

MASTER'S PROGRAMME

HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

NIJMEGEN SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

RADBOD UNIVERSITY

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CONTENTS

REPORT ON THE MASTER’S PROGRAMME HUMAN GEOGRAPHY OF RADBOUD UNIVERSITY **5**

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE PROGRAMME..... 5

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE INSTITUTION 5

COMPOSITION OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL 5

WORKING METHOD OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL 6

SUMMARY JUDGEMENT..... 9

DESCRIPTION OF THE STANDARDS FROM THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK FOR LIMITED
FRAMEWORK ASSESSMENTS..... 11

APPENDICES **23**

APPENDIX 1: DOMAIN-SPECIFIC FRAMEWORK OF REFERENCE 25

APPENDIX 2: INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES 27

APPENDIX 3: OVERVIEW OF THE CURRICULUM 29

APPENDIX 4: PROGRAMME OF THE SITE VISIT 32

APPENDIX 5: THESES AND DOCUMENTS STUDIED BY THE PANEL 33

This report was finalised on 11 October 2019

REPORT ON THE MASTER'S PROGRAMME HUMAN GEOGRAPHY OF RADBOUD UNIVERSITY

This report takes the NVAO's Assessment Framework for the Higher Education Accreditation System of the Netherlands for limited programme assessments as a starting point (September 2018).

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE PROGRAMME

Master's programme Human Geography

Name of the programme:	Human Geography
CROHO number:	60466
Level of the programme:	master's
Orientation of the programme:	academic
Number of credits:	60 EC
Specialisations or tracks:	Conflicts, Territories and Identities Cultural Geography and Tourism Economic Geography Europe: Borders, Identity and Governance Globalisation, Migration and Development Urban and Cultural Geography
Location(s):	Nijmegen
Mode(s) of study:	full time, dual
Language of instruction:	English
Submission deadline NVAO:	01/11/2019

The visit of the assessment panel Human Geography and Urban Planning to the Nijmegen School of Management of Radboud University took place on 28 and 29 May 2019. The judgements in this report refer to the full time and dual modes of study, unless otherwise indicated.

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE INSTITUTION

Name of the institution:	Radboud 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 11 February 2019. The panel that assessed the master's programme Human Geography consisted of:

- Em. prof. dr. L.J. (Leo) de Haan, emeritus professor of Development Studies, at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) of Erasmus University Rotterdam [chair];
- Em. prof. dr. C. (Christian) Kesteloot, emeritus professor at the Division of Geography and Tourism of KU Leuven (Belgium);
- Prof. dr. E.M. (Ellen) van Bueren, professor of Urban Development Management at the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment of Delft University of Technology;
- Prof. dr. F.J.A. (Frank) Witlox, professor of Economic Geography at the Department of Geography at Ghent University (Belgium);
- N.J.F. (Niek) Zijlstra, bachelor's student Human Geography and Urban Planning at the University of Amsterdam [student member].

The panel was supported by dr. M (Meg) van Bogaert, who acted as secretary.



WORKING METHOD OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

The master's programme Human Geography at the Nijmegen School of Management of Radboud University was part of the cluster assessment Human Geography and Urban Planning. In April and May 2019, the panel assessed nineteen programmes at four universities. The following universities participated in this cluster assessment: University of Amsterdam, University of Groningen, Utrecht University, and Radboud University.

Panel members

The panel consisted of the following members:

- Em. prof. dr. L.J. (Leo) de Haan, emeritus professor of Development Studies, at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) of Erasmus University Rotterdam [chair];
- Em. prof. dr. C. (Christian) Kesteloot, emeritus professor at the Division of Geography and Tourism of KU Leuven (Belgium);
- Prof. dr. E.M. (Ellen) van Bueren, professor of Urban Development Management at the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment of Delft University of Technology;
- Drs. J. (Judith) Borsboom-van Beurden, senior researcher Smart Sustainable Cities at Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU, Norway);
- Dr. L.B.J. (Lianne) van Duinen, project manager at the Council for the Environment and Infrastructure (Rli);
- Dr. C.J. (Kees-Jan) van Klaveren, senior auditor and data protection officer at Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences;
- Prof. dr. M.A. (Maria) Koelen, professor of Health and Society at Wageningen University & Research;
- Prof. dr. F.J.A. (Frank) Witlox, professor of Economic Geography at the Department of Geography at Ghent University (Belgium);
- J. (Jim) Klooster BSc, master's student Economic Geography at the University of Groningen [student member];
- L. (Lars) Stevenson BSc, bachelor's student Political Science and master's student Comparative Politics, Administration & Society at Radboud University [student member];
- N.J.F. (Niek) Zijlstra, bachelor's student Human Geography and Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Amsterdam [student member];
- Prof. dr. ing. C.M. (Carola) Hein, professor of History of Architecture and Urban Planning at the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment of Delft University of Technology [referee assessment University of Groningen].

For each site visit, assessment panel members were selected based on their expertise, availability and independence.

The QANU project manager for the cluster assessment was dr. Irene Conradie. She acted as secretary of the site visit of the University of Amsterdam. In order to assure the consistency of assessment within the cluster, the project manager was present at the panel discussion leading to the preliminary findings at all site visits. All draft reports were checked by QANU. Dr. Meg van Bogaert and drs. Mariette Huisjes, freelance secretaries for QANU, acted as secretaries of the site visit of the University of Groningen. Dr. Meg van Bogaert acted as secretary of the site visits of Utrecht University and Radboud University. Dr. Marijn Hollestelle, employee of QANU, was present at the site visit of Utrecht University, specifically for the ECA assessment report of quality in internationalisation of the master's programme International Development Studies. The project manager and the secretaries regularly discussed the assessment process and outcomes.

Preparation

On 18 February 2019, the panel chair was briefed by the project manager on the tasks and working method of the assessment panel and more specifically his role, as well as on the use of the assessment framework. A preparatory panel meeting was organised on 18 February 2019. During this meeting, the panel members received instruction on the tasks and working method and the use

of the assessment framework. The panel also discussed the domain specific framework. A schedule for the site visit was composed. Prior to the site visit, representative partners for the various interviews were selected. See Appendix 4 for the final schedule. Before the site visit, the programmes wrote self-evaluation reports of the programmes and sent these to the project manager. She checked these on quality and completeness and sent them to the panel members. The panel members studied the self-evaluation reports and formulated initial questions and remarks, as well as positive aspects of the programmes.

The panel also studied a selection of theses and their assessment forms for the programmes. The selection consisted of fifteen theses, based on a provided list of graduates between 2017-2019. A variety of topics and tracks and a diversity of assessors were included in the selection. The project manager and panel chair assured that the distribution of grades in the selection matched the distribution of grades of all available theses.

Site visit

The site visit to Radboud University took place on 28 and 29 May 2019. At the start of the site visit, the panel discussed its initial findings on the self-evaluation reports and the theses, as well as the division of tasks during the site visit. During the site visit, the panel studied additional materials about the programmes and exams, as well as minutes of the Programme Committee and the Examination Board. An overview of these materials can be found in Appendix 5. The panel conducted interviews with representatives of the programmes: students and staff members, the programme's management, alumni and representatives of the Examination Board and the Programme Committee. It also offered students and staff members an opportunity for confidential discussion during a consultation hour. No requests for private consultation were received. 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.

Report

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

Generic quality

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

Meets the standard

The programme meets the generic quality standard.

Partially meets the standard

The programme meets the generic quality standard to a significant extent, but improvements are required in order to fully meet the standard.

Does not meet the standard

The programme does not meet the generic quality standard.



The panel used the following definitions for the assessment of the programme as a whole:

Positive

The programme meets all the standards.

Conditionally positive

The programme meets standard 1 and partially meets a maximum of two standards, with the imposition of conditions being recommended by the panel.

Negative

In the following situations:

- The programme fails to meet one or more standards;
- The programme partially meets standard 1;
- The programme partially meets one or two standards, without the imposition of conditions being recommended by the panel;
- The programme partially meets three or more standards.

SUMMARY JUDGEMENT

Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes

The distinct profile and identity of the Human Geography master's programme are appreciated by the panel. The focus on critical, political and cultural approaches is reflected in the intended learning outcomes (ILOs), and the programme explicitly incorporates preparation for the professional field in its objectives. The ILOs of the programme are in line with the international requirements regarding the level and orientation of an academic master's programme.

Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment

According to the panel, the Human Geography curriculum is clearly structured and allows students to specialise and go in-depth on topics of interest to them. The structure of the curriculum allows small specialisations to be viable. There are some common core courses throughout the six specialisations, but students from different specialisations also meet each other during electives. The methods and techniques taught in the programme are also tailored to the interests and expertise of the students, which makes sense for this heterogeneous student population. Within this flexible system, the panel asks for attention to be paid to monitoring the acquired level and diversity in research methods and techniques for all students. The quality of the courses is good, and the relationships between the course objectives, ILOs and the Dublin descriptors show that the curriculum enables the students to achieve the ILOs. The master's thesis is combined with a research internship, challenging students to make the research relevant for society. During the research internship, they develop both analytical and professional skills. The panel agrees with the objective of the internship, primarily doing research for the thesis. Therefore, it is very important that the programme supports the students in finding an internship position that fits their thesis topic. The panel encourages the programme to pay more attention to monitoring, updating and communicating the objectives and process of the internship to the students. The programme prepares students for the professional field in a number of other ways, e.g. by organising guest lectures and focusing on current socio-spatial problems in the curriculum. Internationalisation is developing at a proper pace and is aimed at supporting the students to prepare for an internationally oriented labour market. All teaching staff members combine research and teaching and are qualified in both. The faculty pays appropriate attention to the professionalisation of its teaching staff. The perceived work pressure is high, but the panel finds that the faculty is paying sufficient attention to this problem. It finds that the programme offers students a teaching-learning environment that enables them to achieve the ILOs.

Standard 3: Student assessment

The assessment in the Human Geography programme is based on the faculty's assessment policy. A matrix shows which forms of assessment are used for the various courses. The balance between group work and individual assignments is adequate. The Examination Board is both proactively and reactively involved in monitoring the quality of assessment. There are several initiatives to improve the quality of assessment, and topics regarding assessment are discussed in the section meetings. The panel draws attention to the anchoring of these subjects to ensure the PDCA cycle is complete. It notes that the programme has developed an assessment policy and procedures that contribute to the reliability, validity and transparency of the assessment. The assessment of master's theses is adequately organised, although the selection of the second assessor could be done more independently. The panel recommends discussing the grading of the different criteria more frequently among assessors, for example on the basis of calibration sessions.

Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes

The panel reviewed a selection of theses that were produced by graduates of the Human Geography programme. These theses clearly show that the students achieve the ILOs. Attention to the labour market is present throughout the curriculum, although the programme specifically focuses on analytic, conceptual, creative and visionary skills. In the long term, this approach is valued by alumni. Based on a selection of master's theses, the alumni survey and interviews with alumni during the site visit, the panel concludes that students realise the ILOs as formulated by the programme.



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

Master's programme Human Geography

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

The panel chair, em. prof. dr. L.J. (Leo) de Haan, and the secretary, dr. M (Meg) van Bogaert 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: 11 October 2019

DESCRIPTION OF THE STANDARDS FROM THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK FOR LIMITED FRAMEWORK ASSESSMENTS

Context

The master's programme in Human Geography is embedded in the Nijmegen School of Management (NSM). The programme is offered by one of its four sections, namely the Geography, Planning and Environment section. Other programmes offered by this section are the bachelor's programme Geography, Planning and Environment, the master's programme Spatial Planning and the master's programme Environment and Society Studies. The faculty profiles itself as a scientific centre of knowledge and research on complex management and design issues in the public and private spheres. The faculty's research is carried out by the Institute for Management Research.

Dual mode

The master's programme Human Geography offers students of all specialisations the option to follow the programme in a dual mode: a combination of paid work and study. During the site visit the panel interviewed students enrolled in the dual mode, and this mode was also discussed in the interview with the management. Only if the panel was of the opinion that its assessment of the dual mode differentiated from the regular mode would this be pointed out in this assessment report.

Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes

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

Findings

Profile

The master's programme Human Geography at Radboud University (RU) focusses on critical engagement in current debates in the discipline about how space and place are socially and materially constructed as the basis for investigating and explaining socio-spatial developments. Political-geographical themes of bordering, migration and place-identity led to the development of a number of specialisations. These specialisations adopt similar critical perspectives and focus on globalisation, European Integration, regional economic development, urbanism and mobility, and tourism. The Human Geography programme aims at preparing students for professional careers that require high levels of analytical, critical-reflective and strategic skills. This implies that they are developing academic knowledge and skills, with which they can contribute to the solution of current practical socio-spatial problems after graduation. Graduates will be able to:

- Independently conduct scientific research on relevant, complex and specialised socio-spatial problems, making use of human geographical and related social science theories, methods and techniques;
- Investigate complex policy issues in professional practice, independently or in teamwork, making use of human geographic (and related) theories, methods and techniques, and deliver a scientific contribution to the solution of them.

The first goal is geared towards the education of academic researchers, while the second focusses on academic professionals. In the self-evaluation report the programme states that it fosters the reputation for high standards of critical academic research. The Domain-Specific Framework of Reference (DSFR) for the Human Geography and Urban and Regional Planning domain in the Netherlands was updated for this review by the four participating universities. The panel appreciates that the programme clearly profiles itself within the framework. Its profile has (1) a critical orientation towards current debates in academic research, resulting in a multi-paradigmatic approach, (2) a strong focus on political and cultural geography approaches, which also returns in the core domains



of research by faculty members, and (3) an orientation towards a higher level of theoretical analyses of socio-spatial processes.

The Human Geography programme offers six specialisations, which cater to the needs and interests of the students. They can also opt for a free master specialisation, in which they combine courses of their own choice. The specialisations are:

- Economic Geography;
- Globalisation, Migration and Development;
- Urban and Cultural Geography;
- Europe: Borders, Identities and Governance;
- Cultural Geography and Tourism;
- Conflicts, Territories and Identities.

For each specialisation a dual mode is possible, in which the students can combine the training with a partially paid position at one of the organisations with which relevant agreements have been made.

Students informed the panel that the variety of specialisations was one of the reasons to choose the Nijmegen programme. Despite the fact that they consciously select one of the specialisations, they all consider themselves human geographers – with a specific focus – after graduation. According to the panel, the Human Geography programme has a distinct profile that includes critical, political and cultural approaches and is typical for the Nijmegen approach to the discipline. The panel appreciates this clear identity, which also explicitly includes preparing students for the labour market.

Intended learning outcomes

The Human Geography programme has translated its objective into 20 intended learning outcomes (ILOs). The ILOs go beyond the individual specialisations and are anchored at the level of the master as a whole. The focus on analytical meta-skills allows students to deal with other topics themselves. In contrast to the bachelor's programme, the master's programme Human Geography is more specialised and educates the students to apply a critical perspective and to deepen their knowledge and skills in their specific field of specialisation. Explicitly, the master's programme is more advanced regarding theoretical pluralism, the focus on an empirical basis, a critical perspective, independence, and making geographic knowledge matter practically. The ILOs distinguish between 1. theory, 2. research, 3. policy competencies, 4. communication and 5. reflection. Each of these five central aims is subdivided and concretised into a number of ILOs that jointly meet the Dublin descriptors (see Appendix 2 for the ILOs). On the basis of a scheme in the self-evaluation report, the panel concludes that the ILOs do indeed cover the Dublin descriptors. The majority of the ILOs fall under the Dublin descriptors of Applying knowledge and understanding and Communication. The panel noticed that the Dublin descriptors of Making judgments and Learning skills are only dealt with in one ILO. While this is sufficient, it thinks that this imbalance is remarkable and suggests that the programme looks into this.

According to the panel, the ILOs reflect the profile and identity of the programme, with a clear focus on policy competences, methodology and preparation for the professional field. It determined that the ILOs are academically oriented and at a master's level. For example, they refer to contributing to the improvement and further development of scientific theories, designing of original and scientifically valid, theory-led empirical research, and working together while taking other individuals' standpoints, positions and values into consideration.

Considerations

The distinct profile and identity of the Human Geography master's programme are appreciated by the panel. The focus on critical, political and cultural approaches is reflected in the ILOs, and the programme explicitly incorporates preparation for the professional field in its objectives. The ILOs of the programme are in line with the international requirements regarding the level and orientation of an academic master's programme.

Conclusion

Master's programme Human Geography: the panel assesses Standard 1 as 'meets the standard'.

Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment

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

Findings

Curriculum

The one-year (60 EC) curriculum offers six specialisations. Appendix 3 provides an overview of the curriculum for each specialisation. Each one has three mandatory courses (total 18 EC), some of which are joint for two or more specialisations (e.g. *Multiculturalism, Diversity and Space* is part of three specialisations). Furthermore, all but one specialisation have 12 EC dedicated to electives. Three specialisations schedule all electives in the first semester, two specialisations schedule 6 EC in each semester. Finally, all specialisations have the *Preparing the Master Thesis* course (6 EC) in the first semester and the *Master Thesis* (24 EC) in the second semester.

- The Economic Geography specialisation aims at providing insights into the basic mechanisms behind spatial differentiation, notably the rise of global capitalism, the shaping of business networks, and the impact of new technologies. A specific focus lies on the social and political dimensions of economic development.
- The Globalisation, Migration and Development specialisation aims at gaining a better understanding of these themes by focussing on the changing relationships of global and local societies through the rise of social and spatial inequalities. Particular emphasis lies on the relationship with urban contexts of globalisation and the linkage to rural developments.
- The Urban and Cultural Geography specialisation aims at providing insights into how different actors influence the physical form of cities. An explicit focus lies on the role of urban culture as the driving force for urban development.
- The Cultural Geography and Tourism specialisation aims at key insights into the background of touristic experiences. The specific focus on the experience of places is characteristic for this programme. This specialisation is offered in close collaboration with Wageningen University.
- The Europe: Borders, Identities and Governance specialisation aims to increase the understanding of the value and workings of the EU within the social and geopolitical developments both in Europe and in relation to the rest of the world. Its specific focus lies on the big picture and the basic principles and ideas of Europe and its borders.
- The Conflict, Territories and Identities specialisation aims to provide insights into the backgrounds and causes of the national and international violent conflicts, related mental and physical borders, and strategies and challenges in dealing with these conflicts. Its focus lies on multi-scalar, multi-dimensional and multi-disciplinary aspects. This specialization is conducted in close cooperation with the Centre for International Conflict, Analysis and Management (CICAM) in the same faculty.

Each master's specialisation consists of a number of mandatory courses, which are expected to cover important aspects of the research in these specialised fields. Even though all specialisations differ in the topics they deal with, some overlap is visible, specifically in reference to the more general theoretical frameworks and approaches. In addition, each specialisation offers space for elective modules, which allow the students to customise their own curriculum. The strong focus on research in the programme leads to ample time being given to preparing and setting up the research in the framework of the *Preparing the Master Thesis* course. Subsequently, there is time for conducting research in the internship. During the site visit, additional information was provided by the programme on the numbers of students enrolled in each course. This information showed that although some specialisations are very small, the number of students per course is high enough to



keep the programme efficient and workable. Also, the students find ample opportunities to specialise without just taking courses with students of their own specialisation. This enables them to learn to look and interact beyond their own specialisation.

Without common courses for all specialisations, the programme is really focusing on the students deepening their knowledge and skills in the theme. The panel thinks that an aspect that typifies the programme is the large amount of room for students to make choices. Not only are there many specialisations to choose from, there are also many options for students to create their individual trajectory within the specialisations. The panel is of the opinion that the programme succeeds in bringing coherence and balance to the curriculum both within and between the specialisations by defining a clear programme for each master's specialisation in which courses overlap. Initially, the panel asked whether a common course on geographical theories and perspectives for all specialisations would be of added value. However, the students, teaching staff and management convinced it that each specialisation pays sufficient attention to geography and that a logical and clear structure in the curriculum is visible within the specialisations. The students told the panel that they would have preferred even more opportunities to have individual options, beyond the 12 EC of most specialisations.

The *Prepare the Master Thesis* course provides the opportunity for all students to specialise in methods and techniques of their own choice. The Human Geography programme does not include a specific methods and techniques course. Rather, it allows the students to pick methods *à la carte*. It therefore offers optional modules which they can choose and that fit their interests and level and support their preparation of the master's thesis. Given the heterogeneous disciplinary background of the student population, the panel is of the opinion that the choice to allow them to specialise individually is a good one. It does suggest paying attention to the monitoring of the acquired level and diversity of the methods and techniques. Precisely because of the heterogeneous student population, the programme cannot assume that all students at the start are at the level of the those who graduated from Radboud University's own bachelor's programme. One of the subjects that the panel felt was missing was cartographic analysis, especially the search for spatial patterns, and communication. It furthermore emphasizes the importance of maintaining the combination of both qualitative and quantitative methodology in the programme for all students. The students should be sufficiently aware that both methodologies might be useful in their research to answer the research question formulated. Based on the selection of theses the panel read, it concludes that most students choose a qualitative approach, while in a number of cases a quantitative method might have been a better option. Taking the relatively large population into account, it believes that it will not be difficult for the programme to organise a more structured approach to the methodology modules.

In order to form a picture of the course content, the panel had access to the educational material of a number of courses during the site visit (see Appendix 5). It evaluated the content and level of the courses as good. It came to this conclusion based on the study material that was provided during the site visit and information on Blackboard. Learning objectives are formulated for each course. An appendix to the self-evaluation report presents the connection between the course objectives and the ILOs. Each of the specialisations focuses on a specific field of application but fulfils the general ILOs of the programme. This emphasises the focus of the Human Geography programme on key analytical and creative skills rather than the specific knowledge of these topical fields. Based on this extensive documentation, the panel concludes that the courses are aligned with the ILOs.

Research internship and master's thesis

The master's thesis starts with an approved research proposal, after which the student starts to conduct his/her research at the internship organisation. The research proposal is written in the *Prepare the Master Thesis* course. The research for the master's thesis is done during the research internship. This requires the students to conduct their research on a topic which is of relevance for the internship organisation and challenges them to make their academic expertise practically useful. As the thesis research is intended to prove their competency as a researcher, they will essentially have to conduct their research independently. The supervisors will support them with advice and

coaching, but they will have to direct the research work themselves and will need to take the initiative. They are also responsible for the time management of the research. The research results in a scientific research report (master's thesis) that includes reporting on the research internship.

The programme actively supports the students in finding an internship, although it is sometimes difficult to find a place that fits a particular student's interests. Specifically, international students, who do not speak Dutch, often find it difficult to find an internship position. The panel observed somewhat of a mismatch between the expectations and wishes of the students and the programme management with respect to the relevance of the mandatory internship. The students, in contrast to the programme management, consider it primarily a preparation for the professional field as well as part of their master's thesis research. They even suggested in the student chapter that the compulsory link between research for the thesis and the internship should be abolished. The programme management is firm in its objective for the internship: It is primarily about doing research for the thesis, and by carrying the research out within the framework of an organisation, the research is made relevant. The panel agrees with this approach, although this makes it all the more important that the students are given the opportunity to find a suitable internship placement. The programme seems to be aware of this issue and provides supervisors with additional time to support the students. Also, the students are stimulated to start as soon as possible on finding an internship position. On the basis of the interviews, the panel concludes that the process is not always well organised or clear for the students. Ultimately, all of them find an internship position, partly thanks to the use of their own network and that of the teaching staff. The panel emphasises the importance of continuously monitoring and updating as well as communicating the process to the students, to make sure that they understand the philosophy and objectives of the internship.

The panel discussed the research internship at length in combination with the development of both analytical skills and practical skills. The reason for this was a remark in the student chapter stating that practical skills could be emphasized more in the programme, while the programme argued that the development of analytical skills prepares students best for their long-term career. The latter was confirmed by the programme management. It was echoed by alumni, who informed the panel that in the long term, the analytical skills are the most valuable. Indeed, in doing research for the master's thesis, the focus lies primarily on the development of analytical skills. Nonetheless, the teaching staff told the panel that a lot of attention is also paid to the development of professional skills, like communication, project management and writing. The internship context of the research internship adds to the development of these skills. The panel agrees that the analytical skills are important and is of the opinion that the programme pays sufficient attention to the development of professional skills.

Dual mode programme

The master's programme Human Geography offers students of all specialisations the option to conduct the programme in a dual mode: a combination of paid work and study. The student takes courses in the programme while simultaneously gaining experience as a geographer at a professional organisation, which has been pre-selected by the master's programme as a Dual Employer Organisation. This dual mode takes an extra semester and is selective. The students need to apply for a temporary, part-time, paid job at the Dual Employer Organisation. The amount of ECs for the dual programme is equal (60 EC) to the regular programme. The education is equivalent to that in the regular programme, but space for electives is reduced by 6 EC, which is subsequently allocated to the dual mode. Each semester, the objectives and deliverables for the student are determined in a so-called red-threat assignment. Most students who enrol in the dual mode start as regular students in the master's programme and then choose to switch to the dual mode. During the site visit the panel interviewed students enrolled in the dual mode, and this mode was also discussed in the interview with the programme management. The dual mode programme offers students the opportunity of an intensive experience in the professional field, while at the same time being challenged to link the practical knowledge needs of the organisation to the master's programme and master's thesis research. The panel is of the opinion that the dual mode is an asset to the programme. It interviewed a number of students enrolled in the dual mode, who stated that the learning goals



are set prior to the dual period, and the assessment includes theoretical aspects as well as a reflection part. According to the panel, it is unfortunate that the students receive merely 6 EC for a minimum of six months added to the programme, although they told the panel that they get a modest salary from the Dual Employer Organisation.

Didactic principles

In the self-evaluation report the master's programme Human Geography elaborates on its constructive didactic principles, in which teachers equip and coach the students to engage critically with their study material. The aims and principles are operationalised in the following ways:

- Academic attitude: the programme builds on the curiosity-driven academic attitude of ambitious and socially engaged students from a diverse multidisciplinary field.
- Critical and engaging: theories and methods are introduced and elaborated as part of critical engagement with the geographical manifestation and development. The pragmatic and critical human geography approach is fundamental for the programme. The students are provided with an academic challenge to develop and apply their knowledge in a socially as well as personally meaningful manner.
- Challenging students: the emphasis is on independent student learning activities. The students are confronted with an unadorned, sometimes rather resistant scientific reality. Supervision of master students involves coaching them to make choices independently and develop their own ideas. They are expected to engage in a full-scale scientific debate with peers and their supervisor.
- Linking academic teaching and research: on the one hand, lecturers engaged in disciplinary and multi-disciplinary research base their teaching partly on their own research, using concepts and case studies. On the other, the students are invited to choose a thesis approach that is or can be informed by and linked to the research issues the supervisor is working on.
- Interactive teaching: the broad spectrum of specialisations offered in combination with the number of students leads to some courses being taught for a relatively small number of students. This provides the opportunity for small-scale teaching and small-scale research projects.

The panel finds that the didactic principles are appropriate for a master's programme whose aim is to enable the students to operate independently. The students learn to find their own way, which strengthens their development. The drawback is that they sometimes miss out on the potential wealth and depth that the programme has on offer. As an example, the panel mentions that students do not know when to start organising an internship abroad, which means that fewer students stay abroad for a longer period of time.

Preparation for the professional field

In line with the advice of the international advisory board, the Human Geography programme generally focuses on establishing strong scientific analytical competences of the students and less on short-term practical skills for starting professionals. According to the self-evaluation report, these analytical skills will make the difference, especially in the later phases of professional life. In all master's specialisations there is a clear focus on current socio-spatial problems, which makes the programme topical and relevant for the professional field. The programme furthermore makes use of guest lecturers and endowed professors with a strong focus on the interface between academia and the professional field. Finally, the mandatory internship in the framework of which the master thesis research is conducted prepares the students to apply their scientific knowledge and skills to practical problems. In cooperation with the Programme Committee and the student association, extracurricular career events are organised. An initiative was launched to organise a framework for master students to 'be a professional for a day' during which they can voluntarily join an alumnus in a more advanced position in his/her career for one day.

Admission and enrolment

Students with a degree from the bachelor's programme Geography, Planning and Environment have direct admission to the programme. Those with a bachelor's degree from a similar programme at

another university are also admitted. According to the self-evaluation report, a substantial number of students have entered the programme with a master's degree from another university. In those cases, no pre-master is required, but an intake examination is used to assess the level of the applicant's social sciences background. Students with a professional (HBO) degree can apply for a pre-master's programme. The diversity in disciplinary background of enrolling students is considered an enrichment by the programme. The students consider it a challenge, but also appreciate the diversity, as do future employers, according to alumni the panel interviewed. The inherent multidisciplinary nature is a crucial element of the field of human geography and the learning environment of the programme, which is strengthened by the diverse student population.

Internationalisation

In the self-evaluation report, the international orientation of the programme is described. The master's programme Human Geography is oriented towards international research. This implies that research, ideas, theories and methodologies are inspired by international academic debates. In addition, with the place-specific contextualities of the socio-spatial phenomena under investigation, the students must engage with cases and spaces outside their comfort zone, specifically the specialisation themes cannot be studied without recourse to an international perspective. The programme is thus taught in English, to incorporate this perspective. Furthermore, there are a number of international field trips, and a large number of students do their master's thesis research abroad or go abroad as exchange students (nearly 45%). Finally, the teaching staff is also partly from abroad or has substantial international experience and is involved in international cooperative networks. The number of international students participating in the programme (or parts of it) is growing, increasingly leading to an international classroom in which multicultural learning is fostered. Finally, some pilot projects have been initiated, in which the programme reaches out to the international community of prospective geography students by means of model on-line courses. This gives foreign students an impression of the style of teaching, the topics and the standards required to take part in the programme. From the interview with the teaching staff, it became clear to the panel that the number of international students is increasing, although this growth differs between the specialisations. It is positive about the developments regarding internationalisation. The group of students is increasingly diverse and heterogeneous, and the staff is also becoming more diversified. The panel noted that the international context is regularly addressed in the courses, while the comparison between the different international perspectives is also regularly made. It advises the programme to pay continuous attention to the composition of the groups in the courses. International students do not necessarily mix with Dutch students. In order to benefit from the diversity in cultures and disciplinary backgrounds, it is important that they interact with each other, if necessary on a mandatory basis.

Teaching staff

All staff teaching in the Human Geography master's programme are also active researchers, and most are members of the Nijmegen School of Management's Institute for Management Research. Rules of the School require all tenured staff to obtain the Basic University Teaching Certificate (UTQ). In addition, all associate professors and full professors are required to obtain their Senior University Teaching Certificate (Sen.UTQ). Assistant professors are stimulated to obtain a Sen.UTQ. Over 85% of teaching staff has a UTQ, and approximately 30% a Sen.UTQ. The policy that all lecturers have at least a UTQ shows that the programme has taken the recommendation of the previous assessment panel on this point to heart. As the education is offered in English, the English language proficiency of the teachers is also subject to requirements. More than half of the teachers are native speakers or have obtained a CPE. The results of the student evaluations of teachers about the level of their English are positive. The faculty's education centre regularly organises 'Broodje Onderwijs' ("Educational Sandwich") lunch meetings on specific education-related themes, such as testing, providing feedback and assessing essays. The Examination Board also proactively organises meetings at which skills for assessments are discussed. Teachers can also request individual coaching from the Department of Educational Offices at the faculty as well as university level or attend specific training modules.



The teaching load varies between staff members (0.1 to 0.65 FTE). The self-evaluation report stated that the student-teacher ratio has been stable over the past period, although the overall workload is demanding and growing for both staff and students. The programme is therefore working on optimising the efficient use of available resources, e.g. through the close ties between the research of the staff and their teaching and supervision tasks. Master's thesis research topics are grouped around the supervisors' research topics, and the course programme within the different master's specialisations is closely connected to the research conducted by the teaching staff.

During the site visit, the panel extensively discussed the perceived workload, which was also a point of attention during the previous visit. Workload is an agenda item at the section meetings and that makes it discussable and visible according to the panel. The students indicated that the quality of the programme is good. The panel believes that an important cause contributing to the workload is the importance that is attached to doing research, which makes it difficult for many teachers to find a good balance between teaching and research. This is an important but difficult point to address and certainly not only relevant for the programmes in Nijmegen. The panel finds that the programme has taken measures to reduce the workload. Nevertheless, workload remains a point deserving attention, and the panel advises the programme, section and faculty to keep this issue on the agenda.

Considerations

According to the panel, the Human Geography curriculum is clearly structured and allows students to specialise and go in-depth on topics of interest to them. The structure of the curriculum allows small specialisations to be viable. There are some common core courses throughout the six specialisations, but students from different specialisations also meet each other during electives. The methods and techniques taught in the programme are also tailored to the interests and expertise of the students, which makes sense for this heterogeneous student population. Within this flexible system, the panel asks for attention to be paid to monitoring the acquired level and diversity in research methods and techniques for all students. The quality of the courses is good, and the relationships between the course objectives, ILOs and the Dublin descriptors show that the curriculum enables the students to achieve the ILOs. The master's thesis is combined with a research internship, challenging students to make the research relevant for society. During the research internship, they develop both analytical and professional skills. The panel agrees with the objective of the internship, primarily doing research for the thesis. Therefore, it is very important that the programme supports the students in finding an internship position that fits their thesis topic. The panel encourages the programme to pay more attention to monitoring, updating and communicating the objectives and process of the internship to the students. The programme prepares students for the professional field in a number of other ways, e.g. by organising guest lectures and focusing on current socio-spatial problems in the curriculum. Internationalisation is developing at a proper pace and is aimed at supporting the students to prepare for an internationally oriented labour market. All teaching staff members combine research and teaching and are qualified in both. The faculty pays appropriate attention to the professionalisation of its teaching staff. The perceived work pressure is high, but the panel finds that the faculty is paying sufficient attention to this problem. It finds that the programme offers students a teaching-learning environment that enables them to achieve the ILOs.

Conclusion

Master's programme Human Geography: the panel assesses Standard 2 as 'meets the standard'.

Standard 3: Student assessment

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

Findings

The Nijmegen School of Management has formulated its general policies with regard to examinations and assessments in the Education and Examination Regulations (EER). These contain both the general, faculty-wide rules and programme-specific ones. Course coordinators are appointed as

examiners and decide on the form of an examination, the choice of questions and assignments, and the grading. Each specialisation has a track coordinator who coordinates and monitors these aspects for each programme. The master's coordinator looks at the appropriateness and variety of examination forms across the entire curriculum. The majority of assessments are written exams and essays, which are appropriate assessment methods. The panel was pleased to notice that in some courses a broader variety of assessment methods is used. For example, the *Urban and Cultural Geography* course includes a Fieldwork Photo Essay and oral examination in its assessment. The programme aims at a careful balance between group work in tutorials and individual tasks. The panel verified the balance between group work and individual work. In a number of courses, this exceeds the maximum of 25% group work that the Examination Board has set as desirable at the course level. When looking at the curriculum level, the extent of the group work falls within the guidelines of the Examination Board. Students informed the panel that they do a significant amount of groupwork, which prepares them for the professional field. Overall, they are satisfied with the balance across the curriculum.

When constructing examinations, peer review is done by fellow teachers who are involved in a course. The examinations are assessed on the basis of criteria that are derived from the learning objectives of the course, which applies to both written and oral examinations. For written examinations, answer models are available, and the students are provided with sample questions in advance. For essays or individual assignments, instructions and criteria are available in the course manual. As part of the quality assurance system for assessment, each programme uses course dossiers. The students are also asked to complete an evaluation at the end of each course, including an evaluation of the assessment.

Examination Board

Section GPM has one Examination Board for the bachelor's programme and three master's programmes (Human Geography, Spatial Planning and Environment and Society Studies). The Examination Board has formulated specific rules and regulations for the assessment and testing, especially with regard to the master's thesis. In addition, it continuously monitors the application of the rules and regulations and the quality and assessment of examinations, both proactively and reactively. Reactively, it responds to signals, requests and complaints by students. It proactively formulates additional rules and checks the assessments. In 2016, for example, a peer review process was organised for the assessment of courses, in which subjects such as rubrics and summative versus formative exams were discussed. On the basis of the results, attention was paid to the internalisation of the starting points for assessment by the lecturers, i.e. did they all have a similar way of interpreting assessments? The Examination Board regularly assesses the justification of the grades awarded to master's theses by organising an InterVision of the assessment; this was done in 2015 and 2107. A selection of nine theses (GPE-wide) were marked by independent 'third' assessors who were asked to critically reflect on the marking by the first and second assessors, and to discuss the main findings with them. The results were subsequently discussed in a plenary meeting with all members of the department. As a result, the guidelines for assessment were elaborated on the assessment form after the last InterVision.

Based on the discussion with the Examination Board and the supporting documents, the panel concluded that the quality assurance of the assessments is in order. The Examination Board used the faculty's assessment policy to formulate principles about assessment within the programmes. The high percentage of lecturers with a Sen.UTQ contributes to existing expertise in assessment within the programme. Much coordination on the curriculum, but certainly also on assessments, takes place in the Section meetings. A number of subjects are regularly discussed but do not seem to be really anchored, running the risk of not completing the PDCA cycle. As an example, the panel mentions the balance between formative and summative assessments in the programme.

Master's thesis

In the internship, the focus is on conducting research on a topic which is of relevance for the internship organisation; this practical relevance is a core learning objective of the thesis. The



master's thesis, which includes reporting on the research internship, is assessed based on criteria listed in an assessment form. The students receive this assessment form at the beginning of the programme. Each student has two supervisors, one at the internship organisation and one from the university. Even though the thesis research is conducted outside the university, the assessment of the quality of the master's thesis remains the sole responsibility of the supervisor and second assessor. The coordinator of the *Preparing the Master Thesis* course appoints the supervisor. The second assessor is invited by the supervisor, based on their specific expertise in relation to the thesis topic. The panel understands that the supervisor is well placed to find a second assessor with the right expertise on the research subject. However, it feels that the programme runs the risk of creating fixed pairs of assessors. Although the thesis supervisors with whom the panel spoke indicated that this is not the case, it would like to draw attention to this point.

The panel reviewed the procedure of thesis assessment and generally found that the assessment form is used consistently. The assessments and final grades in the sample were broadly in line with those proposed by the panel. The panel was very positive about the fact that the first and second assessors fill out the forms separately, making the assessment process transparent even though the two assessments usually showed few differences in grading. The downside of having two assessment forms is that it was not clear to the panel how the final mark was determined in some cases. It understood that the students do not receive the assessment of the second assessor, and it recommends looking for a way to include the comments and remarks of the second assessor in such a way that they are useful to the student.

The panel is of the opinion that all theses are of satisfactory or good quality. However, its assessment of approximately one-third of the theses differed more than one point from that of the programme, i.e. in the panel's opinion these theses were graded either too high or too low. This deviation was not found in theses of the other master's programme the panel assessed during this site visit. The panel is well aware that the assessment procedure of the programme comprises more than merely filling out the assessment form. The panel understands that the final mark is not necessarily the unweighted average of both assessors' marks and, moreover, that process and other aspects only known to the first assessor are also part of the assessment. In that context, the panel feels that the comments on the assessment form were instructive overall, but not always reflecting the grades. The guidelines for filling out the thesis assessment form are useful and informative and the form describes the criteria in a good way. However, it seems insufficiently transparent what leads to a particular grade. The panel appreciates the occasional InterVision sessions and stimulates the programme to include discussing this grading aspect with the assessors on a regular basis, also in view of the increasing diversity of the staff with different backgrounds in assessment policies.

Considerations

The assessment in the Human Geography programme is based on the faculty's assessment policy. A matrix shows which forms of assessment are used for the various courses. The balance between group work and individual assignments is adequate. The Examination Board is both proactively and reactively involved in monitoring the quality of assessment. There are several initiatives to improve the quality of assessment, and topics regarding assessment are discussed in the section meetings. The panel draws attention to the anchoring of these subjects to ensure the PDCA cycle is complete. It notes that the programme has developed an assessment policy and procedures that contribute to the reliability, validity and transparency of the assessment. The assessment of master's theses is adequately organised, although the selection of the second assessor could be done more independently. The panel recommends discussing the grading of the different criteria more frequently among assessors, for example on the basis of calibration sessions.

Conclusion

Master's programme Human Geography: the panel assesses Standard 3 as 'meets the standard'.

Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes

The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Findings*Achieved learning outcomes*

The appendices of the self-evaluation report provide an overview of the way the ILOs are covered by the learning outcomes of the courses, leading to students having acquired all ILOs upon graduation. Specifically, the master's thesis covers many ILOs. The programme focuses on developing the general analytic, conceptual, creative and visionary skills of the students by means of specialisation and deepening of their knowledge on topics that fit their own personal interests. The self-evaluation report mentioned that this is reflected in the fact that a number of students manage to publish academic and professional articles on the basis of their thesis.

In order to gain insight into the final level of the students of the master's programme Human Geography, the panel studied 15 theses and their associated assessment forms prior to the visit. Based on this sample, it concluded that the master's theses sufficiently demonstrate that students achieve the final qualifications of the programme. As already mentioned under standard 2, most students used a qualitative approach. Nearly all theses the panel read had a clear geographical dimension and relevance to the discipline, although not all students justified their choice of the subject from a geographical perspective. It noticed that the students try to include the global perspective in their thesis, which is commendable. In some cases, this works well, while in other theses the conduct of research on the global, national and micro levels is too complex and results in a superficial analysis. Positive aspects observed in many of the theses were the use of good academic English, good literature review and embedding of the research in the academic literature, well-chosen and explained methodology. Some theses displayed a good conceptual framework as well. The panel is positive about the fact that many students use maps in their thesis, although most of them are simple situation maps. It encourages the programme to favour the search for and analysis of spatial patterns through thematic mapping. Another aspect that requires attention in many of the theses is the clarity of the conclusions and discussion in relation to the research question(s).

Labour market

Based on the alumni monitor and regular alumni contacts, as well as the LinkedIn alumni community, the programme concludes that graduates end up in all sorts of career paths and branches. Alumni stated that they appreciate the programme because it meets their interests, even if it is not directly geared towards readily available jobs on the labour market. Specifically, the critical attitude, analytical skills and focus on content are mentioned as strong features of the programme. More recent graduates would have appreciated some more practical skills, but in the longer term the analytical approach is valued and appreciated. According to the alumni monitor, graduates on average find a suitable first job less than 3.5 months after graduation.

Considerations

The panel reviewed a selection of theses that were produced by graduates of the Human Geography programme. These theses clearly show that the students achieve the ILOs. Attention to the labour market is present throughout the curriculum, although the programme specifically focuses on analytic, conceptual, creative and visionary skills. In the long term, this approach is valued by alumni. Based on a selection of master's theses, the alumni survey and interviews with alumni during the site visit, the panel concludes that students realise the ILOs as formulated by the programme.

Conclusion

Master's programme Human Geography: the panel assesses Standard 4 as 'meets the standard'.



GENERAL CONCLUSION

The panel's judgement on standards 1, 2, 3 and 4 for the master's programme Human Geography at Radboud University Nijmegen is 'meets the standard'. Therefore, according to the rules of the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders, the general and final judgement is positive.

Conclusion

The panel assesses the *master's programme Human Geography* as 'positive'.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: DOMAIN-SPECIFIC FRAMEWORK OF REFERENCE

The Human Geography and Urban and Regional Planning domain in the Netherlands

The current domain-specific reference framework confines itself to a substantive description of the two core disciplines, in combination with the general expectations regarding the competencies of graduates. Therefore, it is a more concise document than the previous (2012) one. The exit qualifications for bachelor and master programmes are no longer included, partly because the Dublin descriptors already provide an adequate general description of the desired scientific level, but also to give the programmes taking part in the reaccreditation ample opportunity to demonstrate their own specific profile in their self-studies.

The Human Geography and Urban and Regional Planning domain is very broad and diverse, and the different academic programmes within the Netherlands highlight different elements. They vary, for example, in the balance between scientific and professional training, degree of research intensity, degree of integration between the two core disciplines, opportunities to specialise, and types of specialisation offered. This domain-specific reference framework emphasizes the common features applying to all programmes.

The Human Geography and Urban and Regional Planning domain revolves around the complex relationship between people (society) and their environment (space). There are five qualities that determine the mind set of geographers and planners. First of all, the ability to think from a time-space perspective, these being the two dimensions within which human action unfolds. Secondly, the ability to study the relation between people and environment in the context of intertwined spatial scale levels (local, regional, national, global). Insight into socio-spatial transformations is gained by studying the interaction between these scale levels (the multi-scalar perspective), without making prior assumptions about the dominance of any one level (e.g. the global level) over another (e.g. the local level). Thirdly, the mind set of geographers and planners is based on the idea that space and society closely interact and shape each other. Human actions, and the behavioural patterns that develop in the course of time (institutions), crystallize in space, while conversely, spatial structures and place-related features trigger and shape human actions. A fourth quality relates to the strong multidisciplinary orientation in the work of geographers and planners; relationships between humans and their environment are studied from a range of mutually supplementary disciplinary perspectives. The precise combinations chosen depend on the nature of the socio-spatial problems being studied and will vary per programme within the domain. Finally, the fifth quality is closely linked with all the above: the integrative character of the geographical and planning approach. This crux is an ambition to understand the mutual cohesion between economic, social, cultural and political phenomena and processes within their specific spatial contexts.

Key terms in the domain are space, place, location, scale, networks, linkages, spatial behaviour, place attachment, spatial quality, spatial design and spatial interventions. Within the domain socio-spatial problems are taken as starting points of scientific inquiry. These issues include spatial inequality, globalization, migration, segregation, diversity and identity, environmental burden, sustainable area development, mobility and governance. The aim is not only to make critical analyses of the issues concerned, but also to design plans and interventions that may solve or reduce socio-spatial dilemmas.

The international and comparative character of studying the relation between people and environment is inherent to the Human Geography and Urban and Regional Planning disciplines. Socio-spatial problems, and planned actions to deal with them, are marked by the specific national, regional and local context in which they arise. The significance of the embeddedness of socio-spatial phenomena is the key to Human Geography and Urban and Regional Planning. However, awareness of the importance of context does not imply that the disciplines are merely the sum of an endless series of case-studies. The ambition is to identify the international similarities and differences of socio-spatial processes and developments, in order to unravel both their unique and generic aspects. Both facets are typical of the quest of Human Geography and Urban and Regional Planning to



formulate theories (explanation in context). To emphasize this international, comparative character, teaching does not focus solely on the Netherlands. And when studying Dutch cases, the international importance and international suitability of the theoretical perspectives and research angles developed will always be considered. Continuing on from this, the composition of staff and students in all the Dutch programmes in the domain is becoming increasingly diverse (in many ways). The 'international classroom' being introduced in more and more programmes, facilitates and reinforces the international-comparative orientation of both disciplines.

The Human Geography and Urban and Regional Planning domain has evolved in close cohesion with the other social sciences. While it shares important qualities with the latter - such as attention for formulating theory and the need for rigid methodology - it is also distinct by emphasizing particular qualities. The strong empirical orientation, apparent in the importance attached to primary data collection and fieldwork, is a typical feature of our domain. Furthermore, 'learning by doing' has become an important part of all programmes, partly because it enhances sensitivity to the time and place (context)-bound character of social, cultural, political and economic phenomena and developments. Geographers and planners are constantly challenged to step outside the comfort zone of their own field. Finally, research within the domain has increasingly opened up for a wide spectrum of methods and techniques. This methodological pluralism corresponds with the choice to study socio-spatial problems at various scale levels, which precludes a standard method of analysis.

Human Geography and Urban and Regional Planning graduates are able to identify, analyse and explain socio-spatial problems, based on and contributing to the 'body of knowledge' adhering to the discipline. They are also fully conversant with general social-scientific methods and techniques, as well as more domain-specific research methods, such as GIS and spatial impact analysis. The Bachelor's programmes do this, in line with the basic level of the Dublin descriptors, by laying a broad scientific foundation in the two core disciplines, while the Master's programmes train students, again following the Dublin framework, at a theoretically and methodologically more advanced and specialist level.

The programmes under consideration prepare students for a variety of professions and sectors. Typical jobs include researcher, teacher/lecturer, consultant, policy official and project manager. A common characteristic of staff qualified in Human Geography and/or Urban and Regional Planning is their inclination for a comprehensive approach to problems, and their ability to create awareness on the spatial diversity of societal problems. Students with a specialist Master's degree often find themselves in professions directly connected with their specialism, such as spatial planning, area development, urban policy, construction and housing, regional policy, traffic and transport management or environmental policy. The self-studies of the individual degree programmes will inform more specifically on the professions and sectors in which graduates work.

The domain-specific framework of reference (DSFR) has been formulated by the national disciplinary meeting (Disciplineoverleg Geografie en Planologie). The former DSFR has been adjusted, i.e. updated and shortened by omitting the concrete exit qualifications for bachelor and master. The participating programmes have been able to comment on the draft. It has been laid down during the meeting on 6 September 2018.

APPENDIX 2: INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the degree programme, students are specialised in one of the following disciplinary fields:

- **Globalisation, Migration and Development:** various dimensions and aspects of globalisation, notably as this relates to socio-economic and spatial development for different parts of the world, the Global South in particular. Core issues on which this Master's specialisation will focus include: changing relationships of global and local societies through the rise of new social and spatial inequalities brought about by global processes, migration and mobility and the emergence of transnational identities versus local interpretations in so-called multicultural societies. With particular emphasis on the relationship with urban contexts and rural domains of these issues as related to sustainability of livelihood strategies and development policies in different regions.
- **Urban and Cultural Geography:** how different actors influence the physical form of cities but also the way in which they present and understand the character and identity of cities and how they make use of the typical urban environment in their daily activities.
- **Cultural Geography and Tourism:** tourism as based on the cultural appreciation and value of the cities and landscapes tourists visit. Tourism also has a major economic, social and environmental impact on places and regions. This Master's specialisation allows you to understand the processes involved and how to use them in practice. Advanced theories and practices of leisure and tourism and their influence on the social and physical environment. Tourism as the experiencing places and events, how these experiences are produced, what effects they have and how they can be influenced.
- **Europe: Borders, Identities and Governance:** bordering processes occurring within Europe's internal cross-border regions (or Euregions), taking into account the context of shifts in state sovereignty, territoriality, and cultural identity in Europe's borderlands with special attention to external bordering dimension of the European Union (i.e., Eastward Enlargement, European Neighbourhood Programme), while also addressing the EU's search for a broader role in the world, cross-border governance, transnational and multi-level governance, European citizenship and 'cosmopolitical' identities), critical border geopolitics, biopolitical borderings and border securitisation, European post-colonial bordering and 'othering', and the search for an 'ethical' dimension to European borders.
- **Economic Geography:** the role of regions as locations for economic activities, the optimal interaction between economic activities and the local environment like flows of knowledge, the recruitment and training of employees, relations with suppliers, local governments and the role of environmental and social organisations.
- **Conflicts, Territories and Identities:** (inter)national conflict, war and the physical and mental borders that come along with these. With special focus on backgrounds, contexts and sources - imperialism, geo-politics, failing states, religions, (national) identities, discrimination, resources, borders - and the management and resolution - good governance, border management, humanitarian aid, development aid, diplomacy, peace operations and the political and social construction of conflicts, territories and identities, as well as the theory and practice of (inter)national conflict management.

Or a combination of the above in form of the

- **Free Specialisation.**

At the end of the degree programme, students are independently able to:

Theory

1a. General disciplinary competencies

1. interpret and describe the concepts, approaches and methods, including their differences and communalities, relevant for the respective disciplinary fields, and to discuss these with colleagues;
2. understand the development of the respective disciplinary field and its movements, including the societal, philosophical and scientific-theoretical backgrounds;



3. interpret, describe, conceptualise and explain social-spatial processes by means of field specific ('mid-range') theories and/or more general social theories, with reference to the relevant structures, physical conditions and social-spatial actions of individuals and institutions;
4. recognise and theorise the spatiality and historically and to critically compare different occurrences of these social-spatial processes, both within the Netherlands as well as abroad.

1b. Competencies in scientific theory

1. evaluate the scientific theories, relevant for the respective disciplinary fields, regarding their ontological and epistemological assumptions and regarding their internal consistency, empirical validity and societal relevance;
2. contribute to the improvement and further development of these scientific theories;

Research

2. Methodological competencies

1. design original and scientifically valid and problem-oriented theory-led empirical research by formulating a social-spatial problem, a corresponding research objective, and by deriving concrete research questions from this problem, and selecting an appropriate method and underpin the choices made therein;
2. conduct the research by collecting and analysing the necessary data and formulate and evaluate conclusions by using theories, scientific methods and techniques relevant to the specific disciplinary field;
3. contribute with this research to the advancement of knowledge in this specific disciplinary field;
4. critically evaluate the potential and the of this research.

Application

3. Policy competencies

1. recognise social-spatial problems and identify the relevant social-spatial policy and relevant policy actors;
2. critically analyse and evaluate the practice and the spatial and societal consequences of specific social-spatial policy at various scales in the Netherlands and abroad;
3. formulate proposals, based on scientific research, that can provide a relevant contribution to solving concrete social-spatial problems;
4. evaluate of the effects of implemented policy on social-spatial developments.

Communication

4. Communication competencies

1. communicate in a professional way, verbally and in writing, with a wide range of networks of people and groups;
2. work together in a professional and goal-oriented way in a wide range of social settings (interdisciplinary teams of experts, consultation and negotiation), taking into consideration other individuals' standpoints, positions and values.

Reflection

5. Personal competencies

1. develop one's own social and intellectual skills to stay abreast of changing social circumstances and to embrace the values and norms of a responsible academic professional;
2. discuss one's own position with respect to social-spatially-relevant societal developments and problems;
3. act effectively in a wide range of situations by linking together insights, skills and attitudes and being able to reflect on this process;
4. reflect ethically on and account for your own scientific research.

APPENDIX 3: OVERVIEW OF THE CURRICULUM

Specialisation in Conflicts, Territories and Identities

Course	Period	Course load
<u>Geopolitics of Borders</u>	1	6 EC
<u>Conflicting Theories: Applying Theoretical Approaches to Conflicts, Territories and Identities</u>	1	6 EC
<u>Preparing the Master's Thesis</u>	1-2	6 EC
<u>Political and Geographical Conflict Resolution, Theory and Practice</u>	2	6 EC
<u>Excursion</u>	2	6 EC
Elective course(s)	3	6 EC
<u>Master's Thesis and Research Internship</u>	3-4	24 EC
<i>Total course load</i>		60 EC

Specialisation in Cultural Geography and Tourism

Course	Period	Course load
<u>Urban and Cultural Geography</u>	1	6 EC
<u>Preparing the Master's Thesis</u>	1-2	6 EC
<u>Master's Thesis in Cultural Geography and Tourism</u>	1-4	24 EC
Elective course	Semester 1 and/or 2	6 EC
Elective course	Semester 1 and/or 2	6 EC
<i>A choice of two of the following courses provided by the <u>University of Wageningen</u>:</i>		
<u>Leisure, Tourism and Environment: Experience and Environment*</u>	3 (Jan.)	6 EC
<u>Governance of Tourism and Natural Resources</u>	3 (Jan.)	6 EC
Especially for the RU adapted version of: <u>Sustainable Tourism: Society & Environmental Aspects</u> (partly online) enrollment before October 30, 2018 by email to h.ernste@fm.ru.nl	2 (Oct. - Dec.)	6 EC
<u>Leisure, Tourism and Globalisation</u>	3 (Mar. - Apr.)	6 EC
<i>Total course load</i>		60 EC



Specialisation in Economic Geography

Course	Period	Course load
<u>Economic Geographies: Foundations, Critiques and Alternatives</u>	1	6 EC
<u>Placemaking and Spatial Practice</u>	1	6 EC
<u>Preparing the Master's Thesis</u>	1-2	6 EC
<u>Economy, Space and Culture in Nijmegen</u>	3-4	6 EC
Elective course(s)	2	12 EC
<u>Master's Thesis and Internship</u>	3-4	24 EC
<i>Total course load</i>		<i>60 EC</i>

Specialisation in Europe: Borders, Identity and Governance

Course	Period	Course load
<u>Geopolitics of Borders</u>	1	6 EC
Elective courses	1-2	12 EC
<u>Preparing the Master's Thesis</u>	1-2	6 EC
<u>Multiculturalism, Diversity and Space</u>	1-2	6 EC
<u>Cross Border Governance</u>	3-4	6 EC
<u>Master's Thesis and Internship</u>	3-4	24 EC
<i>Total course load</i>		<i>60 EC</i>

Specialisation in Globalisation, Migration and Development

Course	Period	Course load
Elective course(s)	1-4	12 EC
<u>Globalising Cities and Hinterlands</u>	1-2	6 EC
<u>International Migration, Globalisation and Development</u>	1-2	6 EC
<u>Preparing the Master's Thesis</u>	1-2	6 EC
<u>Multiculturalism, Diversity and Space</u>	2	6 EC
<u>Master's Thesis and Internship</u>	3-4	24 EC
<i>Total course load</i>		<i>60 EC</i>

Specialisation in Urban and Cultural Geography

Course	Period	Course load
Elective course(s)	1-2	12 EC
Urban and Cultural Geography Including 4-Day Excursion to a Bustling City	1	6 EC
<u>Preparing the Master's Thesis</u>	1-2	6 EC
<u>Multiculturalism, Diversity and Space</u>	2	6 EC
<u>Economy, Space and Culture in Nijmegen</u>	3-4	6 EC
<u>Master's Thesis and Research Internship</u>	3-4	24 EC
<i>Total course load</i>		<i>60 EC</i>



APPENDIX 4: PROGRAMME OF THE SITE VISIT

DAY 0		
Monday 27 May 2019		
16.30	18.30	Arrival of panel at the hotel, internal panel meeting
19.00	21.00	Dinner

DAY 1		
Tuesday 28 May 2019		
8.30	9.00	Arrival / Welcome
9.00	9.45	Meeting with management all programmes
9.45	10.15	Internal panel meeting and documentation review
10.15	11.00	Meeting with students and alumni B Geografie, Planologie en Milieu (incl. PC)
11.00	11.15	Break
11.15	12.00	Meeting with teaching staff B Geografie, Planologie en Milieu (incl. PC)
12.00	13.30	Internal panel meeting (incl. lunch)
13.30	14.15	Meeting with students M Human Geography (incl. PC)
14.15	14.30	Break
14.30	15.15	Meeting with teaching staff M Human Geography (incl. PC)
15.15	17.00	Internal panel meeting: preliminary findings / consultation hour (16.30-17.00)
17.00	17.30	Meeting with alumni M Human Geography en M Spatial Planning
18.30	21.00	Dinner

DAY 2		
Wednesday 29 May 2019		
8.30	9.00	Arrival
9.00	9.45	Meeting with students M Spatial Planning (incl. PC)
9.45	10.30	Meeting with teaching staff M Spatial Planning (incl. PC)
10.30	11.00	Break
11.00	11.45	Meeting with Examinations Board (all programmes)
11.45	13.15	Internal panel meeting (incl. lunch)
13.15	14.00	Final interview with management
14.00	14.45	Deliberations panel, formulating preliminary findings and conclusions
14.45	15.00	Feedback of preliminary findings and conclusions
15.00	15.15	Break
15.15	16.15	Development dialogue
16.15	16.30	Departure

APPENDIX 5: THESES AND DOCUMENTS STUDIED BY THE PANEL

Prior to the site visit, the panel studied 15 theses of the master's programme Human Geography. Information on the selected theses is available from QANU upon request.

During the site visit, the panel studied, among other things, the following documents (partly as hard copies, partly via the institute's electronic learning environment):

- Reports from the Examination Board;
- Reports from the programme committee;
- A representative selection of test assignments with corresponding criteria and standards;
- Documentation of the following courses:
 - Geopolitics of Borders
 - Urban and Cultural Geography
 - Globalising Cities & Hinterlands
 - Conflict, Territories and Identities.