

Assessment report  
Limited Framework Programme Assessment

**Bachelor Communication Science**

University of Twente

*Contents of the report*

1. Executive summary .....	2
2. Assessment process .....	4
3. Programme administrative information.....	7
4. Findings, considerations and assessments per standard .....	8
4.1 Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes .....	8
4.2 Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment .....	11
4.3 Standard 3: Student assessment.....	14
4.4 Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes .....	16
5. Overview of assessments.....	17
6. Recommendations .....	18

## 1. Executive summary

In this executive summary, the panel presents the main considerations which led to the assessment of the quality of the Bachelor Communication Science programme of the University of Twente, which has been assessed according to the limited framework standards, laid down in the NVAO Assessment framework for the higher education accreditation system of the Netherlands, as published on 20 December 2016.

The programme objectives are sound and relevant. The programme is clearly focused on the study of communication sciences from organisational, technological and design perspectives. In the panel's view, the study of these perspectives within this domain makes the programme profile very clear and very focused. Both for the contents and for the degree of focus, the profile is greatly appreciated by the panel. In addition, the panel welcomes the programme pursuing both academic depth and practical relevance. The benchmark of the programme against programmes in the Netherlands and abroad in this field, which has been conducted, leads to further clarification of the programme profile.

The panel appreciates the Joint Disciplinary Framework for Communication Science, which has been drafted by the joint programmes in the Netherlands. The panel considers this framework to be a sound and up-to-date description of the Communication Science domain and of the attainment levels of Bachelor and Master programmes in this domain. The panel regards the objectives of this programme to be clearly aligned with this framework.

The panel approves of the students being primarily educated to proceed to master programmes in this domain, but also proceeding to the labour market.

The panel feels the clear focus of the programme and the well-defined categories in the intended learning outcomes create a very nicely structured framework, which could serve as an example for other programmes in this domain. The intended learning outcomes meet the bachelor level.

The admission requirements and procedures of the programme are appropriate. The panel appreciates the matching process for applicants. The panel proposes to monitor the intake numbers.

The curriculum matches the intended learning outcomes. The panel very much appreciates the curriculum contents, as the Twente Educational Model structure offers a well-elaborated curriculum. The modules as well as the learning-teaching trajectories assure curriculum coherence. The programme succeeds in acquainting students with important, current subjects in this field. The panel supports initiatives taken by the programme to put specific knowledge and skills students acquire in modules into broader perspective, allowing students to obtain a general overview of the communication science field.

The lecturers are highly committed to the programme and programme improvement. The panel is very positive about the expertise, educational capabilities and research track records of the lecturers in the programme. The panel is also positive about the lecturers meeting regularly to discuss the programme. The panel urges the Faculty Board to recruit candidates for the senior lecturers' vacancies, taking the gender balance for senior staff into account.

The programme succeeds in offering project-led, student-driven and small-scale education. The study methods are varied. The number of hours of face-to-face education and the students-to-staff ratio are adequate. Study guidance is very much up to standard. The drop-out rates of the programme are satisfactory and the student success rates are favourable. As the number of students spending part of the curriculum abroad is quite modest, the panel suggests to encourage students to go abroad.

The panel approves of the examinations and assessment rules and regulations of the programme. The Examination Board monitors the examinations and assessments appropriately.

The examination methods in the programme are consistent with the course goals and contents. The panel welcomes the range of examination methods adopted. Although the measures taken to counter free-riding may be said to be adequate, the panel advises to set the proportion of group examination products within courses at a maximum to curb free-riding effects.

Students are provided with well-organised supervision of the Bachelor theses. The panel approves of the thesis assessment procedures. As not all of the examiners seem to be fully informed about the thesis assessment procedures, the panel proposes to support them in that sense.

The panel considers the measures ensuring the validity, reliability and transparency of examinations and assessments to be up to standard. The programme examiners draft and assess course examinations in very organised ways, assuring the quality. Examinations and Bachelor theses are reviewed on a regular basis.

The Bachelor theses match the intended learning outcomes and are up to standard. The panel advises to monitor the communication science contents of the theses. The panel suggests to adopt more standardised or more strict formats for the Bachelor theses. The panel agrees to the grades given by the programme examiners, although for some theses the panel would have given somewhat different grades. As this is the case, the panel suggests to schedule, for instance, regular assessments of theses by external experts.

The panel feels the programme has taken appropriate measures to acquaint students with the professional practice in the programme domain. The panel considers students completing the programme to have reached the intended learning outcomes and regards the programme to offer suitable preparation for master programmes in this domain.

The panel which conducted the assessment of the Bachelor Communication Science programme of University of Twente assesses this programme to meet the standards of the limited framework, as laid down in the NVAO Assessment framework for the higher education accreditation system of the Netherlands, judging the programme to be satisfactory. Therefore, the panel advises NVAO to accredit the programme.

Rotterdam, 16 April 2019

Prof. dr. H. Vandebosch  
(panel chair)

drs. W. Vercouteren  
(panel secretary)

## 2. Assessment process

The evaluation agency Certiked VBI received the request by the University of Twente to coordinate the limited framework programme assessment process for the Bachelor Communication Science programme of this University. This objective of the programme assessment process was to assess whether the programme would conform to the standards of the limited framework, as laid down in the NVAO Assessment framework for the higher education accreditation system of the Netherlands, published on 20 December 2016 (Staatscourant nr. 69458).

Management of the programmes in the assessment cluster Communication Sciences convened to discuss the composition of the assessment panel and to draft the list of candidates.

Having conferred with management of the University of Twente programme, Certiked invited candidate panel members to sit on the assessment panel. The panel members agreed to do so. The panel composition was as follows:

- Prof. dr. H. Vandebosch, professor Department of Communication Sciences, University of Antwerp (panel chair);
- Prof. dr. A.A. Maes, professor Communication and Cognition, Tilburg University (panel member);
- Prof. dr. T. Smits, professor Faculty of Social Sciences, Leuven University (panel member);
- C.H.W. Buurman, chair Logeion, Netherlands Association for Communication Professionals (panel member);
- E. Bulten MSc, alumna Master Communication, Health and Life Sciences, Wageningen University (student member).

On behalf of Certiked, drs. W. Vercouteren served as the process coordinator and secretary in the assessment process.

All panel members and the secretary confirmed in writing being impartial with regard to the programme to be assessed and observing the rules of confidentiality. Having obtained the authorisation by the University, Certiked requested the approval of NVAO of the proposed panel to conduct the assessment. NVAO has given the approval.

To prepare the assessment process, the process coordinator convened with management of the programme to discuss the outline of the self-assessment report, the subjects to be addressed in this report and the site visit schedule. In addition, the planning of the activities in preparation of the site visit were discussed. In the course of the process preparing for the site visit, programme management and the process coordinator regularly had contact to fine-tune the process. The activities prior to the site visit have been performed as planned. Programme management approved of the site visit schedule.

Well in advance of the site visit date, programme management sent the list of final projects of graduates of the programme of the most recent years. Acting on behalf of the assessment panel, the process coordinator selected fifteen final projects. The grade distribution in the selection was ensured to conform to the grade distribution in the list, sent by programme management.

The panel chair and the panel members were sent the self-assessment report of the programme, including appendices. In the self-assessment report, the student chapter was included. In addition, the expert panel members were forwarded a number of final projects of the programme graduates, these final projects being part of the selection made by the process coordinator.

A number of weeks before the site visit date, the assessment panel chair and the process coordinator met to discuss the self-assessment report provided by programme management, the procedures regarding the assessment process and the site visit schedule. In this meeting, the profile of panel chairs of NVAO was discussed as well. The panel chair was informed about the competencies, listed in the profile. Documents pertaining to a number of these competencies were presented to the panel chair. The meeting between the panel chair and the process coordinator served as the briefing for panel chairs, as meant in the NVAO profile of panel chairs.

Prior to the date of the site visit, all panel members sent in their preliminary findings, based on the self-assessment report and the final projects studied, and a number of questions to be put to the programme representatives on the day of the site visit. The panel secretary summarised this information, compiling a list of questions, which served as a starting point for the discussions with the programme representatives during the site visit.

Shortly before the site visit date, the panel met to go over the preliminary findings concerning the quality of the programme. During this preliminary meeting, the preliminary findings of the panel members, including those about the final projects were discussed. The procedures to be adopted during the site visit, including the questions to be put to the programme representatives on the basis of the list compiled, were discussed as well.

On 31 January 2019, the panel conducted the site visit on the University of Twente campus. The site visit schedule was in accordance with the schedule as planned. In a number of separate sessions, panel members were given the opportunity to meet with Faculty representatives, programme management, Examination Board representatives, lecturers and final projects examiners, and students and alumni.

Very shortly before the site visit, one of the panel members reported ill and declared to be unable to be present at the site visit of 31 January 2019 on the University of Twente campus. After internal deliberations, the panel decided to proceed with the site visit. The programme was informed about the situation and about the panel's proposition to proceed with the site visit. Being conscious of the absence of one of the panel members, programme management informed the panel to support the decision to go on with the site visit and to proceed with the assessment process as planned. The panel member concerned was absent on the day of the site visit, but did study the self-assessment report and appendices of the programme. The panel member also fully participated in the preparation of the site visit. After the site visit, the panel member studied the assessment draft report and commented on the contents of the draft report. The panel member was given the opportunity to make additional inquiries into the proceedings during the site visit.

In a closed session at the end of the site visit, the panel considered every one of the findings, weighed the considerations and arrived at conclusions with regard to the quality of the programme. At the end of the site visit, the panel chair presented a broad outline of the considerations and conclusions to programme representatives.

Clearly separated from the process of the programme assessment, the assessment panel members and programme representatives met to conduct the development dialogue, with the objective to discuss future developments of the programme.

The assessment draft report was finalised by the secretary, having taken into account the findings and considerations of the panel. The draft report was sent to the panel members, who studied it and made a number of changes. Thereupon, the secretary edited the final report. This report was presented to programme management to be corrected for factual inaccuracies. Programme management was given two weeks to respond. Having been corrected for these factual inaccuracies, the Certiked bureau sent the report to the University Board to accompany their request for re-accreditation of this programme.

### 3. Programme administrative information

Name programme in CROHO: B Communication Science (B Communicatiewetenschap)  
Orientation, level programme: Academic Bachelor  
Grade: BSc  
Number of credits: 180 EC  
Specialisations: None  
Location: Enschede  
Mode of study: Full-time (instruction language English)  
Registration in CROHO: 21PH-56615

Name of institution: University of Twente  
Status of institution: Government-funded University  
Institution's quality assurance: Approved

## 4. Findings, considerations and assessments per standard

### 4.1 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*

The Bachelor Communication Science programme is one of the programmes offered by the Faculty of Behavioural, Management and Social Sciences of University of Twente. The Faculty Board, chaired by the dean, has the responsibility for the quality of education and research within the Faculty. The programme director, assisted by the programme coordinator, takes care of the day-to-day management of the programme. The Programme Committee (both for bachelor and master), consisting of an equal number of lecturers and students, advises programme management on quality issues. The Examination Board Behavioural Sciences covers the B-COM programme, the M-COM program, as well as the Bachelor and Master programmes in Psychology and the Master programme in Educational Science and Technology and has the authority to ensure the quality of examinations and assessments of the programme.

In the academic year 2016/2017, the programme changed the language of instruction from Dutch to English. This change was part of the University-wide step from Dutch-taught to English-taught bachelor programmes.

The Bachelor Communication Science programme of University of Twente aims to educate academically trained communication professionals. The programme is directed towards organisational, technological and design perspectives of communication science. The programme studies the effects technological developments may have on communication practice, addresses communication as factor for success of technologies, and studies (multisensory and visual) communication design. Further, students are educated to relate communication to organisational contexts, to understand the relation between communication and technology or design, to know the communication domain breadth and communication being woven into subject matter, to go from strategical thinking to practical implementation, and to bridge theory and practice in this domain.

The Bachelor Communication Science and the Master Communication Studies of University of Twente share the focus areas mentioned. The Master, however, addresses more complex and advanced communication phenomena, provides more specialised insights, systematically offers students multiple academic perspectives allowing students to reflect on the value and limitations of academic knowledge, and allows students to contribute to the communication science body of knowledge.



The programme objectives are aligned with the requirements of the Joint Disciplinary Framework for Communication Science. This framework has been drafted by the joint Communication Science programmes in the Netherlands. In this framework, the position of the discipline internationally and in the Netherlands, the joint principles of Dutch Communication Science programmes as well as the general objectives and the final attainment levels for Bachelor and Master Communication Science programmes in the Netherlands have been outlined.

The programme has been benchmarked against programmes in the Netherlands and abroad. The results of the benchmark show the programme to meet international academic standards. The programme is based upon research of lecturers with an international reputation. The programme may be compared to academic programmes in this domain both in Europe and the rest of the world. The programme distinguishes itself through the organisational, technological and design focus, and through going beyond mediated communication.

Students are primarily prepared to continue their studies in master programmes in the programme domain or related domains. They may, however, also enter the labour market.

The objectives of the programme have been translated into the programme intended learning outcomes. These intended learning outcomes specify, as main points, theoretical knowledge and understanding of communication science and organisation, technology and design related fields; research competencies at basic level; problem-solving competencies at basic level; professional skills, such as interacting with stakeholders, understanding organisations, and planning and managing work; academic skills, such as critical reflection on scientific knowledge and ethical awareness; and personal development competencies.

Programme management compared the intended learning outcomes to the Dublin descriptors for bachelor programmes, to demonstrate these to meet bachelor level requirements.

#### *Considerations*

The panel regards the programme objectives to be sound and relevant. The programme is clearly focused on the study of communication sciences from organisational, technological and design perspectives. In the panel's view, the study of these perspectives within this domain makes the programme profile very clear and very focused. Both for the contents and for the degree of focus, the profile is greatly appreciated by the panel. In addition, the panel welcomes the programme pursuing both academic depth and practical relevance.

The panel appreciates the Joint Disciplinary Framework for Communication Science, which has been drafted by the joint programmes in the Netherlands. The panel considers this framework to be a sound and up-to-date description of the Communication Science domain and of the attainment levels of Bachelor and Master programmes in this domain. The panel regards the objectives of this programme to be clearly aligned with this framework.

The panel welcomes the benchmark of the programme against programmes in the Netherlands and abroad in this field, as the benchmark leads to further clarification of the programme profile.

The panel approves of the students being primarily educated to proceed to master programmes in this domain, but also proceeding to the labour market.

The panel feels the clear focus of the programme and the well-defined categories in the intended learning outcomes create a very nicely structured framework, which could serve as an example for other communication science programmes. The panel regards the intended learning outcomes to meet the bachelor level.

*Assessment of this standard*

These considerations have led the assessment panel to assess standard 1, Intended learning outcomes, to be good.

## 4.2 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 student influx between 2013 and 2017 was on average about 53 incoming students per year. The proportion of foreign students is about 50 %, since the programme became English-taught. The influx target of the programme is about 80 students. The admission criteria for the programme are the Dutch pre-university diploma (vwo) or the completed first year of higher professional education (hbo). Non-Dutch students are admitted, if they report equivalent prior education. Prospective students are invited to take part in the matching process. They fill out written questionnaires and meet with a study advisor to discuss their motivation, capabilities and interests. This way, applicants are given more ground for their decisions about entering the programme.

The curriculum has a study load of 180 EC and takes three years to complete. The programme presented a table, mapping the intended learning outcomes to the curriculum components. The curriculum has been organised in line with the Twente Educational Model structure, which applies to all bachelor programmes of the university. The curriculum is composed of 12 modules of 15 EC each, scheduled in each of the 12 periods of the curriculum, being four periods per year. Specific themes are addressed in these modules. In each of the modules in the first two years and in one of the modules of the third year, the courses are arranged around the project of the module. Students acquire knowledge and skills required, and apply these in the module project. The components *theory*, *research methodology*, *academic and professional skills*, and *project* are part of each of the modules. These components belong to the four learning-teaching trajectories, which run through the curriculum. Over all of the modules, knowledge, understanding and skills of the learning-teaching trajectories are covered. For instance, in the research methodology learning-teaching trajectory, among others, *qualitative methods*, *data collection and scale construction*, *big data analytics* and *quantitative data analysis* are studied within modules. By taking all modules, students acquire theory, methodology, academic and professional skills and contents required. The projects in the modules cover content-related subjects, such as *reputation and crisis management*, *user perspectives in technology design*, *stakeholder management and communication* and *leadership and communication in modern society*. In addition, University-wide reflection on science, technology and society has been integrated in the modules. The first two modules in the third year provide students with options to select minors to prepare for specific master programmes, to do internships in the Netherlands or abroad or to take courses abroad. About 20 % of the students do internships. Only few students go abroad. The Bachelor thesis (15 EC) is the final component of the curriculum, requiring students to do an individual research project. Talented and motivated students may take part in intra- or extra-curricular honours programmes. The intra-curricular star programme consisting of in-depth, additional assignments in five of the modules is taken by a number of students. The extra-curricular University-wide programme is not taken often.

A total number of 26 lecturers (4.8 fte) are involved in the programme. This number excludes PhD students and lecturers who participate incidentally. The lecturers are employees of a number of

departments of the Faculty of Behavioural, Management and Social Sciences. The vast majority of the lecturers (18 staff members or 4.1 fte) are staff members of the Department of Communication Science of the Faculty. These lecturers are researchers in the programme domain. Research done at the Department is valued internationally. At the moment, the Faculty has 22 research departments. The coming years, they will be merged into five research programmes. About 77 % staff members have PhD degrees. About 54 % of the lecturers are BKO-certified, whereas 31 % have been exempted and 12 % of them are in the process of acquiring the certificate. Module coordinators meet regularly to align the modules to each other. Within modules, lecturers meet to align their courses. Lecturers regard the workload to be manageable. At the moment, two senior positions are vacant. The gender balance in senior positions is uneven. Students are very appreciative of the lecturers' educational capabilities and of the support they obtain from their lecturers.

The programme educational concept consists of project-based education, student-driven learning, and small-scale education. The projects are at the centre of modules, allowing students to learn by engaging in and working on projects. Student-driven learning fosters students to take their learning processes into their own hands. The programme offers guidance and tutoring to achieve this goal. The students-to-staff ratio for the programme is about 30/1. The number of hours of face-to-face education is about 9 hours per week (380 hours/42 weeks) in the first year, about 6 hours per week (256 hours/42 weeks) in the second year and about 4 hours per week (78 hours/21 weeks) in the third year. The study methods adopted in the programme comprise lectures, tutorials, supervised self-study sessions and project meetings. Tutorials are small-scale. A number of tutorials are based upon the flip-the-classroom principle. Students study micro lectures in preparation of tutorials. Students have access to the lab facilities *DesignLab* or *BMS Lab* to acquire technology-related practical skills. The study counselling system the programme has put in place, combines the open-door policy of lecturers with group information provision and individual guidance by student counsellors. This system is highly appreciated by students. The programme drop-out rates decreased over the years and now amount to about 25 %, mostly in the first year. The years after, hardly any students drop out. The student success rates of the programme for the last two to three cohorts are on average 70 % after three years and on average 90 % after four years (proportions of students re-entering in the second year).

#### *Considerations*

The admission requirements and admission procedures of the programme are appropriate. The panel appreciates the matching process for applicants. The panel proposes to monitor the intake numbers of the programme.

The curriculum matches the intended learning outcomes. The panel very much appreciates the curriculum contents, as the Twente Educational Model structure offers a well-elaborated curriculum. The project, theory, research methodology and skills components addressed within the modules are very well-aligned with the categories of intended learning outcomes. The modules as well as the learning-teaching trajectories assure curriculum coherence. The panel feels the programme succeeds in acquainting students with important, current subjects in the communication science field. The panel supports initiatives taken by the programme to put specific knowledge and skills students acquire in the modules into broader perspective, thereby presenting students a comprehensive view on the communication science field.

The lecturers are highly committed to the programme and programme improvement. The panel considers the lecturers to be well-qualified instructors. The panel is very positive about the expertise and research track records of the lecturers in the programme. The proportions of lecturers having PhD degrees or being BKO-certified are up to standard. The panel is also positive about the lecturers meeting regularly to discuss the programme. The panel urges the Faculty Board to recruit candidates for the senior lecturers' vacancies, taking the gender balance for senior staff into account.

The programme succeeds in offering project-led, student-driven and small-scale education. The study methods are varied and are aligned with the educational concept. The number of hours of face-to-face education and the students-to-staff ratio are adequate. Study guidance is very much up to standard. The panel is positive about the lab facilities *DesignLab* or *BMS Lab* and encourages the programme to use these facilities to the full. The drop-out rates of the programme are satisfactory and the student success rates are favourable. As the number of students spending part of the curriculum abroad is quite modest, the panel suggests to encourage students to go abroad.

*Assessment of this standard*

These considerations have led the assessment panel to assess standard 2, Teaching-learning environment, to be good.

### 4.3 Standard 3: Student assessment

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

#### *Findings*

The examination and assessment rules and regulations of the programme correspond to the Faculty of Behavioural, Management and Social Sciences guidelines and the University of Twente Framework for Student Assessment. Within the Faculty, the Examination Board oversees and assures the examinations and assessments of several programmes of the Faculty, including Communication Science. The Board monitors the quality of examinations and assessments of the Bachelor Communication Science and the Master Communication Studies programmes and other programmes.

The examination methods adopted in the courses are aligned with the course goals and contents. The examination methods vary to allow for different course goals to be tested. The examination methods in the programme include written examinations (multiple-choice and/or open-ended questions), individual or group assignments, individual or group presentations, debates and reflections. All components within modules must be completed satisfactorily by students. In case one of these components is unsatisfactory, students must redo the unsatisfactorily assessed component. Given the project-based education adopted by the programme, the proportion of group products is quite substantial. About 30 % to 40 % of all examinations may be group products. The programme monitors group projects to prevent free-riding. In the group products assessments, individual performances by students are taken into account and may lead to differentiated grades for group members. Not only summative assessments are scheduled, but also formative assessments. Students very regularly receive feedback from the lecturers or from the fellow-students.

The Bachelor thesis is the final project of the programme. The projects are individual research projects. The programme thesis and internship coordinator assures the topics, selected by students, to meet the project learning goals and requirements. Topics may match questions raised by organisations in the field and may, therefore, have professional field dimensions. Students are individually guided by their supervisor. In addition, they may take supporting lectures offered by the thesis and internship coordinator. Prior to the completion deadline, students submit their draft thesis. The thesis is assessed by the supervisor and the second grader. Points to be improved are remarked. Students submit the final thesis some weeks later. The thesis is assessed by both the supervisor and the second grader separately. Both use thesis assessment scoring forms. The theses are assessed on the basis of the thesis itself (70 % of the grade), the oral presentation at the colloquium (20 %) and the thesis process (10 %). In case of substantial disparities in the assessment of more than 1.0 point between the examiners, they meet to discuss the differences. If they do not reach an agreement, a third examiner is asked to assess the thesis and the thesis and internship coordinator will decide on the final grade.

Programme management and the Examination Board have taken a number of measures to promote the validity, reliability and transparency of examinations and assessments. The programme assessment plan outlines the relations of the programme intended learning outcomes, course goals and course examinations. The plan is updated yearly. The Examination Board appoints examiners, who should have

PhD degrees and who should be BKO-certified. Modules have assessment schemes to arrive at the final grades. Course examinations include test specification tables or assessment forms with assessment criteria and their weights. Peer review among examiners is promoted. Regularly, assessment experts check module examinations and assessments. Students are informed about the examination formats and grading. The Examination Board reviews samples of theses. All written assignments by students are automatically checked for plagiarism. The Examination Board investigates suspicion of fraud or plagiarism and handles cases in that respect.

#### *Considerations*

The panel approves of the examinations and assessment rules and regulations of the programme, these being in line with Faculty of Behavioural, Management and Social Sciences and University of Twente assessment policies and guidelines. The Examination Board monitors the examinations and assessments appropriately.

The examination methods in the programme are consistent with the course goals and contents. The panel welcomes the range of examination methods adopted. Although the measures taken to counter free-riding may be said to be adequate, the panel advises to set the proportion of group examination products within courses at a maximum to curb free-riding effects.

The supervision and assessment processes for the Bachelor theses are satisfactory. Students are provided with well-organised supervision. The panel approves of the assessment procedures, the theses being assessed on the basis of clear and weighted criteria. As not all of the examiners seem to be fully informed about the thesis assessment procedures, the panel proposes to support them in that sense.

The panel considers the measures ensuring the validity, reliability and transparency of examinations and assessments to be up to standard. The panel feels the programme examiners draft and assess course examinations in very organised ways, assuring the quality. Examinations and Bachelor theses are reviewed on a regular basis.

#### *Assessment of this standard*

The considerations have led the assessment panel to assess standard 3, Student assessment, to be satisfactory.

#### 4.4 Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes

The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.
--

##### *Findings*

The final Bachelor theses are individual research projects. In Bachelor thesis processes, student guidance is more intensive than in the Master thesis processes. In case theses are aligned with problems of more practical nature in organisations in the professional field, the programme assures these theses to be academic research projects nevertheless. The average grade of Bachelor theses for the last five years is 7.3. The proportion of students graduating with distinction (*cum laude*) is about 10 %. The panel studied the Bachelor theses of fifteen programme graduates of the most recent years.

The programme has taken initiatives to prepare students for the professional field. In the curriculum, students are not only trained as researchers, but also as problem-solvers and organisers. In particular, they may take on roles as magazine editors, marketing consultants or user experience consultants. Projects in modules may be real-life assignments from organisations. Students may also do internships. Guest lecturers from the professional field are involved in the programme. The programme started offering the extra-curricular *Prepare Your Future* project, consisting of a series of presentations by professionals in the field. The programme was discussed with a range of experts from the professional field the last years. Since February 2018, the Work Field Committee provides input on professional field trends as well.

Views on students' competencies are gathered by the programme thesis and internship coordinator among organisations in the professional field. These organisations are generally very content about the students' performances. Students tend to proceed to master programmes in this domain. In general, they do not enter the labour market directly after finishing the bachelor programme.

##### *Considerations*

The Bachelor theses match the intended learning outcomes. The theses are regarded by the panel to be up to standard. The panel advises to monitor the communication science contents of the theses. The panel suggests to adopt more standardised or more strict formats for the Bachelor theses, especially with regard to the abstract. The panel agrees to the grades given by the programme examiners, although for some theses the panel would have given somewhat different grades. As this is the case, the panel suggests to schedule, for instance, regular assessments of Bachelor theses by external experts.

The panel feels the programme has taken appropriate measures to acquaint students with the professional practice in the programme domain. The panel considers students completing the programme to have reached the intended learning outcomes and regards the programme to offer suitable preparation for master programmes in this domain.

##### *Assessment of this standard*

The considerations have led the assessment panel to assess standard 4, Achieved learning outcomes, to be satisfactory.



## 5. Overview of assessments

Standard	Assessment
Standard 1. Intended learning outcomes	Good
Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment	Good
Standard 3: Student assessment	Satisfactory
Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes	Satisfactory
Programme	Satisfactory

## 6. Recommendations

In this report, a number of recommendations by the panel have been listed. For the sake of clarity, these have been brought together below. These panel recommendations are the following.

- To monitor the intake numbers of the programme.
- To put specific knowledge and skills students acquire in the modules into broader perspective, as the programme is planning to do.
- To recruit candidates for the senior lecturers' vacancies, taking the gender balance for senior staff into account.
- To encourage students to go abroad.
- To set the proportion of group examination products within courses at a maximum to curb free-riding effects.
- To support examiners in applying the Bachelor thesis assessment procedures.
- To calibrate theses' assessments by scheduling, for instance, regular assessments of Bachelor theses by external experts.
- To adopt more standardised or more strict formats for the Bachelor theses, especially with regard to the abstract.
- To monitor the communication science contents of the Bachelor theses.