ECTS) Research Methods for Global Studies II		GLO1421 (2,5 ECTS) Research Methods for Environment & Economy I	GLO1521 (2,5 ECTS) Research Methods for Environment & Economy II	
	Skills	GLO1131 (1 ECTS) Academic & Professional Skills I	GLO1231 (1,5 ECTS) Academic & Professional Skills II		GLO1431 (1 ECTS) Academic & Professional Skills III	GLO1531 (1,5 ECTS) Academic & Professional Skills IV	
	Languages	1505LA1 (2,5 ECTS) – Language Classes Semester 1			1505LA2 (2,5 ECTS) – Language Classes Semester 2		
YEAR 2	SEMESTER 3 – MIGRATION & CITIZENSHIP			SEMESTER 4 – TOLERANCE & BELIEFS			
	Theme	GLO2111 (7,5 ECTS) Migration & Citizenship I	GLO2211 (7,5 ECTS) Migration & Citizenship II	GLO2341 (5 ECTS) Project: What's the Power of my Passport?	GLO2411 (7,5 ECTS) Tolerance & Beliefs I	GLO2511 (7,5 ECTS) Tolerance & Beliefs II	GLO2641 (5 ECTS) Project: Preparing for the Field
	Methods	GLO2121 (2,5 ECTS) Research Methods for Migration & Citizenship I	GLO2221 (2,5 ECTS) Research Methods for Migration & Citizenship II		GLO2421 (2,5 ECTS) Research Methods for Tolerance & Beliefs I	GLO2521 (2,5 ECTS) Research Methods for Tolerance & Beliefs II	
	Skills	GLO2131 (1 ECTS) Academic & Professional Skills V	GLO2231 (1,5 ECTS) Academic & Professional Skills VI		GLO2431 (1 ECTS) Academic & Professional Skills VII	GLO2531 (1,5 ECTS) Academic & Professional Skills VIII	
	Languages	2505LA3 (2,5 ECTS) – Language Classes Semester 3			2505LA4 (2,5 ECTS) – Language Classes Semester 4		
YEAR 3	SEMESTER 5 – PEACE & JUSTICE (Option 1)			SEMESTER 6 – 21 ST CENTURY LEARNING			
	Theme	GLO3111 (8 ECTS) Peace & Justice I	GLO3211 (12 ECTS) Peace & Justice II		GLO3411 (6 ECTS) 21 st Century Learning I	GLO3511 (9 ECTS) 21 st Century Learning II	
	Skills	GLO3131 (2 ECTS) Academic & Professional Skills IX	GLO3231 (3 ECTS) Academic & Professional Skills X		GLO3999 (20 ECTS) Project: Bachelor Thesis		
	Minor	SEMESTER 5 – MINOR (Option 2) Minor (25 ECTS) If applicable: a literature exam of max. 12 ECTS in case the minor does not contain 25 ECTS					

Appendix 3: Site visit programme

Day 0: Monday 24 February 2025

Arrival in Maastricht, preparations panel

Day 1: Tuesday 25 February 2025

09.00	09.15	Arrival panel
09.15	09.45	Internal meeting panel
09.45	10.45	Programme management
10.45	11.00	Break
11.00	11.30	Steering committee (interfaculty)
11.30	11.45	Break
11.45	13.00	Students & alumni
13.00	13.45	Lunch break
13.45	14.45	Information market with students and staff
14.45	15.00	Break
15.00	16.15	Lecturers
16.15	16.45	Wrap-up day 1 (panel only)

Day 2: Wednesday 26 February 2025

08.30	08.45	Arrival panel
08.45	09.15	Internal meeting panel
09.15	10.15	Board of Examiners and BSc GS monitoring and development
10.15	10.45	Break
10.45	11.15	Final meeting programme management
11.15	12.30	Internal panel meeting
12.30	13.15	Lunch break
13.15	13.45	Oral feedback by panel chair (preliminary findings/conclusions)
13.45	14.45	Development dialogue (chaired by programme)

The panel offered students, staff, and other stakeholders of the programme who had not been included in the site visit schedule the opportunity to bring to the attention of the panel those matters they deem of importance to the assessment, in confidence and without involving the programme management. No stakeholders contacted the panel prior to or during the site visit to use this option.

Appendix 4: Theses and documents studied by the panel

Prior to the site visit, the panel studied the theses of 15 graduates of the bachelor's programme Global Studies. Information on the selected documents is available from the secretary upon request.

The panel studied the self-evaluation report and, among other things, the following documents:

Appendices with the self-evaluation report

1. Overview of BKKI elements in BSc Global Studies
2. Follow-up actions after midterm review
3. Programme-level intended learning outcomes
4. Curriculum map
5. Global Studies programmes and information on comparison to BSc GS
6. Alumni overview
7. Description of the Field Study
8. Overview of extracurricular events, CPD trainings, and educational research linked to BKKI standards
9. Comparative student progress/exit rates
10. Overview of BSc GS staff, by course and module
11. Assessment principles
12. Thesis trajectory 2023-2024

Digital dossier (web)

1. Admission procedure & application assessment rubrics
2. Alumni policy BSc Global Studies draft
3. Annual report EPC BSc Global Studies 2022-2023
4. Annual report EPC BSc Global Studies 2023-2024
5. Annual report GS Curriculum Team 2023-2024
6. Annual Report-GSC 2022-2023
7. Annual Report-GSC 2023-2024
8. Assessment overviews per course
9. AST annual report 2023-2024
10. BoE Annual report 2021-2022
11. BoE annual report 2022-2023
12. BSc GS Admission requirements
13. BSc GS Education & Examination Regulations 2023-2024
14. BSc GS Education & Examination Regulations 2024-2025
15. BSc GS Final Work Procedure 2023-2024
16. BSc GS Midterm review March 2023
17. Canvas learning environment
18. Collaboration Agreement GS, fourth revision, draft
19. Complaints Service Point
20. Constructive alignment at UM
21. Course information 2023 + 2024
22. Curriculum overview with links to Canvas courses
23. Disability support

24. Education Plan Global Studies 2022-2023
25. Education Plan Global Studies 2023-2024
26. Education Plan Global Studies 2024-2025
27. Evaluation per selected course
28. Excellence programmes
29. FASoS Assessment Policy 2023-2024
30. FASoS GenAI Policy
31. FASoS Rules and Regulations 2023-2024
32. FASoS Rules and Regulations 2024-2025
33. FASoS Script Calibration Sessions
34. FASoS Strategic Plan
35. Global Studies course evaluation
36. Global Studies mentoring
37. Global Studies scores in NSE and Keuzegids
38. GS Language Policy 2023
39. GS Language Policy 2024
40. Honours+
41. Information on Maastricht University faculties
42. Mandate of the FASoS Assessment Support Team
43. Marble
44. Original Collaboration Agreement GS
45. PBL at FASoS
46. PBL at UM video
47. PBL in short
48. Policy Plan Studying with a disability and or chronic illness 2023-2026
49. Problem-Based Learning
50. Quality Assurance Policy Education
51. Semester 6 21st Century Learning project descriptions
52. Statute BoE 2023-2025
53. Syllabus GS Bachelor Thesis 2023-2024
54. Testimonials
55. Thesis evaluation 2022-2023
56. Transition rules – GS Language policy 2023
57. UM Global Studies Scholarship 2025
58. UM Language Policy 2022-2024
59. UM Strategic Programme 2022-2026
60. UM student support
61. UM study advisers
62. UM Vision on Assessment
63. UM Vision on Education
64. UNL guidelines on selection in bachelor programmes (Dutch only)

Information market; students and staff presented information on:

1. 21st Century Learning Project
2. Science Communication Platform

3. Field Study
4. AV gallery
5. Global studies Community
6. Semester 2 + Semester 4