

ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT

**MASTER'S PROGRAMME**

**POLITICAL SCIENCE**

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

**LEIDEN UNIVERSITY**

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This report was finalised on 18 September 2019



# ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT OF THE MASTER'S PROGRAMME POLITICAL SCIENCE OF LEIDEN UNIVERSITY

This report takes the NVAO's Assessment Framework for Limited Programme Assessments as a starting point (19 December 2014).

## ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE PROGRAMME

### Master's programme Political Science

Name of the programme:	Political Science
CROHO number:	60203
Level of the programme:	master's
Orientation of the programme:	academic
Number of credits:	60 EC
Specialisations or tracks:	Political Science International Organisations
Location(s):	Leiden
Mode(s) of study:	full time
Language of instruction:	English
Expiration of accreditation:	29/03/2020

## ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE INSTITUTION

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

## COMPOSITION OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

The NVAO has approved the composition of the panel on 24 April 2019. The panel that assessed the master's programme Political Science of Leiden University consisted of:

- Prof. M. (Marijke) Breuning, professor in Political Science and Women's and Gender Studies at the Department of Political Science of the University of North Texas (United States) [chair];
- Prof. dr. D. (Dirk) De Bièvre, associate professor in International Politics and International Political Economy, and chair of the Department of Political Science, of Antwerp University (Belgium);
- F. (Felix) Wagner, master's student in Human Geography: Conflict, Territories and Identities at the Radboud University [student member].

The panel was supported by dr. E. (Els) Schröder, who acted as secretary.

## WORKING METHOD OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

### *Panel*

All three panel members involved in the additional assessment of the master's programme Political Science were members of the original assessment panel that reviewed the programme in May 2017. Prof. dr. M. Breuning (chair) and Prof. dr. D. De Bièvre also reviewed the programme's Plan of Improvement, as received by NVAO in February 2018.



### *Preparation*

The programme prepared a status report in the form of a self-evaluation report (*Critical reflection on plan of improvement, 24 May 2019*), which was made available to the panel members and secretary in preparation for the site visit. Prior to the site visit, the panel studied the self-evaluation report, several supporting documents and a sample of assessment forms for sixteen final works. This sample was selected from a list of all graduates from the academic year 2018-2019. The panel carefully selected these forms, to ensure that all specialisations and also two internship reports were represented. The student member of the panel had access to these forms as second reader to include a student's perspective on the transparency and use of these forms. The panel members circulated their provisional findings on the self-evaluation report and other materials, sharing these with the panel secretary.

### *Additional site visit*

An additional site visit took place on 25 June 2019 in Leiden in order to verify preliminary findings. At the start of the site visit, the panel discussed its initial findings on the self-evaluation report and assessment forms, as well as the division of tasks during the site visit. The panel used the final part of the site visit to discuss its findings in an internal meeting. Afterwards, the panel chair publicly presented the panel's preliminary findings and general observations.

During the site visit, the panel studied additional materials about the programme as well as minutes from meetings of the Programme Committee and the Board of Examiners. An overview of these materials can be found in Appendix 3. The panel conducted interviews with representatives of the programmes: students and staff members, the programme's management, alumni and representatives of the Board of Examiners.

### *Report*

After the site visit, the secretary wrote a draft report based on the panel's findings and submitted it for peer assessment. Subsequently, the secretary sent the report to the panel. After processing the panel members' feedback, the secretary sent the draft reports to the faculty in order to have these checked for factual irregularities. The secretary discussed the ensuing comments with the panel's chair and changes were implemented accordingly. The report was then finalised and sent to the Faculty of Social Sciences and University Board.

### *Definition of judgements standards*

In accordance with the NVAO's Assessment framework for limited programme assessments, the panel used the following definitions for the assessment of both the standards and the programme as a whole.

#### **Generic quality**

The quality that, in an international perspective, may reasonably be expected from a higher education Associate Degree, Bachelor's or Master's programme.

#### **Unsatisfactory**

The programme does not meet the generic quality standard and shows shortcomings with respect to multiple aspects of the standard.

#### **Satisfactory**

The programme meets the generic quality standard across its entire spectrum.

#### **Good**

The programme systematically surpasses the generic quality standard.

#### **Excellent**

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



## SUMMARY JUDGEMENT

The original visit of the assessment panel Political Science to the Faculty of Social Sciences of Leiden University took place on 15-16 May 2017. During this site visit the panel assessed Standard 2 of the master's programme Political Science as 'unsatisfactory'. In addition, it offered some points of improvement regarding Standard 3. Nevertheless, it recognised that the programme was in flux and emphasised in its assessment report that it considered the master's programme as a whole of a sufficient standard for a positive assessment.

This additional assessment only reassesses Standard 2 ('Teaching-learning environment') based on the thematic categories identified in the Plan of Improvement. They concern: the redesign of the programme; strengthening management and quality control; and changes in admission requirements. The panel also revisited its own advice regarding the Plan of Improvement, namely the need to monitor staff members' workload and the effects of changes in the teaching-learning environment on both annual cohorts (one starting in September and the other in February). Standard 3 ('Assessment') was already assessed as 'satisfactory' in the panel report and is therefore not reassessed here. The panel, however, acknowledges that the master's programme Political Science worked hard to address the critical notes regarding Standard 3 in the improvement period granted by NVAO. Hence, it addresses its findings and considerations concerning improvements for Standard 3 based on the Plan of Improvement.

The panel encountered several examples that indicated a significant improvement of the programme and its quality culture. The programme truly embraced change and improvement. The redesigned curriculum and six specialisations now create coherence and structure. The teaching-learning environment now benefits from a strong curriculum design with an impressive variety of high-quality courses that allow for both diversification and in-depth specialisation. Changes to the management structure and increased communication and consultation positively affected the teaching-learning environment, which is now fruitful, engaging and challenging. New programme elements, such as the SPOC course and redesigned course on methodology and academic practice, look promising and are thoughtfully designed. Students are well supported by a well-qualified and committed staff, which is dedicated to further improvements to the programme and supported by its management to do so. A good guidance and support system is in place, allowing students to benefit from all available options on offer and to make the most of their studies. The panel therefore considers the programme's teaching-learning environment as challenging and engaging, and considers its quality now as impressive and high, surpassing the level that may be expected.

A culture of improvement is now tangible at all levels. The panel was impressed by the way in which staff members were fully on board with all changes and was pleased to hear that they will also be rewarded for their hard work with teaching waivers in the coming two years. The panel also verified that its trust in the Programme Board and the Board of Examiners in 2017 to act upon recommendations concerning necessary improvements was fully justified. Since its original site visit, a comprehensive assessment plan and assessment matrices were drafted, evaluated and implemented. Procedures are now in place to safeguard the independence of the second reader in thesis assessment, and a learning curve towards the correct use of assessment forms has been established, allowing for exchange between instructors and the assessment specialist. Importantly, the remit and resources of the Board of Examiners have been increased. These changes supported the Board in tightening up its grip on thesis assessment procedures and opened up time for consultation amongst the various staff members within the programme and for evaluation of the newly introduced quality assurance mechanisms. The panel encountered several examples testifying to an increased professional and positive quality assessment culture in the master's programme. It considers the redesigned thesis assessment form as examples of best practice in the way in which it offers transparency to students and external agents.

Based on the information provided in the self-evaluation report on the Plan of Improvement, the documents provided, the assessment forms studied and the information provided by interview



partners during the additional site visit, the panel established that the master's programme Political Science addressed the suggestions and recommendations in the panel report of September 2017 regarding Standard 2 and Standard 3, and in many aspects went beyond what may have been expected. The programme met its own goals and targets as outlined in the Plan of Improvement of February 2018 and created a thriving programme with a stimulating, engaging and high-quality teaching-learning environment for its students. In acknowledgement of the hard work of staff members and management and supported by the evidence collected during this additional assessment, the panel concluded that the master's programme Political Science surpassed all the panel expectations and the level and quality that may be expected for such a programme. Therefore, the programme assessed the improved teaching-learning environment as being of good quality.

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

*Master's programme Political Science*

Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes	satisfactory
Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment	good
Standard 3: Student assessment	satisfactory
Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes	satisfactory
General conclusion	satisfactory

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

Date: 18 September 2019





# CONTEXT ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT MASTER'S PROGRAMME POLITICAL SCIENCE OF LEIDEN UNIVERSITY

## *Site visit (May 2017)*

The visit of the assessment panel Political Science to the Faculty of Social Sciences of Leiden University took place on 15-16 May 2017. During this site visit the panel assessed Standard 2 of the master's programme Political Science as 'unsatisfactory'. In addition, it offered some points of improvement regarding Standard 3. Nevertheless, it recognised that the programme was in flux and emphasised in its assessment report that it considered the master's programme as a whole of a sufficient standard for a positive assessment.

## *Panel report (September 2017)*

In its assessment report, dated 25 September 2017, the panel emphasised the following: 'The Programme Board and its staff have recognised the need for change: the lack of a clear profile and specialisation options are the main reasons for the planned changes within the programme. As of September 2017, Leiden University will offer six Political Science specialisations, which will hopefully also result in more coherence in the curriculum design. The upcoming programme overhaul will thus have a major impact on the existing teaching-learning environment. As the current individual courses are in general of the appropriate level and as the teaching staff is dedicated to their research and students, the panel trusts the programme to implement the necessary changes and address the observed areas of concern in the current curriculum design and interaction with students. It therefore feels that the concerns raised about the current teaching-learning environment need to be taken seriously by the management, but that these concerns do not have to reflect on its overall assessment of the quality of the programme as a whole. Based on the decision rules as formulated by the NVAO, the panel assessed the master's programme Political Science in Leiden as 'satisfactory'.'

## *NVAO Decision (December 2017)*

On 5 December 2017, NVAO rejected by letter Leiden University's request for re-accreditation of its master's programme Political Science as received on 31 October 2017. This rejection was based on the negative assessment of Standard 2 ('Teaching-learning environment') and the points of improvement regarding Standard 3 ('Assessment') raised by the panel. NVAO asked the programme to prepare a Plan of Improvement, addressing both Standard 2 and the points of improvement raised by the panel for Standard 3.

## *Plan of Improvement and panel advice (February 2018)*

NVAO received a detailed Plan of Improvement on 6 February 2018. The Plan of Improvement listed improvement towards Standard 2 as well as Standard 3. It was structured by grouping the measures into thematic categories. They concerned:

1. the redesign of the programme;
2. strengthening management and quality control;
3. changes in admission requirements;
4. development of a comprehensive assessment plan;
5. changes to the thesis assessment process.

A positive panel advice, dated 29 January 2018, regarding the suggested changes and improvements was added to this Plan of Improvement. The advice applauded the management for the detailed nature of the plan, which showed both the steps already taken as well as clear timelines for planned improvements. The panel raised two additional points for the management's continuous attention in the following years: monitoring the workload of staff members who have to adjust to teaching at two locations, and paying close attention to the fact that the teaching-learning environment should be satisfactory for both annual cohorts (one starting in September and the other starting in February).

The panel concluded that it was confident that the suggested measures could result in a positive assessment of the programme's teaching-learning environment (Standard 2) within a period of two



years. Additionally, it stressed in its accompanying letter that it was pleased that its suggestions regarding assessment (Standard 3) had also been taken into account for the continuous improvement of the programme.

*Accreditation Decision (March 2018)*

Based on Leiden University's Plan of Improvement and the panel's positive advice, NVAO granted the master's programme Political Science an improvement period. Its accreditation decision asked for an additional assessment report by 29 March 2020:

*"Op basis van het herstelplan en het positieve advies van het panel daarover besluit de NVAO tot toepassing van het bepaalde in artikel 5a.12a van de WHW (herstelperiode). Naar het oordeel van de NVAO is met het herstelplan en het positieve oordeel van het panel daarover voldoende aannemelijk gemaakt dat de opleiding binnen de termijn van twee jaar alsnog aan het kader zal voldoen. De NVAO leest in het herstelplan dat de opleiding is gestart met activiteiten die de kwaliteit van de opleiding verbeteren. De NVAO onderschrijft het advies van het panel in reactie op het herstelplan."*

# DESCRIPTION OF STANDARDS 2 AND 3 FROM THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK FOR LIMITED FRAMEWORK ASSESSMENTS

## Introduction

This additional assessment only reassesses Standard 2 ('Teaching-learning environment') based on the thematic categories identified in the Plan of Improvement. They concern: the redesign of the programme; strengthening management and quality control; and changes in admission requirements. The panel also revisited its own advice regarding the Plan of Improvement, namely the need to monitor staff members' workload and the effects of changes in the teaching-learning environment on both annual cohorts (one starting in September and the other in February). Its findings regarding these topics are included as part of the panel assessment of Standard 2.

Standard 3 ('Assessment') was already assessed as 'satisfactory' in the panel report and is therefore not reassessed here; the panel will only confirm its original assessment. It acknowledges that the master's programme Political Science worked hard to address the critical notes regarding Standard 3 in the improvement period granted by NVAO. Hence, it addresses its findings and considerations concerning improvements for Standard 3 based on the following thematic categories of the Plan of Improvement: the development of a comprehensive assessment plan and changes to the thesis assessment process. In addition, the way in which the Board of Examiners strengthened its role and visibility in quality assurance will be briefly addressed, along with the changes to the quality culture at the master's programme.

### **Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment**

The curriculum, staff and programme-specific services and facilities enable the incoming students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

### **Findings and considerations panel 2017**

The panel encountered a master's programme on the eve of change in May 2017. Over the years leading up to the assessment of 2017, the programme had been searching for its place within the Dutch academic landscape. It experimented with a broad curriculum and introduced a stronger focus on professional skills and job orientation. The implementation of an internship seminar was viewed by the panel as one of its assets. The one-year master's programme consisted of two tracks: 'Political Science' (PS) and 'International Organisation' (IO). The two specialisations shared general learning objectives and a common core course, 'Conflict and Cooperation', as well as a joint skills course. In addition to the two mandatory courses, students had a free choice of elective seminars, allowing them to create their own profile and focus of study. To complete their master's programme, they could opt for a thesis seminar or an internship.

Changes were already afoot in 2017: a new programme with six specialisations was foreseen, replacing the current programme with two specialisations. Although the panel was positive about the content of the individual courses of the current programme, it shared the view of the management, staff, students and alumni that change was needed: the programme and curriculum design lacked coherence and a clear profile. It concluded from student and alumni testimonies that the lack of coherence had negatively affected the teaching-learning environment. In addition, the academic year 2015-2016 seemed to have been a particularly difficult one for the master's programme: the absence of core staff members negatively influenced the students' experiences and seemed to have resulted in a communication breakdown between the students and staff members of the programme. The panel established that the Programme Committee ('*Opleidingscommissie*') could be strengthened within the programme.

The panel concluded that the quality of the staff members was good: students and alumni spoke with enthusiasm about the expertise and teaching abilities of their instructors as well as their motivation, dedication and accessibility. Because of enrolment and staffing issues, the students of the academic



year 2015-2016 were confronted with an increased group size, the cancellation of seminars and a reduction of thesis theme seminars. This situation did not meet their previously held expectations of a programme that prides itself on flexibility and freedom of choice. The panel thought that other solutions should be offered for the problems encountered, as the implemented solutions compromised the coherence and effectiveness of the teaching-learning environment.

In addition, the quality of the programme was also affected by the significant differences in the varied entry levels of the student intake. The panel concluded that some students were left to struggle with their academic skills, methodological approaches and/or language skills. It advised the management and staff to consider implementing a new admission strategy and to offer better support during the programme to ensure that all students would be able to meet the programme's intended learning outcomes.

## **Findings panel 2019**

### *Programme redesign*

By 2019, the new programme with six specialisations had been introduced. These six specialisations are offered at two locations. In Leiden, four specialisations are to be found: Political Legitimacy and Justice (PLJ), Parties, Parliaments and Democracy (PPD), Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict and Development (NECD) and International Politics (IP). In The Hague, two specialisations are offered: Dutch Politics (NP) and International Organisation (IO).

The six specialisations share a similar cumulative structure, starting with two shared mandatory courses ('Great Debates in Political Science' and 'Advanced Academic and Professional Skills') and a dedicated core seminar for each specialisation. Students deepen their substantive knowledge through additional courses, culminating in a thesis written within a specialisation-specific thesis seminar. All students may opt to combine their thesis with an internship. In Leiden, students take electives for their pre-thesis coursework, while in The Hague students follow more policy-oriented seminars on policy-making and policy evaluation.

To further strengthen the coherence of the specialisations, the Programme Board decided to earmark elective courses for the specialisations and streamline the offering of core seminars, electives and thesis seminars. Earmarking helps students in creating a focused programme, while simultaneously allowing for freedom of choice. In addition, the programme also intensified contact and advice on the available choices. The Director of Studies now explicitly briefs study advisors and instructors on the way in which students can combine electives to prepare for thesis writing. In addition, the Director of Studies meets on several occasions with students to provide information on combining courses within the programme along with offering an open office hour to all students for questions regarding planning, scheduling and combining courses within the curriculum.

The panel studied the structure, coherence and set-up of all six specialisations and is enthusiastic about this new organisation of the programme. The structure allows for both in-depth research and knowledge acquisition within a specific field and gives students a good overview of theories related to the broader field of Political Science. Earmarking is highly appreciated by the panel. The redesigned programme is also very attractive to prospective students: enrolment numbers increased from 49 students in 2016-2017 to 129 students in 2018-2019. More significantly, the increased popularity of the programme did not affect student satisfaction during the last two years. The panel studied course evaluations that were positive in general. During its additional site visit, it also spoke to students who were very satisfied with the quality of the courses on offer.

Naturally, the panel came across some examples of teething problems within certain courses and/or specialisations as may be expected from such a new curriculum. But from conversations with students, staff members and the management, it was clear that these initial problems were already being addressed by the management, both during the academic year and within the overall programme design, to general student and staff satisfaction. During the site visit, the panel also

encountered clear evidence of the increased and more active role of the Programme Committee ('*Opleidingscommissie*') in streamlining and heading these structural changes, both in written records studied during the site visit and as expressed by student and staff members during the additional site visit.

An example of direct action within a cohort could be found in the Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict and Development specialisation. The students noted that no dedicated thesis seminars were offered addressing Development; this omission was quickly amended by the Programme Board, who directly created an additional thesis seminar on this aspect. A structural change as the result of student feedback involved the relocation of the Dutch Politics specialisation. At the time of the additional site visit, this specialisation was still offered in The Hague. From September 2019, however, Dutch Politics moves to Leiden as a result of student and staff feedback and after consultation with the Programme Committee. The move will allow for a wider variety of course options and more specialisation-oriented electives for those students and will also focus the remaining specialisation in The Hague, International Organisation, in a more concise way by offering a more directed focus on relevant practices, methods and theories for this particular specialisation.

The new course design was further strengthened by the introduction of coordination meetings along with a mechanism of instructors' peer support. In addition, a database with all course syllabi and programme components was developed, which is actively maintained and updated. These new initiatives allow individual instructors to interact and learn from each other, building on existing course information and teaching methods. The results were impressive, according to the panel. Instructors now have direct access to examples of best practices with respect to teaching, resulting in an accumulation of expertise. This was also demonstrated during the site visit. Instructors offered illustrations from their daily practice, which showed that they are very aware of each other's course content, the expertise conveyed and the skills being trained across the programme. Frequent meetings also resulted in more consistently shared knowledge about the welfare and progress of individual students over all six specialisations.

The panel considered the adopted strategy as exemplary and was also very pleased to note that the instructors had really been convinced of the advantages of this increased level of coordination and sharing, overcoming initial reservations that they freely admitted having had at the start of the new approach. During the site visit, staff members were strongly committed and gave several examples of increased communication resulting in positive programme changes. The panel noted a clear 'group spirit' and dedication amongst staff members and was struck by this improvement-oriented atmosphere. This change in attitude is considered a strong accomplishment of the new programme design by both staff members and the panel. It clearly demonstrates the considerable progress made by the programme, for which the panel wants to commend both the Programme Board and its staff.

- P.15, paragraph on 'February cohort'. The 7<sup>th</sup> sentence of this paragraph states that February students start 'their thesis or internship straight away'. This seems to imply that these students work on their thesis in their first semester of the programme, whereas they write the thesis in the last block of their programme, same as the September cohort.

#### *February cohort*

The February cohort increased in the last two years from 16 students in 2016-2017 to 37 students in 2017-2018. These increased numbers resulted in better cohort-building, as students testified during the additional site visit. Nevertheless, offering six specialisations continues to require relentless and efficient planning as all involved attested. Students of the February cohort still share core courses with September students. As a result, February students need to make a head start in their specialisation with dedicated and specialised course work straight away while preparing themselves for starting their thesis or internship in the second semester. This situation demands a clear idea from February students what they are aiming for and a notion of a thesis interest or subject. The Programme Board and students of the February cohort both confirm that this set-up, in



which they take the core courses that support their research skills at a later stage, is not ideal. Nevertheless, they agree on the necessity of this set-up to allow the option of a February start.

According to the panel, sufficient advice and support with decisions during the year are key to making a February start successful. February students mentioned that advice regarding enrolment in the February cohort was consistent and very good. They were briefed in advance of enrolment about the set-up of the February programme by study advisors and were well aware, as a result, of the fact that they needed to swiftly make up their mind regarding their thesis topic and programme planning. February students felt that communication during the course regarding choices and electives helped them to succeed sufficiently within their cohort. Without hesitation, they considered the February programme feasible within a year due to the support offered by the programme. These testimonies thus addressed the earlier panel's concerns regarding the February cohort. In its view, the teaching-learning environment for February students, albeit slightly less streamlined, is not compromised by its alternative programming.

#### *Strengthening management and quality control*

The programme management took several steps to bolster the coherence and quality of the programme. The small-scale nature of the master's courses has been maintained and remains guaranteed by enforcing caps on course size and by hiring new staff members. As the programme grew further between 2017-2019, the enrolment numbers have resulted in the creation of many new courses and seminars and led to the hiring of new instructors. Both students and staff are very positive about the resulting diversification of the programme and the new research lines added to the Institute of Political Science.

Course work on average allows for a maximum of twenty students, with an average of twelve to fourteen students over the last two years, while thesis seminars are now structurally capped at twelve participants. During the additional site visit, students confirmed that classes have remained small and that suitable solutions were sought when certain courses were oversubscribed. This has retained small-scale teaching, usually through the introduction of a shadow course or an alternative course on the same topic or field. Courses were no longer simply cancelled. The students mentioned to the panel that sometimes small student groups were combined in such a way that original topics and interests were sufficiently covered by bridging expertise, resulting in highly interesting courses and seminars. The panel is pleased to note this inventive and flexible approach of the programme regarding its small-scale setting and compliments it on the progress made.

The panel came across several examples of good management by the Programme Board concerning ad hoc replacements of staff members, reactions to student complaints, tailored solutions to variations in enrolment numbers, and successful consultation sessions resulting in structural programme change. Staff members in coordinating roles and members of the various dedicated committees, such as the Board of Examiners and Programme Committee, praised the Programme Board for its dedication and vision. During the site visit, students indicated that they felt comfortable to approach staff members and the members of the Programme Board. The Director of Studies also introduced a weekly office hour for students and staff members and made it a point of honour to attend all introduction sessions and special occasions of all specialisations at both locations. According to the panel, these initiatives have increased the visibility and accessibility of the programme management considerably.

The panel also specifically valued the Programme Board's efforts to be visible and approachable for staff members and students at both locations of the master's programme. In addition to teaching staff, the teaching coordinator, the institute manager and a member of the Institute Board are all present in The Hague at least one day a week. Regular staff and coordination meetings help to sustain communication and exchange. The panel approves of the Programme Board's underlying view that to ensure consistency and transparency within the programme, both locations need to be served by one Board rather than by separate boards. It was also pleased to hear that student-specific facilities, such as access to study advisors, were designed in a location-specific way.



As mentioned above, the Programme Committee is now more visible within the programme's quality control circle and actively maintains contact with the Programme Board. Although succession of student members is a challenge within a one-year programme, the Programme Committee recently decided to make the most of its double intake in September and February. By structurally appointing student members from both cohorts, natural succession will be guaranteed within the Programme Committee. Additionally, the Programme Committee increased their level of documentation of past practices and actions, and student and staff members invested in their visibility as representatives for the respective groups. Members of the Programme Committee confirmed to the panel during the additional site visit that they feel heard by the Programme Board and are taken seriously by their fellow students and colleagues. The Board of Examiners also made headway in this respect, as will be explored in further detail under Standard 3 below.

#### *Monitoring of staff members' workload*

Recently, measures were introduced to manage the staff members' workload, as this was one of the panel's additional recommendations in the September 2017 report. After asking for a heavy staff investment in the last couple of years to set up the new programme and investing in the quality control of the teaching programme, the panel learned that everyone teaching in the Institute has been provided with a teaching waiver of one course for the academic years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. The panel is pleased that staff members will be rewarded for their efforts and considers this waiver necessary and apt, especially considering the progress made in the last two years.

#### *Changes in admission requirements*

The management introduced several initiatives to address the problem regarding the variation in students' entry levels and the methodological deficiencies amongst students as noted by the panel in the 2017 report. First of all, the master's programme adjusted the admission criteria. English proficiency levels are now clearly defined according to Dutch law. Additional courses in English were introduced in the bachelor's programme Political Science of Leiden University. These new courses allow Leiden bachelor students to practise their English at an early stage within their education, creating a smoother transition into the master's programme.

As part of the selection criteria, applicants for the master's programme must demonstrate competency in Social Science Research Methodology. Students who do not meet this admission requirement are currently required to take a conversion course 'Research Design and Measurement in the Social Sciences' in their first block of the semester. The original panel advice focused on this conversion course and its design, wondering whether a premaster's programme would not be a better alternative instead of following a course on top of the already intensive master's programme. During the last two years, Leiden University focused its efforts on designing a dedicated Small Private Online Course (SPOC), focusing on academic writing skills, research design and methodologies. This SPOC will replace the conversion course as of August 2019.

The panel discussed this new course extensively during the additional site visit with those responsible for its design and implementation. The SPOC will feature three notable advantages over the old conversion course. First, it can be completed before the start of the master's programme, while also allowing for some flexibility in the system – as Dutch law requires programmes to still allow students to enrol by August 31. Secondly, the SPOC can also be used to prepare students for enrolment. It is a means through which they can compensate for deficiencies in research methodology throughout the year, introducing some flexibility regarding the moment at which (prospective) students take the SPOC. The old conversion course, in contrast, was confined to two specific moments in time to match the start date of the two annual cohorts. And finally, the SPOC can be used by any student in the programme as a refresher course in its entirety or as separate modules. Students with methodological deficiencies will be required to have successfully completed the SPOC by the start of October (September cohort) or March (February cohort). In this way, deficiencies should be alleviated more concisely and more structurally, addressing the noticed variations in student entry levels at a



quicker rate while simultaneously supporting students who struggle with certain aspects of the academic nature of their master's programme.

The opportunities of this new initiative are impressive and the panel wishes to praise the programme committee for this new initiative. The course is based on best practice examples of similar courses, while also being radically redesigned and tailored towards the master's programme Political Science. It was thoughtfully designed by an especially dedicated and clearly committed team of instructors with vast expertise in methodology training and academic writing skills. The SPOC course coordinator will carefully implement and guide the first cohort of SPOC students, who will be taking the course for the first time this summer in August 2019. Along with the personalised setting of the digital environment of the SPOC, the course coordinator will organise sessions to share experiences, address specific issues and evaluate the new design. In other words, the course has been carefully designed, but the instructors also plan to use feedback for further improvement.

In addition to these changes, the programme also evaluated the methodology training provided in the master's programme as a whole. The management decided to redesign the existing methodology course 'Advanced Academic and Professional Skills'. A new course 'Political Science Methods' will be introduced in 2019-2020 after careful evaluation and reflection, incorporating all student feedback and staff members' experiences of the past few years. The new course aims to equip students better for selecting a methodology for their final research projects and allows them to practise these methods. The panel noted that the new course design also allows for several joint meetings on methods and research, differentiating between qualitative and quantitative research methods. The new methods course has been designed in close cooperation with the SPOC development team to ensure that both elements work in unison and give students a solid basis and all required methodological expertise and necessary research skills.

As neither the SPOC nor the new methodology course had been run yet at the time of the additional site visit, the panel cannot reflect on their respective success. Nevertheless, it is enthusiastic about the potential and set-up of both initiatives and praises the programme for the sustainable nature of the solutions sought and the creative and considerate manner adopted in tackling the earlier panel's concerns. The programme took a directive approach with full ownership of both the problem and its solutions. According to the panel, this inventive and directive approach oozes confidence. It inspires trust in the panel for the adopted strategies and improvements, in particular as staff members are fully committed and see these adaptations to the programme as an opportunity for continuous improvement. The panel is confident that these new programme elements will enhance the quality of the programme and address the earlier noted variations in students' entry levels. The panel is specifically pleased with the academic staff's orientation towards improvement of courses and programme.

### **Considerations panel 2019**

Based on the information provided in the self-evaluation report and its additional site visit, the panel verified that the staff members of the master's programme Political Science at Leiden University worked very hard to address the panel's concerns raised in 2017. The already envisaged curriculum overhaul introducing six specialisations did indeed provide the desired structure to the programme. In addition and more importantly, the Programme Board introduced many measures that give students good guidance for planning and scheduling their studies, resulting in coherence. Many examples of improvement-oriented curriculum change were also encountered by the panel, at both the course level and specialisation design. This resulted in confidence and ownership among staff members, offering a good basis for trust in the programme and its management. The panel concluded that the practice of earmarking is very successful as it gives students guidelines for a logical study progression while allowing for maximal freedom of choice. Increased support and advice now prepare and support the February cohort in a sufficient manner, leading to an enriching study experience which is feasible within the set course period of one year.

The new curriculum design is also successful: enrolment numbers have increased considerably over the last two years, resulting in diversification and variety in course availability and allowing for the hiring of new staff members, adding to the already diverse and well-qualified team of instructors. The panel noted a clear 'group spirit' and dedication amongst staff members and was struck by this improvement-oriented atmosphere. This change in attitude is considered a strong accomplishment of the new programme design by both staff members and the panel. It clearly demonstrates the considerable progress made by the programme, for which the panel wants to commend both the Programme Board and its staff. The panel was also pleased to learn that staff members are being rewarded for their investments in the programme over the last couple of years and that their teaching workload will be reduced in the coming two years to allow for research time.

The changes at the managerial level, which support faculty and students alike, are impressive. The panel praises the Programme Board, Director of Studies, Programme Committee, support staff and faculty on the demonstrated flexibility and willingness to embrace change. It came across several examples of good management with ad hoc replacements of staff members, reactions to student complaints, tailored solutions to variations in enrolment numbers, and successful consultation sessions resulting in structural programme change which all resulted in very positive changes to the teaching-learning environment. In its view, the communication breakdown noted in the report of September 2017 was more than amply addressed, and communication between students, staff and management has been fully restored and can now be seen as good. The students and staff members praise the accessibility and visibility of the programme management. The various boards involved in quality control now take a clear and more directive approach, and actively drive further improvement within the programme.

The panel is enthusiastic about the programme's initiatives to address the concerns regarding the varied levels of the student intake. The programme introduced new admission guidelines, and opportunities are now offered at the bachelor's level to prepare prospective students for the English-taught teaching-learning environment of the master's programme. The redesign of the methodological course and the newly set-up SPOC sound promising. The panel praises the programme for the sustainable nature of the solutions sought and the creative and directive approach adopted while also taking full ownership of both the problem and its solutions.

In conclusion, the panel was reassured that the academic year 2015-2016 had been a particularly difficult year for the master's programme and that the measures taken since then, combined with the thoughtful and well-planned curriculum overhaul, have resulted in impressive change and notable and considerable improvement in the teaching-learning environment of the master's programme Political Science. The teaching-learning environment now benefits from a good curriculum design with an impressive variety of high-quality courses that allow for both diversification and in-depth specialisation. Students are well-supported by a good, qualified and committed staff, which is dedicated to further improvements to the programme and supported by its management to do so. A good guidance and support system is in place, allowing students to benefit from all available options on offer and making the most of their studies. The panel therefore considers the programme's teaching-learning environment as challenging and engaging, and considers its quality now as impressive and high.

## **Conclusion**

*Master's programme Political Science: the panel assesses Standard 2 as 'good'.*

### **Standard 3: Assessment**

The programme has an adequate assessment system in place.

## **Findings and considerations 2017**

The master's programme has improved its system of assessment since the last accreditation, e.g. it assigned an external member as well as a permanent secretary to the Board of Examiners and



improved the thesis evaluation forms. The panel recognised and appreciated these improvements in 2017, which inspired trust in the professionalism of the Board and the way in which it fulfils and shapes its tasks in quality assurance within the programme. The progress made and the closer grip on quality assurance as demonstrated with the Board were instrumental in the assessment of Standard 3 being 'satisfactory'.

Nevertheless, the panel also suggested areas of improvement. It concluded that a variety of assessment strategies in line with assessment at the master's level was in place at the programme, reflecting the intended learning outcomes. However, it was not clear to the panel how the various types of assessments within courses contributed to the final grade. More importantly, the learning objectives for each course were not always clearly outlined, and as a result no visible connection existed between the learning objectives of a course and the intended learning outcomes of the programme. The panel therefore recommended the implementation of an assessment plan to develop the programme's assessment policy further. It established that closer supervision of the use of evaluation forms was needed to increase the transparency of grading for students. Students were positive about the informal feedback received, but a more formalised feedback procedure may result in a more consistent overview of assessment strategies within the department and thus strengthen the existing assessment practices.

## **Findings 2019**

### *Board of Examiners*

The Board of Examiners has been strengthened in many ways in the period since 2017. Its membership was increased from three to five members in January 2018, and a second external member was appointed in April 2019, who broadens the Board's remit to an even more independent quality control of the thesis assessment. Roles within the Board have been assigned, allowing for specialisation and task-oriented approaches to specific functions (such as addressing fraud cases, handling complaints, involvement in the design of test matrices, etc.). Board members were allocated more time for their tasks in quality control and assessment design. These changes created a platform for change and improvement: with the improved task definition and designated time allowance, the Board of Examiners was able to take a more directive and proactive approach to quality control. In particular, it developed a comprehensive assessment plan and assessment matrices for the master's programme together with the Programme Board and in consultation with instructors and the Programme Committee. Additionally, it revised the existing assessment form and introduced changes to the thesis assessment procedures, taking the feedback and evaluations of all relevant bodies and those concerned into account.

### *Development of a comprehensive assessment plan*

During the academic year 2017-2018, a comprehensive assessment plan for the master's programme was introduced based on an overview of the various programme components of the newly introduced curriculum. The panel studied the comprehensive assessment plan and noted that the learning goals for each course were now clearly specified and linked to the methods of assessment, providing a clear relation between the course objectives and the programme's intended learning outcomes. The assessment plan also explains several programme priorities. They include a balanced mix of forms of assessment and guidelines for safeguarding the master's level of the requirements. Also incorporated in these priorities is a preference for forms of assessment that are carried out individually, acknowledge the value of active participation, and allow students to demonstrate both theoretical knowledge and academic skills.

In addition to the assessment plan, assessment matrices for the master's programme were finalised in early 2019. After a first test run of using these matrices in the academic year 2019-2020, they will be evaluated and adapted, if necessary, based on instructors' and students' feedback. The panel approves of this practice, which demonstrates awareness of the need for continuous development and improvement of assessment practices. It was also informed during the additional site visit that both the Programme Board and Board of Examiners are committed to maintaining the integrity of

the assessment plan and matrices by instructing new members of staff to design new courses based on guidelines adopted in the comprehensive assessment plan. The comprehensive assessment plan will be revisited and updated annually. Recently hired staff members confirmed these practices when speaking to the panel.

#### *Changes to the thesis assessment process*

The thesis assessment process has benefited from a complete redesign since 2017. To ensure the independence of the second readers, they are now independently selected by the Director of Studies, taking into consideration subject and language expertise, before being appointed by the Board of Examiners. The Director of Studies ensures that all staff members are assigned an equal quantity of second readerships and that no fixed pairs of assessors are introduced, and s/he monitors the staff members' workload. The panel approves of these procedures, which strengthen the independence of the second readers. It also noted that the newly introduced thesis forms allow for a clearly independent, visible and transparent role of the second readers.

A new thesis assessment form was introduced in November 2017, which was revised based on evaluations of the form by the thesis coordinators, Programme Committee, Institute Council and Programme Board. The panel closely studied the most recent variant of the thesis assessment and the assessment forms of sixteen final projects (including the forms for the internship project) for the period 2017-2019. The current variant comprises three forms: two forms are filled out independently by two readers, while the third form combines their feedback and proposes insight into the final grading. Students receive all three forms for maximal transparency.

The panel considers the current thesis assessment form an example of best practice. It noted that the third form often repeated some of the feedback on the individual forms of two readers; this is considered unnecessary by the panel and results in too much work for the readers. It suggests considering the third form as purely giving insight into the process of assessment: the third form should clearly reflect the reasoning for the final grade, i.e. it should indicate how the two readers reconciled any difference between the grades awarded independently. As the student receives all three forms, the independent readers' feedback is clear from the first two forms and does not need to be repeated for transparency's sake. This suggestion to reduce the workload for assessors was received in good spirit by the Board of Examiners and the Programme Board, who will take it on board in the next round of evaluations in the use of the new form.

In addition to safeguarding the independence of the second reader, the Board of Examiners tightened its grip on the use of the assessment forms. It now checks all submitted forms, allowing for targeted re-assessment of theses on a regular basis. It also ensures that the forms are filled in appropriately. The Board explained that assessors who did not fill in a form in a transparent manner are now being invited to discuss their practice. This activity ensures a learning curve for those struggling with the new form, allowing for exchange and working together towards improvement of the assessment practices.

#### *Changes in the quality culture*

In the self-evaluation report and supporting documents, a positive change in the attitude towards the importance of quality control was notable. To the panel, it was clear that the programme management had overcome initial reservations regarding the earlier panel's concerns. This positive change was also encountered during the additional site visit, most encouragingly with the faculty. Staff members clearly expressed their support for the introduced changes. They mentioned that some of the changes (such as the comprehensive assessment plan and the new thesis assessment forms) at first seemed to be mostly procedural to them. They were afraid that these measures would add to the existing workload. In practice, however, they experienced how these new procedures and measures resulted in an actual reduction of the workload. In particular, the new assessment form was considered very helpful, cutting down on the time spent on informal evaluation with students while simultaneously allowing for greater transparency and an opportunity for sharing best practices.



The panel heard from the Board of Examiners that the allocated additional time and resources had been badly needed and were well-used. The noted positive changes in the assessment culture had only been possible because of the increase in resources and support offered by the Faculty. Board members could really dedicate time to creating necessary procedures and guidelines and to formal and informal consultation with their fellow staff members. Communication resulted in valuable feedback from the faculty while simultaneously creating a platform of staff support for the required changes. The panel agrees with the Programme Board and the Board of Examiners and compliments the members on the way in which they took the lead in improving the assessment system. It also wants to stress that the Board's task is not finished; as the example of the new thesis assessment forms exemplify, investment in quality control is worth both the resources and the manpower needed to drive further change and pays for itself. Hence, it is crucial that the allocated resources and support offered to the programme in the last two years stay in place to invest further in the programme's quality culture.

### **Considerations 2019**

The panel verified that its trust in the Programme Board and the Board of Examiners in 2017 to act upon recommendations concerning necessary improvements was fully justified. Since its original site visit, a comprehensive assessment plan and assessment matrices were drafted, evaluated and implemented. Procedures are now in place to safeguard the independence of the second reader in thesis assessment, and a learning curve towards the correct use of assessment forms has been established, allowing for exchange between instructors and the assessment specialist. Importantly, the remit and resources of the Board of Examiners have been increased. These changes supported the Board in tightening up its grip on thesis assessment procedures and opened up time for consultation amongst the various staff members within the programme and for evaluation of the newly introduced quality assurance mechanisms.

The panel encountered several examples testifying to an increased professional and positive quality assessment culture in the master's programme. It considers the redesigned thesis assessment form as an example of best practice in the way in which it offers transparency to students and external agents. In addition, the positive change in attitude towards the benefits of assessment procedures is notable. The panel wants to compliment the members of the Programme Board and the Board of Examiners on the way in which they took full control of the necessary steps needed to result in these positive changes. It also wants to stress that the Board's task is not finished. In its view, investment in the quality assurance mechanism pays for itself as exemplified by staff members' reactions to the new thesis assessment forms. Hence, it is crucial that the allocated resources and support offered to the programme stay in place to invest further in the programme's quality culture.

### **Conclusion**

*Master's programme Political Science:* the panel confirms its initial assessment of Standard 3, included in the assessment report dated 27 September 2017, as 'satisfactory'.

## GENERAL CONCLUSION

Based on the information provided in the self-evaluation report on the Plan of Improvement, the documents provided, the assessment forms studied and the information provided by interview partners during the additional site visit, the panel established that the master's programme Political Science addressed the suggestions and recommendations in the panel report of September 2017 regarding Standard 2 and Standard 3. The programme met its own goals and targets as outlined in the Plan of Improvement of February 2018.

Furthermore, the panel encountered several examples that indicated a significant improvement of the programme and its quality culture. The programme embraced change and improvement. The redesigned curriculum and six specialisations create coherence and structure. Changes to the management structure and increased communication and consultation positively affected the teaching-learning environment. New programme elements, such as the SPOC course and redesigned course on methodology and academic practice, look promising and are thoughtfully designed. A culture of improvement is now tangible at all levels. The panel was impressed by the way in which staff members were fully on board with all changes and was pleased to hear that they will also be rewarded for their hard work with teaching waivers in the coming two years. The new assessment plan and matrices are considered of good quality, and the new assessment form is an example of best practice. The panel also praises the Faculty for making available the resources to support the programme with the professionalization of its assessment procedures. These resources and support will continue to be crucial for further improvement. Investment in quality assurance mechanisms has also resulted in workload reduction in certain areas.

The panel upholds its initial assessments of Standards 1, 3 and 4 as 'satisfactory'. It now assesses Standard 2 as 'good'. It judges the overall quality of the programme as 'satisfactory'.

### **Conclusion**

The panel assesses the *master's programme Political Science* as 'satisfactory'.







# APPENDICES



## APPENDIX 1: PROGRAMME ADDITIONAL SITE VISIT

<b>25 juni 2019</b>		
10:15	10:30	Aankomst panel
10:30	11:30	Voorvergadering panel
11:30	12:00	Bestuderen materiaal ter inzage (toetsplan, notulen, jaarverslagen)
12:00	12:30	Gesprek met management (inhoudelijk verantwoordelijken) en studieadviseur
12:30	13:00	Lunch
13:00	13:30	Gesprek met studenten
13:30	14:00	Gesprek met docenten
14:00	14:30	Gesprek met Examencommissie
14:30	15:30	Intern overleg panel + vaststelling voorlopige bevindingen
15:30	15:45	Eindgesprek management (inhoudelijk verantwoordelijken + faculteitsvertegenwoordiging)
15:45	16:00	Mondelinge rapportage (openbaar)





## APPENDIX 2: OVERVIEW OF THE CURRICULUM

### Specialisation International Politics

Programme specialisation International Politics (2018-19, September start)						
Courses	Ects.	Level	Methods of Instruction	Examination	Contact Hours	M/E*
<b>First semester – Core Courses</b>						
Conflict and Cooperation in International Politics	10	500	seminars	Presentation, research outline an paper	28	M
Great Debates in Political Science	5	500	lectures and seminars	Written exam	28	M
Advanced Academic & Professional Skills	5	500	Flip-the-classroom sessions	Short papers, policy paper, and group presentation	28	M
<b>First semester – Electives (students choose one seminar from the list below)</b>						
Applying Game Theory in International Relations	10	500	Seminars	Papers (10)	28	E
European Union: Integration and Disintegration	10	500	Seminars and lectures	Presentation, reaction paper, paper proposal, final paper	28	E
Multiculturalism and Democracy	10	500	Seminars	Participation, small papers (4), presentation, final paper	28	E
States, Citizens and Migrants	10	500	Seminars	Participation, final research paper	28	E
Transnational Politics of Human Rights	10	500	Seminars	Critical review of readings, presentation	28	E
<b>Second semester – Electives (students choose 1 seminar from the list below)</b>						
Political Representation and Parliamentary Politics	10	500	Lectures, discussion, presentations, simulation, peer review	Participation, presentation, papers.	28	E
Contemporary Debates on Justice	10	500	Seminars	Weekly critique on literature, presentations, individual paper, participation	28	E
Crisis Management	10	500	Seminars	Book review, participation, thesis research proposal, thesis	28	E
International Organisations in Times of Rising Nationalism	10	500	Seminars	Participation, final research paper	28	E
Political Communication and Media Effects	10	500	Short lectures, discussion, student presentations	Reaction papers, presentation, final paper, participation	28	E
The Political Economy of Natural Resource-led Development	10	500	Seminars and lectures	Policy brief, essay	28	E
Russia and the world	10	500	Seminars	Participation, presentation, essay, final paper	28	E
<b>Second semester – Mandatory Course</b>						
Thesis Seminar MSc International Politics	20	600	Mixed: (sub) group, individual sessions	Thesis proposal, MSc thesis	**	M
<b>Optional: Internship</b>						
Internship Project Seminar and Thesis MSc Political Science	30	600	seminars	Thesis	28	E
* M: mandatory, E: elective						
** In block 3 bi-weekly sessions, in block 4 contact hours vary according to need of students						



Programme specialisation International Politics (2018-19, February start)						
Courses	Ects.	Level	Methods of Instruction	Examination	Contact Hours	M/E*
<b>First semester – Core Courses</b>						
Great Debates in Political Science	5	500	lectures and seminars	Written exam	28	M
Advanced Academic & Professional Skills	5	500	Flip-the-classroom sessions	Short papers, policy paper, and group presentation	28	M
<b>First semester – Electives (students choose one seminar from the list below)</b>						
Political Representation and Parliamentary Politics	10	500	Lectures, discussion, presentations, simulation, peer review	Participation, presentation, papers.	28	E
Contemporary Debates on Justice	10	500	Seminars	Weekly critique on literature, presentations, individual paper, participation	28	E
Crisis Management	10	500	Seminars	Book review, participation, thesis research proposal, thesis	28	E
International Organisations in Times of Rising Nationalism	10	500	Seminars	Participation, final research paper	28	E
Political Communication and Media Effects	10	500	Short lectures, discussion, student presentations	Reaction papers, presentation, final paper, participation	28	E
The Political Economy of Natural Resource-led Development	10	500	Seminars and lectures	Policy brief, essay	28	E
Russia and the world	10	500	Seminars	Participation, presentation, essay, final paper	28	E
<b>Second semester – Electives (students choose 1 seminar from the list below)</b>						
International Organisations in Times of Rising Nationalism	10	500	Seminars	Participation, final research paper	28	E
Elections and Political Careers	10	500	Seminars	Written work, participation, presentation	28	E
The Making of Modern International Relations	10	500	Seminars	Participation, in-class midterm, research paper	28	E
<b>Second semester – Mandatory Course</b>						
Conflict and Cooperation in International Politics	10	500	seminars	Presentation, research outline an paper	28	M
Thesis Seminar MSc International Politics	20	600	Mixed: (sub) group, individual sessions	Thesis proposal, MSc thesis	**	M
<b>Optional: Internship</b>						
Internship Project Seminar and Thesis MSc Political Science	30	600	seminars	Thesis	28	E
* M: mandatory, E: elective						
** In block 3 bi-weekly sessions, in block 4 contact hours vary according to need of students						

## Specialisation International Organisation

Programme specialisation International Organisation (2018-19, September start)						
Courses	Ects.	Level	Methods of Instruction	Examination	Contact Hours	M/E*
<b>Semester 1</b>						
Dynamics of International Organisation	10	500	Seminars	Participation, weekly assignments, presentation, presentation paper	28	M
Great Debates in Political Science	5	500	Lectures and seminars	Written exam	28	M
Advanced Academic & Professional Skills	5	500	Flip-the-classroom sessions	Short papers, policy paper, and group presentation	28	M
The Politics of Policy-Making: National and International Challenges	10	500	Seminars	Participation, take-home exam	28	M
<b>Semester 2</b>						
Policy Evaluation in National and International Contexts	10	500	Seminars	Papers (2), written exam	28	M
Thesis Seminar MSc International Organisation	20	600	Mixed: (sub) group, individual sessions	Thesis proposal, MSc thesis	**	M
<b>Optional: Internship</b>						
Internship Project Seminar and Thesis MSc Political Science	30	600	seminars	Thesis	28	E
* M: mandatory, E: elective						
** In block 3 bi-weekly sessions, in block 4 contact hours vary according to need of students						

Programme specialisation International Organisation (2018-19, February start)						
Courses	Ects.	Level	Methods of Instruction	Examination	Contact Hours	M/E*
<b>First semester</b>						
Great Debates in Political Science	5	500	Lectures and seminars	Written exam	28	M
The Politics of Policy-Making: National and International Challenges	10	500	Seminars	Participation, take-home exam	28	M
Advanced Academic & Professional Skills	5	500	Flip-the-classroom sessions	Short papers, policy paper, and group presentation	28	M
Policy Evaluation in National and International Contexts	10	500	Seminars	Papers (2), written exam	28	M
<b>Second semester</b>						
Dynamics of International Organisation	10	500	Seminars	Participation, weekly assignments, presentation, presentation paper	28	M
Thesis Seminar MSc International Organisation	20	600	Mixed: (sub) group, individual sessions	Thesis proposal, MSc thesis	**	M
<b>Optional: Internship</b>						
Internship Project Seminar and Thesis MSc Political Science	30	600	seminars	Thesis	28	E
* M: mandatory, E: elective						
** In block 3 bi-weekly sessions, in block 4 contact hours vary according to need of students						



Programme specialisation International Organisation (2018-19, September start)						
Courses	Ects.	Level	Methods of Instruction	Examination	Contact Hours	M/E*
<b>Semester 1</b>						
Dynamics of International Organisation	10	500	Seminars	Participation, weekly assignments, presentation, presentation paper	28	M
Great Debates in Political Science	5	500	Lectures and seminars	Written exam	28	M
Advanced Academic & Professional Skills	5	500	Flip-the-classroom sessions	Short papers, policy paper, and group presentation	28	M
The Politics of Policy-Making: National and International Challenges	10	500	Seminars	Participation, take-home exam	28	M
<b>Semester 2</b>						
Policy Evaluation in National and International Contexts	10	500	Seminars	Papers (2), written exam	28	M
Thesis Seminar MSc International Organisation	20	600	Mixed: (sub) group, individual sessions	Thesis proposal, MSc thesis	**	M
<b>Optional: Internship</b>						
Internship Project Seminar and Thesis MSc Political Science	30	600	seminars	Thesis	28	E
* M: mandatory, E: elective						
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Programme specialisation International Organisation (2018-19, February start)						
Courses	Ects.	Level	Methods of Instruction	Examination	Contact Hours	M/E*
<b>First semester</b>						
Great Debates in Political Science	5	500	Lectures and seminars	Written exam	28	M
The Politics of Policy-Making: National and International Challenges	10	500	Seminars	Participation, take-home exam	28	M
Advanced Academic & Professional Skills	5	500	Flip-the-classroom sessions	Short papers, policy paper, and group presentation	28	M
Policy Evaluation in National and International Contexts	10	500	Seminars	Papers (2), written exam	28	M
<b>Second semester</b>						
Dynamics of International Organisation	10	500	Seminars	Participation, weekly assignments, presentation, presentation paper	28	M
Thesis Seminar MSc International Organisation	20	600	Mixed: (sub) group, individual sessions	Thesis proposal, MSc thesis	**	M
<b>Optional: Internship</b>						
Internship Project Seminar and Thesis MSc Political Science	30	600	seminars	Thesis	28	E
* M: mandatory, E: elective						
** In block 3 bi-weekly sessions, in block 4 contact hours vary according to need of students						



## APPENDIX 3: DOCUMENTS STUDIED BY THE PANEL

Prior to the site visit, the panel studied the assessment forms for sixteen final projects of the master's programme Political Science, including two internship projects. Information on the selected projects is available from QANU upon request.

Prior to the additional site visit, the panel also studied the following documents:

- Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs);
- Overview Teaching Programme (Leiden/The Hague);
- Overview issues and recommendations visitation panel and measures Political Science;
- Digital study guide master's programme Political Science;
- Education and Examination Regulations (*Onderwijs- en examenregeling*);
- Student reaction to the Self-evaluation Report of the Plan of Improvements.

During the additional site visit, the panel studied the following documents:

### Implementation and monitoring improvement plan

- October 2017 – OD drafts improvement plan in consultation with Teaching Committee, Admissions Committee, Board of Examiners
- 6 November 2017 – Institute Council discusses draft improvement plan
- 9 November 2017 – Meeting with OD and chairs of Teaching Committee, Admissions Committee, Board of Examiners
- 17 November 2017 – Teaching Committee discusses draft improvement plan
- 19 December 2017 – feedback on final version improvement plan from chairs of Teaching Committee and Board of Examiners
- 22 January 2018 – Institute Council discusses improvement plan
- 29 January 2018 – final version improvement plan
- 19 June 2018 – progress report implementation improvement plan
- 18 February 2019 – meeting OD and chair Teaching Committee to discuss self-study and procedure
- 13 March 2019 – draft self-study to chairs of Admissions Committee and Board of Examiners
- 21 March 2019 – Programme Board requests Teaching Committee to review draft self-study
- 28 March 2019 – Teaching Committee comments to draft self-study
- 9 April 2019 – Institute Council discusses self-study
- 11 April 2019 – progress report improvement plan
- 2 May 2019 – Teaching Committee response final version self-study
- 3 May 2019 – final version self-study

### MSc coordination meetings

- 8 November 2017 – MSc thesis coordination meeting
- 4 July 2018 – MSc coordination meeting
- 28 August 2018 – MSc thesis evaluation meeting
- 27 November 2018 – MSc thesis coordination meeting
- 4 June 2019 – MSc coordination meeting
- Summer 2019 – MSc thesis evaluation meeting

### Assessment plan

- Assessment plan
- Assessment matrices (three samples provided, more available upon request)

### Reform methods course MSc

- Winter 2018 – concerns OD about evaluations methods course
- 1 March 2019 – Teaching Committee advice to reform methods course
- 7 March 2019 – Institute Council discusses reform methods course
- 28 March 2019 – Programme Board response to TC's advice on reform methods course
- 9 April 2019 – meeting on methods course with OD, methods instructors, chairs of Teaching Committee and Admissions Committee, SPOC developers
- 17 June 2019 – coordination meeting OD and the instructors developing new course

