

MASTER'S PROGRAMME

SPATIAL PLANNING

NIJMEGEN SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

RADBOUD UNIVERSITY

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This report was finalised on 10 October 2019



REPORT ON THE MASTER'S PROGRAMME SPATIAL PLANNING 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 Spatial Planning

Name of the programme:	Spatial Planning
International name:	Spatial Planning
CROHO number:	66655
Level of the programme:	master's
Orientation of the programme:	academic
Number of credits:	60 EC
Specialisations or tracks:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Planning, land and real estate development- Cities, water and climate change- Urban and regional mobility- Strategic spatial planning- European spatial and environmental planning (ESEP)
Location:	Nijmegen
Modes 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 Spatial Planning 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 and Regional 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 Spatial Planning 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 use of the assessment framework.

A preparatory panel meeting was also 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 examiners 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 profile of the Spatial Planning master's programme is clear according to the panel and aims to train spatial planners with a specific focus (generalists) rather than specialists in one direction. The institutional approach is emphasised and reflected in the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) with a clear focus on institutional questions and organisational aspects. The programme's ILOs are in line with the international requirements regarding the level and orientation for an academic master's programme.

Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment

The curriculum of the Planning master's programme is coherent and well-structured, with an appropriate balance between breadth and depth. The four common core courses combined with two specialisation courses result in all-round spatial planners with deepened knowledge on a specific theme. The panel appreciates the setup of the *Advanced Research Methods* course which aims at a broad training in both qualitative and quantitative methods. It encourages the programme to continue its finetuning of this course, most importantly with respect to the timing of the mandatory and optional modules. The programme plans to discontinue one of the specialisations and to include the core course of that specialisation in the core curriculum. Although the panel understands and supports the rationale of this decision, it thinks it is important that the ambitions of the course are tempered in order to make it a success. Students can choose an internship in combination with their thesis research and are stimulated to do so. Most students do, but some – mostly international students – find it very difficult to find an internship position. The panel supports the ambition of the programme to be more proactive in supporting these students. The programme aims at enabling students to become independent professionals, which fits an academic master's programme. The panel is of the opinion that advice and timely communication by the programme are required so that the students will not miss out on the potential wealth and depth the programme has to offer. Internationalisation is developing at a proper pace; this is reflected in the increasing number of international students.

All teaching staff 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 aspect. In conclusion, it finds that the programme offers the students a teaching-learning environment that enables them to achieve the ILOs. Well-performing and motivated students can follow a dual master's programme in which they combine the regular programme with two internships of four months each. The panel is very positive about the dual mode, as it promotes both a deepening of understanding and a solid connection to the professional field. It thinks that the programme should work on making this dual mode a realistic option for international students.

Standard 3: Student assessment

The Planning master's programme performs its assessment based on the faculty's assessment policy. A matrix shows which forms of assessment are used for the various courses. The Examination Board is both proactively and reactively involved in monitoring the quality of assessment. There are several initiatives, and much topics on assessment are discussed in the section meetings. The panel would like to draw attention to the anchoring of subjects related to assessment. 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 the master's theses is adequately organised. The panel appreciates the documentation of the independent role of the second assessor, although it was not always clear how the final grade was determined.

Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes

The panel reviewed a random selection of theses produced by graduates of the Spatial Planning programme. They clearly showed that the students achieve the ILOs. Students feel well prepared for the labour market. Attention to the labour market is present throughout the curriculum, both alumni and the GPE Advisory Committee provides feedback about employment and labour market issues.



Based on the selection of master's theses, the alumni survey and interviews with alumni during the site visit, the panel concludes that the students realise the ILOs as formulated by the Spatial Planning master's programme.

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

Master's programme Spatial Planning

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 chair, prof. dr. L.J. (Leo) de Haan, and the secretary, dr. M (Meg) van Bogaert, of the panel 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: 10 October 2019

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

Context

The master's programme in Spatial Planning is embedded in the Nijmegen School of Management (NSM). The programme is offered through 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 Human Geography 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 (IMR).

Dual mode

The master's programme Spatial Planning offers students of all specialisations the option to conduct 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 felt 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 Spatial Planning carries the subtitle 'managing smart cities and regions' as it prepares the next generation of spatial planners to take up their role as managers of on-going and future spatial transformations in cities and regions. In the programme, the students develop an understanding of planning systems, programmes, projects and processes, and the roles of the state, market and civil society in solving 'wicked' spatial problems. Nowadays, smart and sustainable solutions for planning problems are generated in multi-actor settings responding to and working with different stakeholders. The programme offers five specialisations to provide students with the opportunity to specialise in one of the following fields of application:

- Planning, land and real estate development: the specialisation provides a perspective on urban development. A key aspect is the interaction between planning interventions on the one hand and land and real estate investments on the other. The specialisation aims to prepare students for a future role as city developer, either in the public or private sector.
- Cities, water and climate change: this specialisation discusses the relationship among city planning and development, climate mitigation and adaptation. It prepares students for working on the nexus between urban planning, water and environmental management.
- Urban and regional mobility deals with increasingly complex flows of people and goods in the networked city and region and looks into different integrated mobility systems or transport modes at different spatial scales. It addresses the challenge of how to integrate the mobility and transport aspects into innovative concepts at the level of integrated city regions.
- Strategic spatial planning focuses on the strategic and visionary elements of 'the new planning enterprise'. Cities and regions will continue growing in size and function. Students learn how to deal with related challenges and changing circumstances, add value to the bottom-up emerging local initiatives and revise top-down approaches.
- European Spatial and Environmental Planning (ESEP) focuses on the increasingly important role of the European Union in the fields of environmental and spatial policies. ESEP offers a



solid theoretical foundation to analyse the EU policies for the environment, renewable energy and regional development and how they influence spatial planning policies and practices.

The domain-specific frame of reference (DSFR, see Appendix 1) 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. The DSFR characterises the domain of Human Geography and Spatial Planning. This domain focuses on the complex relationship between human beings and their environment, takes a time-space perspective, and studies the interrelationship between different scale levels (from local to global). It describes the increasing importance of sustainability and governance as core issues, focussing on both the critical analysis of these issues and on issues of the design and management of interventions. Within this framework, the Nijmegen master's programme Spatial Planning focusses primarily on planning issues in urbanised areas and on the management and organisation of planning processes (rather than urban design). There is a shift from government to governance and increased reliance on 'market forces, private and other actors'. These latter often take the initiative and play a crucial role in defining and implementing spatial projects nowadays. The students are therefore taught the complexity of 'wicked' spatial problems, and institutional and governance approaches to better understand contemporary planning issues. The programme trains students to work within such multi-actor settings and to think outside given boxes. Its purpose is to prepare them for academic, knowledge-intensive jobs in government, government-related institutions, business (mainly consultancies) and research. It is closely linked to the planning group's research on the governance of spatial transformations towards sustainable, resilient and just cities.

The panel appreciates the fact that the programme primarily focusses on training spatial planners with a specific focus rather than specialists in one of the specialisations. Compared to other planning programmes, the Nijmegen programme emphasises organisational aspects (both institutional and governance) and employs a stakeholder approach. This is appreciated by the panel, as it positions Nijmegen with a planning programme based on an interest in administrative issues, governance and institutions.

Intended learning outcomes

The previous assessment panel recommended describing specific learning outcomes for the specialisations and structuring them in a common frame. The transition to a fully English-taught format was used to develop a more integrated programme and coherent set of ILOs in response to the recommendations made by the previous panel. The ILOs distinguish between theory, application, research, reflection and communication. Category-specific ILOs have also been formulated for the five specialisations. Appendix 2 provides an overview of the ILOs. On the basis of a table in the self-evaluation report, the panel concludes that they cover the Dublin descriptors at the master's level. For example, the Dublin descriptor on applying knowledge and understanding is reflected in the ILO referring to autonomously explaining, critically assessing and adequately applying available theories and concepts, current developments and scientific debates to complex planning issues. Compared to the bachelor's programme Geography, Planning and Environment, the master's programme Spatial Planning teaches more complex – and more specialisation-specific – theories and methodologies, and increases the requirement and capacity for self-study.

According to the panel, the ILOs reflect the profile and identity of the programme, with a clear focus on institutional questions and organisational aspects. It determined that they are academically oriented and at a master's level. For example, the students learn to critically reflect on the limitations and normative assumptions involved in planning research conducted by themselves or others.

Considerations

The profile of the Spatial Planning master's programme is clear according to the panel and aims to train spatial planners with a specific focus (generalists) rather than specialists in one direction. The institutional approach is emphasised and reflected in the ILOs with a clear focus on institutional

questions and organisational aspects. The programme's ILOs are in line with the international requirements regarding the level and orientation for an academic master's programme.

Conclusion

Master's programme Spatial Planning: 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) programme consists of four core courses (4 x 6 EC) and also offers five specialisations (2 x 6 EC) that focus and deepen the understanding of general issues in specific and distinguishable areas of spatial planning. Each specialisation offers an obligatory course (6 EC) and an elective (6 EC) part. In addition, the programme comprises a master's thesis research project (24 EC). Nearly all students combine the thesis research with an internship at an external (or hosting) organisation. Appendix 3 provides a schematic overview of the curriculum.

The four core courses are *Institutional Perspectives*, *Advanced Research Methods*, *Comparative Spatial Planning and Metropolitan Development* and *Urban Innovation Space*. They cover all ILOs on theory, research, application, communication and reflection. These courses address institutional analysis and the governance of 'wicked' problems, planning systems and metropolitan development, vision and strategy making, and research methodology. With this core the programme offers a strong foundation in institutional and planning theories from the spatial planning domain and of adjacent disciplines such as economics, political science and public administration. Conceptual and practical skills are complemented and refined in the specialisations and electives that address more specific realms of the spatial domain. The five specialisations are described in this report, under Standard 1.

According to the panel, the four common core courses result in a coherent and structured programme with an appropriate balance between breadth and depth. With its relatively large core, the programme creates all-round spatial planners, and by adding a 12 EC specialisation course, they deepen their knowledge and understanding on a specific theme. At the same time, the room for specialisation is limited, even when including the 24 EC thesis. Some students would like to have more time for specialisation as the mandatory specialisation course and one elective offer limited opportunities for in-depth study. The panel is of the opinion that the present balance is good but believes that the programme should also look for a way to support students with an explicit wish for further in-depth study. For example, by offering more specialisation-specific choices and assignments in the core courses.

The *Advanced Research Methods* course consists of four course activities. The first are plenary sessions in which students learn from the research experiences of junior researchers at the department, to get inspired by the current research topics of the staff and learn tips and tricks about finding an internship position. Subsequently, they are given several assignments on a number of themes, like the definition of the research problem and performing a literature review, and do an assignment on research relevance. Assignments in tutorials are discussed and lead to a design component (proposal for one's own master's thesis). The panel appreciates the assignments in which the students have to reflect on an existing master's thesis; this gives them an impression of what is expected when writing their own thesis. The third activity is successfully completing at least one of the mandatory modules that deal with different research methods and one specialisation module. According to the students the panel interviewed, these modules were not mandatory in the past, and many students did not follow any. The panel also understood from the students that they are often not aware of the methods required for their thesis at the moment they have to choose the optional



modules. The panel is pleased with the decision to make at least one module mandatory and appreciates the methods offered in the modules that are diverse and state-of-the-art. It encourages the programme to optimise this part of the course further. For example, the programme might include the mandatory modules early on in the course, at the moment when the students are thinking about the methodology for the research topic they have selected and schedule the optional modules at the end of the course. This will help students to start earlier in the year with the search for an internship and/or thesis topic. The fourth and final activity is that students are assigned a thesis supervisor and receive individual coaching to prepare the master's thesis proposal, which must be approved by the supervisor before they can start their thesis research.

In the upcoming academic year (2019/20), the Strategic spatial planning specialisation will be discontinued. Reasons for this move are the limited number of students and the different focus of the specialisation, which is not on a specific domain of planning, but rather on vision and strategy-making processes. The knowledge in this specialisation is increasingly relevant to all planning students, and the core course of this specialisation, *Urban Futures Lab*, will become part of the core curriculum, replacing the current *Urban Innovation Space* course. During the site visit the panel discussed this change with the teaching staff. In the new core course, aspects of the discontinued specialisation are included, such as the students working on a simulation game for a planning issue relevant to their specialisation, developing a game on mobility, climate or land development issues. In this way, the programme wants to strengthen the students' knowledge of the use of spatial data in planning processes. This proposed change is well supported, although the panel has some reservations with respect to its execution. Although the *Urban Futures Lab* course was highly valued last year, students informed the panel that the content of the course was very interesting, but it was an intensive course, and its organisation, planning and timing should be improved. Specifically, with the increased group size in the upcoming year, this might become an issue. The panel is of the opinion that the intention of the course might be too ambitious and have too many objectives for a 6 EC common course, as it includes not only using a game/tool, but also developing one. If not carefully organised and managed, the latter might become the objective instead of the vehicle. Therefore, the panel recommends reviewing the objective and learning goals of this course and – if needed – adapting them to fit the size and position of the course in the curriculum. This will give the programme a better chance to successfully implement this innovative course in a way which fits its overall objectives.

Master's research project and thesis

The master's thesis should demonstrate the theoretical, methodological, empirical and reflective skills that students have acquired. At the very start of the programme, the students follow the *Advanced Research Methodology* course in which they orient themselves on their thesis topic and the professional field to which they would like to contribute. They prepare a proposal for their research project, develop planning and time management skills, and explore possible hosting organisations. The combination of thesis research and internship is strongly encouraged and facilitated by the programme and usually takes four months (on a fulltime basis). The internship allows students to get acquainted with the labour market. While carrying out their research and writing their master's thesis, they learn to design an academically relevant research project, collect empirical data and analyse the data systematically, draw conclusions and formulate recommendations. They are also invited to reflect on their theoretical and methodological choices. The choice of topic is free, although the programme stimulates students to establish links with the fields and approaches covered in the research of teaching staff. Based on the research topic, the students are appointed a supervisor in the *Advanced Research Methods* course. According to the panel, the process for the research internship and master's thesis works well, and the students are well informed about it.

Students told the panel that most do a research internship, but it requires planning, and they have to start discussing their plans on time. For some students it appears to be difficult to find an internship without help. Specifically, international students told the panel that they have difficulty finding an internship in the Netherlands. According to the students the panel talked to, only three of twelve

international students did an internship, while some of the others would also have liked to do one. The programme therefore intends to be more proactive in this respect, for example by communicating and arranging possible internships during the first semester. This is applauded by the panel. Students who do an internship clearly gain added value from the workplace experience, as they get easy access to the required data and learn to apply the theory in practice.

Didactic principles and teaching-learning environment

The master's programme Spatial Planning aims at challenging its students. Most of them are highly motivated and dedicated, which is further stimulated in the programme. At the start of the programme, the students are informed that they are considered junior colleagues who are primarily responsible for their own learning process, which presupposes a certain level of self-discipline and self-organisation. Small-scale teaching methods are used in the courses, even when attended by large groups, for example tutorials for reading, reviewing, discussing and presenting in groups of 6-8 students. In both core courses and electives, lectures are combined with small to mid-size discussion groups. A variety of didactical instruments is used: lecturing, presentations, assignments, papers, groupwork, individual work, feedback sessions, etc. The master coordinator monitors the variety and checks the balance between individual and group work. The students' activities range from writing reviews of scientific articles and previous master's theses to discussing tutorial assignments, preparing poster presentations and partaking in field trips and workshops. In this way, the programme aims to promote their active engagement. For instance, in the *Institutional Perspectives* course, they select a 'wicked' problem, the possible governance of which they elaborate through various assignments and prepare a poster presentation in a scientific setting with their peers.

The panel finds that the didactic principle to make students responsible for their own learning process is appropriate for a master's programme which aims to enable them to operate independently. They learn to find their own way, which is good for 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 found that they do not know when to start organising an internship abroad, which means that fewer students stay abroad for a longer period of time. It advises the programme to inform the students more closely without taking away their initiative. In this way, it expects the potential of many students to be better expressed.

The students were very positive about the way the programme evaluates the quality of courses and assessment. They mentioned that the programme publishes the results and a plan of action on the digital learning environment. They also informed the panel that in-class evaluation moments are built in by many teachers, in order to make minor adjustments to a course while it is running.

Dual mode

Well-performing and highly motivated students may follow a dual master's programme in any of the specialisations. In a dual master's programme, they complete two work periods of four months in the spatial planning practice. Usually, they work one period for a government organisation and one period for a consultancy firm. In the first semester, they apply for a temporary position of four months to be filled at an external institution in the second semester. This working experience is rewarded with 6 EC and replaces the elective in the regular master's programme. The student carries out various activities as a junior spatial planner and reflects on them in a series of meetings at the university. The product of this dual internship is a report in which the student reflects on what he/she has learned. At the beginning of the second semester, he/she applies for a second temporary research position of four months and carries out his or her master's thesis research within the context of an organisation and related to the ongoing projects within that organisation. During the site visit, the panel interviewed dual students, and the dual mode was also discussed in the interview with management. It understood that the dual mode programme offers students the opportunity to have 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. It is of the opinion that the dual mode is an asset to the programme. Dual students told the panel 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 four months' working experience in addition to the programme, although the students told the panel that they get a modest allowance from the Dual Employer Organisation. Formally, it is possible for international students to participate in the dual programme, but the panel was told that not being able to speak Dutch is such a hurdle that no international student has actually taken part. This is a pity, because it concludes that the dual mode promotes both a deepening of understanding and a connection with the professional field. This valuable variant of the programme should be part of the possibilities of all well-performing students.

Internationalisation

The programme has been fully English taught since 2018-2019. The main reason for the transition is that planning issues and planning practice have become increasingly international, addressing global challenges locally and regionally. The programme prepares students for this by enabling the exchange of ideas with and learning from students who are familiar with different planning cultures, in an international classroom. In the first year of the English-taught programme, students from a diverse range of countries were attracted. Those interviewed by the panel were positive about the developments regarding internationalisation. They consider it an improvement both for Dutch and international students, as they both learn from the perspectives of other students. International students suggested that the programme could help them to better understand the typical Dutch planning situation prior to the start of the programme. The panel thinks that this is a reasonable recommendation, it will certainly support international students in successfully finishing the programme.

Admission and enrolment

Students with a Nijmegen bachelor's degree in Geography, Planning and Environment or another Dutch bachelor's degree in Planning can enrol unconditionally. The Examination Board determines whether students with another bachelor's diploma can be admitted. Criteria considered are their knowledge and skills in (a) social science methods and (b) planning and governance theory and (c) their proficiency in English. Some students are required to do a pre-master's programme of a maximum of 60 EC. Students with a professional diploma in a relevant field and an average score between 7.0 and 7.5 (out of 10) are directly admitted to the pre-master. The average enrolment number in the programme is 56 over the evaluation period, of which approximately 40% has completed the bachelor's programme Geography, Planning and Environment in Nijmegen. The number of international students enrolling in 2018-19 was 23% of the total student population. There is variation in the number of students per specialisation; ESEP and Strategic Spatial Planning specialisations are the smallest with not more than five registrations per year. Despite these small numbers, the individual courses are always attended by more students, as they are shared between specialisations. On average, 14% graduates within one year, nearly 67% within two years, including the dual mode students. Although most students complete the programme within 18 months, the programme management is continuously trying to improve feasibility, for example by remedying organisational issues. Students who take longer to graduate often opt to spend a longer period on their research internship or are offered a job at the internship organisation.

Teaching staff

The programme is taught by a relatively small number of experienced, skilled and highly dedicated staff members. The main contribution is made by lecturers from the chair group Spatial Planning. Other chair groups involved are Environmental Governance and Politics, Human Geography, Environmental Law and Business Administration. Rules of the School require all GPE's 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 80% of teaching staff has a UTQ, of which approximately 78% has a Sen.UTQ. Most staff members with no UTQ are post-docs or PhD students. 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. The results of the student evaluations of teachers about their level of English are positive. The faculty's education centre also

regularly organises *Broodjes Onderwijs* ('Educational Sandwiches'), 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.

All teaching staff is involved in research, which is carried out within the Faculty's Institute for Management Research. The staff has a multidisciplinary background, and the research is thus informed by a wide range of institutional and governance perspectives. Its focus is on the understanding of institutional and policy change – or the lack thereof – in the field of spatial planning, and on how to design governance strategies for realising spatial transformations towards sustainable, resilient and just cities. During the courses, the staff frequently refers to the empirical research in which they are engaged, both to illustrate a point and to invite students to join, partake and elaborate on it. The hiring policies of the department aim for a balanced mix of nationalities and various specialisations on national and international issues in spatial planning. Furthermore, at the crossroads of education and research, the GPE department has established a series of international lecturers visiting Radboud University. Their lectures and seminars are mostly inserted as guest lectures in regular courses. The chair group has also been successful in the past years in attracting two visiting professors from the US.

The teaching load varies between staff members (0.02 to 0.31 FTE). In the self-evaluation report, the realistic student-staff ratio is calculated to be 42:1. This includes students who take more time than one year to graduate (the average is 18 months). During the site visit, the panel extensively discussed the perceived workload, which was also an agenda item at the section meetings and the previous site visit. By putting it on the agenda and paying continuous attention to the issue, it is prominently present and visible according to the panel. The students indicated that the quality of the programme is good. The panel believes that a significant aspect that contributes 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, the workload remains a point of attention, and it advises the programme, section and faculty to keep this issue on the agenda.

Considerations

The curriculum of the Planning master's programme is coherent and well-structured, with an appropriate balance between breadth and depth. The four common core courses combined with two specialisation courses result in all-round spatial planners with deepened knowledge on a specific theme. The panel appreciates the setup of the *Advanced Research Methods* course which aims at a broad training in both qualitative and quantitative methods. It encourages the programme to continue its finetuning of this course, most importantly with respect to the timing of the mandatory and optional modules. The programme plans to discontinue one of the specialisations and to include the core course of that specialisation in the core curriculum. Although the panel understands and supports the rationale of this decision, it thinks it is important that the ambitions of the course are tempered in order to make it a success. Students can choose an internship in combination with their thesis research and are stimulated to do so. Most students do, but some – mostly international students – find it very difficult to find an internship position. The panel supports the ambition of the programme to be more proactive in supporting these students. The programme aims at enabling students to become independent professionals, which fits an academic master's programme. The panel is of the opinion that advice and timely communication by the programme are required so that the students will not miss out on the potential wealth and depth the programme has to offer. Internationalisation is developing at a proper pace; this is reflected in the increasing number of international students.

All teaching staff 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 aspect. In conclusion, it finds that the programme offers the students a teaching-learning environment that enables them to achieve the ILOs. Well-performing and motivated students can follow a dual master's programme in which they combine the regular programme with two internships of four months each. The panel is very positive about the dual mode, as it promotes both a deepening of understanding and a solid connection to the professional field. It thinks that the programme should work on making this dual mode a realistic option for international students.

Conclusion

Master's programme Spatial Planning: 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). They contain both the general, faculty-wide rules and the 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 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% that the Examination Board has set as desirable at the course level. When looking at the curriculum level, the extent of the group work also exceeds the guidelines of the Examination Board, although part of the assessment of all courses is individual. Although it is not considered a major issue, the panel recommends looking into this aspect.

When preparing examinations, they are reviewed by fellow teachers who are involved in a course. The examinations are assessed on the basis of criteria derived from the course's learning objectives; this 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 a course dossier system. Students are also asked to complete an evaluation at the end of each course, including an evaluation of the assessment.

Examination Board

The section Geography Planning and Environment 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 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. 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. The Examination Board also assessed the justification of the grades awarded to master's theses by organising an InterVision of the assessment, both 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 at 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 supportive documents, the panel concludes 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 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

While most students conduct their master's research project outside the university, the assessment of the quality of the master's thesis remains the sole responsibility of the programme's staff. The criteria on the assessment form – which are made available to students at the beginning of the programme – form the basis of the thesis assessment. The master's thesis coordinator allocates the supervisor and second assessor based on their specific expertise, and both assess the thesis independently, after which they discuss their findings to decide upon the final grade and its justification.

The panel reviewed the procedure of thesis assessment and is generally of the opinion that the assessment form is used consistently. The assessment and final grades in the sample were broadly in line with those proposed by the panel. Only in one case did the panel's assessment deviate more than one grade from that of the assessors. The panel greatly appreciates that both the first and second assessors give detailed explanations for the grades of different criteria, i.e. their individual assessments are recognisably documented. However, in many cases there is no feedback on the final grade, nor is it clear to the panel how differences in grading have been resolved. It thinks that it would be insightful for students and external assessors (e.g. the panel, Examination Board) to have this clarified. Written feedback on the assessment forms was very instructive and overall in line with the grades given.

Considerations

The Planning master's programme performs its assessment based on the faculty's assessment policy. A matrix shows which forms of assessment are used for the various courses. The Examination Board is both proactively and reactively involved in monitoring the quality of assessment. There are several initiatives, and much topics on assessment are discussed in the section meetings. The panel would like to draw attention to the anchoring of subjects related to assessment. 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 the master's theses is adequately organised. The panel appreciates the documentation of the independent role of the second assessor, although it was not always clear how the final grade was determined.

Conclusion

Master's programme Spatial Planning: 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. By the end of the first semester, they have attained in-depth theoretical knowledge of the core domain, the governance of spatial transformations. The specialisation courses offer them the possibility to focus and deepen their understanding in a particular domain of spatial planning



according to their interests. At the same time they are prepared for their independent research project with the help of the *Advanced Research Methods* course. In the research project that results in the master's thesis, they show that they can systematically collect and analyse data, draw conclusions, formulate recommendations and contribute to realising spatial change. The self-evaluation report mentioned that this is reflected in their ability 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 Spatial Planning, the panel studied 15 theses and their associated assessment forms prior to the visit. It noticed that many theses were written in Dutch, but this might have to do with the recent switch to an English curriculum. Based on this sample, it concluded that the studied master's theses sufficiently demonstrate that the students achieve the final qualifications of the programme. It noticed that both qualitative and quantitative methods were used. Overall, the choice of methods was well motivated, and the empirical data were interesting. A number of thesis topics were well embedded in the relevant literature. A general point of attention is that the conclusions often remained superficial, sometimes because of too many theoretical concepts and sometimes because of a sub-standard analysis of the data. Nearly all theses were highly policy-oriented, often on a particular sector, although the programme is moving towards more integrated spatial planning. The panel expects that the thesis topics in the upcoming period will also reflect this move. All theses studied by the panel had a relationship with the spatial environment, but only some clearly identified and argued the spatial dimension.

Labour market

Throughout the programme, the students develop skills that are relevant for the labour market. Examples given in the self-evaluation report are interactions in tutorial groups and the need to cooperate with peers when giving presentations and writing essays and papers. In addition, the programme prepares them by introducing them to professionals from their future fields on multiple occasions. In several courses, guest speakers from the professional field are invited to talk, field trips are organised in most specialisation courses, and the internship provides – for most students – an opportunity to meet with their future professional field and future peers. Students in the dual mode trajectory complete two work experience periods of a minimum of four months. These students often find their starting position in the labour market through these work experience periods, even prior to graduation. Alumni provide the programme with feedback about employment and labour market issues, as does the GPE Advisory Committee. A systematic LinkedIn search in November 2018 showed that a large majority of graduates find employment in relevant positions as policy makers, project developers or consultants. The National Alumni Survey revealed that all graduates have found employment within one year after graduation. Alumni indicated that they feel well prepared for the labour market.

Considerations

The panel reviewed a random selection of theses produced by graduates of the Spatial Planning programme. They clearly showed that the students achieve the ILOs. Students feel well prepared for the labour market. Attention to the labour market is present throughout the curriculum, both alumni and the GPE Advisory Committee provides feedback about employment and labour market issues. Based on the selection of master's theses, the alumni survey and interviews with alumni during the site visit, the panel concludes that the students realise the ILOs as formulated by the Planning master's programme.

Conclusion

Master's programme Spatial Planning: 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 Spatial Planning at the 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 Spatial Planning* 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 specialize, 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 to 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:

- **Strategic Spatial Planning:** Graduates have acquired new communication and cooperation skills and creative and visionary capacities, allowing to set agendas in co-creation with citizens and stakeholders, including newly emerging forms of collective 'plan-making' and governance arrangements. Graduates have the capacity to shape urban futures, using urban laboratories at the intersection of both, bottom-up emerging local initiatives and top-down approaches.
- **Planning, Land and Real Estate Development:** Graduates understand the way planning decisions interrelate with land and real estate market processes and vice versa; the way how governments shape land and real estate markets and influence private actors' investment decisions by land policies and legal instruments; various aspects of the functioning of urban land and real estate markets (i.e. price mechanisms, investment behaviour, market failures); alternative economic approaches to understanding land and real estate markets. They are able to reflect on the use of different land policy instruments and can apply these policies and strategies in practice.
- **Cities, Water and Climate Change:** Graduates understand the relationship between urban planning and development, climate mitigation and adaptation; the potential and pitfalls of various governance strategies and instruments to enhance the sustainability and resilience of the built environment; and more specifically, the potential and pitfalls of strategies for flood proofing urban areas. They are able to critically reflect on urban mitigation and adaptation policies.
- **Urban and Regional Mobility:** Graduates are able to identify emerging trends in transport innovations and technologies and can specify potential implications for travel behaviour and land use patterns. Graduates have the skills to carry out analysis to support decision-making in a multi-actor setting. Graduates can forge coalitions of stakeholders that go beyond the traditional transport domain in order to garner support for strategies and policies with an explicit spatial dimension.
- **European Spatial and Environmental Planning (ESEP):** Spatial and environmental policies at all levels of scales play an increasingly important role in Europe. This specialisation focuses on EU policy processes and governance arrangements in and between European countries, as they influence spatial development, environmental quality and regional economic development.

At the end of the degree programme, students are capable of:

Theory

1. autonomously explaining, critically assessing and adequately applying available theories and concepts, current developments and scientific debates to complex planning issues.

Application

2. a. describing and analysing the relationship between institutions and their effect on spatial use at the local/regional level, while taking account of societal, economic, technological, legal and financial aspects (at various levels of actors);
b. to evaluate the relationship between spatial development and policy (including environmental policy) at the European level, taking account of transnational developments, differences between countries and control from the European Union;
c. the capacity to develop and implement creative and innovative strategies.

Research

3. autonomously designing and performing a scientifically valid and societally relevant planning study, supporting the methodological and theoretical choices made, and translating the results into recommendations for policy on a planning issue.

Reflection

4. critically reflecting on the limitations and normative assumptions involved in planning research conducted by the student or others.



Communication

5. in a scientifically credible fashion, communicating and reporting on analyses and research, and adequately accounting for this analysis.

APPENDIX 3: OVERVIEW OF THE CURRICULUM

All courses are 6 EC, the Master's thesis is 24 EC.

Strategic Spatial Planning

Semester 1		Semester 2	
Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4
Advanced research methods		Master's thesis in Strategic Spatial planning	
Institutional Perspectives: Territorial Governance by State, Market and Civil Society	Comparative Spatial Planning and Metropolitan Development	Urban Innovation Space	
Urban Future Lab – Creative Approaches towards Vision and Strategy Building for Regional Transformation			
Elective course			

Planning, Land and Real Estate Development

Semester 1		Semester 2	
Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4
Advanced research methods		Master's thesis in Planning, Land and Real Estate Development	
Institutional Perspectives: Territorial Governance by State, Market and Civil Society	Comparative Spatial Planning and Metropolitan Development	Urban Innovation Space	
Land and Real Estate Markets: Smart Governance, Finance and Business Models	In-depth Study of Law and Institutions in Spatial Planning		

Cities, Water and Climate Change

Semester 1		Semester 2	
Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4
Advanced research methods		Master's thesis in Cities, Water and Climate Change	
Institutional Perspectives: Territorial Governance by State, Market and Civil Society	Comparative Spatial Planning and Metropolitan Development	Urban Innovation Space	
	Cities, Water and Climate Change		
Elective course			



Urban and Regional Mobility

Semester 1		Semester 2	
Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4
Advanced research methods		Master's thesis in Urban and Regional Mobility	
Institutional Perspectives: Territorial Governance by State, Market and Civil Society	Comparative Spatial Planning and Metropolitan Development	Urban Innovation Space	
Urban Networks: Accessibility and Mobility			
Elective course			

European Spatial and Environmental Planning (ESEP)

Semester 1		Semester 2	
Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4
Advanced research methods		Master's thesis in European Spatial and Environmental Planning	
Institutional Perspectives: Territorial Governance by State, Market and Civil Society	Comparative Spatial Planning and Metropolitan Development	Urban Innovation Space*	
Sustainability and societal transformations*	International Environmental Politics		
Elective course			

* Students choose either one of these courses

DUAL DEGREE

Strategic Spatial Planning (Dual Degree)

Semester 1		Semester 2	
Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4
Advanced research methods		Master's thesis in Strategic Spatial planning	
Institutional Perspectives: Territorial Governance by State, Market and Civil Society	Comparative Spatial Planning and Metropolitan Development	Urban Innovation Space	
Urban Future Lab – Creative Approaches towards Vision and Strategy Building for Regional Transformation		Work experience	

Planning, Land and Real Estate Development (Dual degree)

Semester 1		Semester 2	
Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4
Advanced research methods		Master's thesis in Planning, Land and Real Estate Development	
Institutional Perspectives: Territorial Governance by State, Market and Civil Society	Comparative Spatial Planning and Metropolitan Development	Urban Innovation Space	
Land and Real Estate Markets: Smart Governance, Finance and Business Models		Work experience	

Cities, Water and Climate Change (Dual degree)

Semester 1		Semester 2	
Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4
Advanced research methods		Master's thesis in Cities, Water and Climate Change	
Institutional Perspectives: Territorial Governance by State, Market and Civil Society	Comparative Spatial Planning and Metropolitan Development	Urban Innovation Space	
	Cities, Water and Climate Change	Work experience	

Urban and Regional Mobility (Dual degree)

Semester 1		Semester 2	
Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4
Advanced research methods		Master's thesis in Urban and Regional Mobility	
Institutional Perspectives: Territorial Governance by State, Market and Civil Society	Comparative Spatial Planning and Metropolitan Development	Urban Innovation Space	
Urban Networks: Accessibility and Mobility		Work experience	

European Spatial and Environmental Planning (ESEP) (Dual degree)

Semester 1		Semester 2	
Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4
Advanced research methods		Master's thesis in European Spatial and Environmental Planning	
Institutional Perspectives: Territorial Governance by State, Market and Civil Society	Comparative Spatial Planning and Metropolitan Development	Urban Innovation Space*	
Sustainability and societal transformations*	International Environmental Politics		
		Work experience	

* Students choose either one of these courses



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 Spatial Planning. 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:
 - Institutional Perspectives
 - Urban Future Labs
 - Werkervaring Duale master.