

**MASTER'S PROGRAMME EUROPEAN  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

**MAASTRICHT UNIVERSITY**

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This report was finalised on 14 April 2020



# REPORT ON THE MASTER'S PROGRAMME EUROPEAN PUBLIC AFFAIRS OF MAASTRICHT 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 European Public Affairs

Name of the programme:	European Public Affairs
CROHO number:	60003
Level of the programme:	master's
Orientation of the programme:	academic
Number of credits:	60 EC
Specializations or tracks:	NA
Location(s):	Maastricht
Mode(s) of study:	full time
Language of instruction:	English
Submission deadline NVAO:	01/05/2020

The visit of the assessment History and International Relations to the Faculty of Arts and Social sciences of Maastricht University took place from the 11<sup>th</sup> of December until the 13<sup>th</sup> of December 2019.

## ADMINISTRATIVE DATA REGARDING THE INSTITUTION

Name of the institution:	Maastricht 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 the 4<sup>th</sup> of February 2019. The panel that assessed the master's programme European Public Affairs consisted of:

- Dr. J.W. (Jan Willem) Honig [chair] is senior lecturer in War Studies, Department of War Studies, King's College London (United Kingdom) and visiting professor of Military Strategy at the Swedish Defence University in Stockholm (Sweden);
- Prof. dr. P. (Peter) Bursens is full professor of Political Sciences at the University of Antwerp (Belgium);
- V. (Vicky) Marissen LLM is partner at consultancy firm EPPA, a company specialised in connecting government and business, and visiting professor at the College of Europe;
- Prof. dr. C.A. (Claire) Dunlop is full professor of Politics and Public Policy and head of research at the Department of Politics at Exeter University (United Kingdom);
- Prof. dr. E.B.A. (Erik) van der Vleuten is professor and Chair of History of Technology and chair of the M.Sc. program Innovation Sciences at the Eindhoven University of Technology;
- R. (Rikst) van der Schoor BA, has started the master's programme Intellectual History at the University of St. Andrews (United Kingdom) in 2018 [student member].

The panel was supported by drs. E.G.M. (Mariette) Huisjes, who acted as secretary.



## WORKING METHOD OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

The site visit to the master's programme European Public Affairs at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of Maastricht University was part of the cluster assessment History and International Relations. Between April 2019 and December 2019 the panel assessed 24 programmes at 8 universities. The following universities participated in this cluster assessment: Erasmus University Rotterdam, Maastricht University, Radboud University Nijmegen, University of Groningen, Leiden University, Utrecht University, University of Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam.

On behalf of the participating universities, quality assurance agency QANU was responsible for logistical support, panel guidance and the production of the reports. Dr. A.H.A.M. (Alexandra) Paffen was project coordinator for QANU. Dr. A.H.A.M. (Alexandra) Paffen, dr. F. (Floor) Meijer, J. (Jaïra) Azaria MA, V.L. (Victor) van Kleef MA, drs. R.L. (Renate) Prenen and drs M. (Mariette) Huisjes acted as secretary in the cluster assessment.

During the site visit at Maastricht University the panel was supported by Mariette Huisjes, a certified NVAO secretary.

### *Panel members*

The members of the assessment panel were selected based on their expertise, availability and independence. The panel consisted of the following members:

- Dr. J.W. (Jan Willem) Honig [chairman] is senior lecturer in War Studies, Department of War Studies, King's College London and visiting professor of Military Strategy at the Swedish Defence University in Stockholm;
- Prof. dr. I.B. (Inger) Leemans is professor Cultural History and director of the Graduate School of Humanities at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam;
- Prof. dr. J.F.J. (Jeroen) Duindam is full professor of Early Modern History and programme director at Leiden University;
- Prof. dr. W.J.H. (Jan Hein) Furnée is full professor of European Cultural History at Radboud University;
- Prof. dr. P. (Peter) Bursens is full professor of Political Sciences at the University of Antwerp;
- Prof. dr. W.P. (Wim) van Meurs is full professor of European Political History and chairman of the department Political History at the Humanities Faculty of Radboud University;
- Prof. dr. E. (Eric) Vanhaute is full Professor of Economic and Social History and World History, as well as head of UGent Research Group Communities, Comparisons, Connections at Ghent University;
- V. (Vicky) Marissen LLM, is partner at consultancy firm EPPA, a company specialised in connecting government and business and Visiting Professor at the College of Europe;
- Dr. N. (Nico) Randerad is Associate Professor at Maastricht University and Interim Director of the Social History Centre for Limburg History;
- Prof. dr. N. (Nanci) Adler is full professor Memory, History, and Transitional Justice at the University of Amsterdam (UvA) en research director Holocaust and Genocide studies at the Nederlands Instituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie (NIOD);
- Prof. dr. K. (Koenraad) Verboven is professor of Ancient History and programme director for History at the University of Ghent;
- Prof. dr. V. (Violet) Soen is an Associate Professor in Early Modern History and chair of the research group Early Modern History at the University of Leuven;
- Prof. dr. C.A. (Claire) Dunlop is full professor of Politics and Public Policy and head of research at the Department of Politics at Exeter University;
- Prof. dr. E.B.A. (Erik) van der Vleuten is professor and chair of History of Technology and chair of the M.Sc. program innovation sciences at the Eindhoven University of Technology;
- R. (Rikst) van der Schoor BA, has started the master's programme Intellectual History at the University of St. Andrews in 2018 [student member];

- M. (Mel) Schickel MA, completed the master's programme History of Society at the Erasmus University Rotterdam in 2018 and is working as external relations officer at the Faculty of Science and Engineering of Maastricht University [student member];
- R. (Rico) Tjepkema is a third year bachelor's student International Relations & International Organization at the University of Groningen [student member].

#### *Preparation*

On 11 March 2019 the panel chair was briefed by QANU on his role, the assessment framework, the working method, and the planning of site visits and reports. A preparatory panel meeting was organised on 14 April 2019. During this meeting, the panel members received instruction on the use of the assessment framework(s). The panel also discussed their working method and the planning of the site visits and reports.

The project coordinator composed a schedule for the site visit in consultation with the Faculty. Prior to the site visit, the Faculty selected representative partners for the various interviews. See Appendix 3 for the final schedule.

Before the site visit to Maastricht University, QANU received the self-evaluation reports of the programmes and sent these to the panel. A selection of final works was made by the panel's chair and the project coordinator. The selection consisted of 15 final work packages and their assessment forms, 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 coordinator and panel chair assured that the distribution of grades in the selection matched the distribution of grades of all available final works.

After studying the self-evaluation report, final work packages and assessment forms, the panel members formulated their preliminary findings. The secretary collected all initial questions and remarks and distributed these amongst all panel members.

At the start of the site visit, the panel discussed its initial findings on the self-evaluation reports and the final works, as well as the division of tasks during the site visit.

#### *Site visit*

The site visit to Maastricht University took place from the 11<sup>th</sup> until the 13<sup>th</sup> of December 2019. Before and during the site visit, the panel studied the additional documents provided by the programmes. An overview of these materials can be found in Appendix 4. The panel conducted interviews with representatives of the programmes: students and staff members, the programme's management, alumni and representatives of the Board of Examiners. It also offered students and staff members an opportunity for confidential discussion during a consultation hour. For the master's programme European Public Affairs, 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.

#### *Consistency and calibration*

In order to assure the consistency of assessment within the cluster, various measures were taken:

1. The panel composition ensured regular attendance of (key) panel members, including the chair;
2. The coordinator or her replacement was present at the panel discussion leading to the preliminary findings at all site visits.

#### *Report*

After the site visit, the secretary wrote a draft report based on the panel's findings and submitted it to the project coordinator for peer assessment. Subsequently, the secretary sent the report to the panel. After processing the panel members' feedback, the project coordinator sent the draft reports



to the Faculty in order to have these checked for factual irregularities. The project coordinator discussed the ensuing comments with the panel's chair and changes were implemented accordingly. The report was then finalised and sent to the Faculty 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*

The panel appreciates the broad scope in the master's programme's European Public Affairs (EPA) profile and acknowledges its practice-oriented niche in combination with theoretical reflection. It is satisfied with the thorough and concise intended learning outcomes which demonstrate a good balance between academic and professional skills. It recommends advocating the academic skills stronger in the presentation of the programme as valuable assets of the academic professional. The intended learning outcomes could be further improved, in the panel's view, by pinpointing the relation between different disciplines and their added value.

### *Standard 2*

The panel finds the EPA master's programme clearly structured and overall well-designed in principle. Although the programme is fully pre-structured, the free choice of assignment and debating topics leave students with enough freedom to direct their own learning process. The panel is satisfied by the content of the courses, as are the students. More attention for public leadership, the role of NGO's, and risk management could further enrich the curriculum, according to the panel.

The programme management is aware of the tension between a practical orientation on the one hand – which is a key characteristic of the programme and is cherished by students – and the more academically oriented intended learning outcomes. It clearly makes an effort to balance the two. The panel fully supports this and compliments the programme on the progress that has been made since the latest accreditation in strengthening the academic element in the curriculum. The final work package also reflects the double orientation of practice and theory. It combines a master's thesis based on research with an internship and an internship report. In the panel's view, a few adaptations could make the final work package more manageable for students. It recommends making the thesis a stand-alone project and separating it both substantively and in time from the internship. Given the practical orientation, the thesis may be relatively short, according to the panel, and the requirements for the thesis should correspond with its limited size. Finally, the panel strongly advocates underlining to students, both prospective and current, that the academic elements in the programme are indispensable elements in the learning environment and are an effective preparation for a successful career.

The panel found the teaching methods in the EPA master's programme excellent. They are varied, rooted in professional practice, and follow the problem-based learning method without being dogmatic about it. The programme has a diverse student population in terms of disciplinary background, nationality and professional experience, which is seen as a source of learning in itself. The panel recommends the programme actively stimulating this diversity, since it is one of the programme's strengths.

The quality of staff is good and well-balanced, the panel found, with an impressive body of guest lecturers, which is much appreciated by the students. There are sufficient tenured staff members, whose research inspires students and who guard academic rigour. Study feasibility, student guidance and services are satisfactory. The panel endorses the decision to teach this international programme in English. All in all, the panel is convinced that the learning environment offered by the EPA master's programme enables students to realise the intended learning outcomes.

### *Standard 3*

The panel is satisfied with the assessment in the EPA master's programme. In fact, some of the assessment procedures are state-of-the-art practices that could serve as sources of inspiration and models of emulation for other programmes. The assessment calibration workshops are an example of such best practices, as are the role of the 'responsible examiner' in thesis assessment and the efficient and effective *modus operandi* of the Board of Examiners.



Quality of assessment is soundly assured, the panel found. The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences developed an assessment policy which specifies all roles and responsibilities and sets the standards for various assessment procedures. The programme's Education Plan explicitly connects forms of assessment to the courses and intended learning outcomes. The Board of Examiners assures that the intended learning outcomes are realised by performing regular checks, screenings and audits. In addition to a recurring agenda of quality checks, the Board of Examiners chooses a specific focus point each year on which it advises the programme management. As such, the panel concludes that the Board of Examiners safeguards the quality of assessment and the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and thus carries out its formal tasks well.

At course level, the assessment methods are sufficiently varied and effective. They fit the goals of the courses and offer an excellent preparation for professional practice. The assessment procedure for the final work package functions well in the panel's view. The panel agreed with the marks awarded and found them well justified on the forms, which indicates the existence of a healthy and mature assessment culture. The panel also values that the responsible examiner is not the thesis supervisor, so that he or she can form an independent judgement. For further improvement, the panel recommends documenting the first and second examiner's comments to increase transparency. It also recommends aligning the criteria on the thesis assessment forms more directly with the intended learning outcomes. In general, the panel concludes that the validity, reliability and transparency of the assessments meet the standard.

#### *Standard 4*

The panel found that the EPA master's programme offers its students a good preparation for the labour market. This view is shared by the programme's alumni, who feel very well prepared, especially by the practical assignments. At the same time, the internship hosts value students' academic capabilities, and say that the students are flexible, critical thinkers, which they appreciate. This is the panel's impression as well, based on its dialogue with some of the students and alumni.

Based on the data in the self-evaluation report, a sample of the final work packages and a dialogue with some of the alumni, the panel concludes that graduates of the EPA master's programme attain the intended learning outcomes set by the programme.

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

#### *Master's programme European Public Affairs*

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, Jan Willem Honig, and the secretary, Mariette Huisjes, 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: 14 April 2020

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

## **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 European Public Affairs (EPA) studies the process in which actors attempt to develop and influence public policy during different stages of the policy-making cycle: the agenda-setting phase, the decision-making phase and the implementation and evaluation phases. It focuses on the European Union, with students learning to understand the multi-level system of governance in the EU and all the actors trying to influence it. The programme aims to deliver academic professionals who understand that contemporary EU policy problems transcend national and disciplinary borders, and that possible solutions to address each problem can vary, often reflecting country-specific preferences or socio-economic conditions. Graduates of the programme have the academic and professional skills necessary to analyse and contextualise this complexity, and to operate in an international environment. Students need to understand and use a variety of disciplines. Political science and public administration form the core of the programme, but a basic understanding of economics and law is also needed to understand policy issues.

The master's programme European Public Administration distinguishes itself from comparable programmes by its practical orientation on the world outside of academe. The principle of 'authentic learning' – an instructional approach focused on real world tasks – is one aspect of the programme in which this orientation is expressed. Another aspect is the close cooperation with the European Institute for Public Administration (EIPA), an organisation that carries out European affairs research and training, mainly for EU member states' and applicant states' civil servants. EIPA staff are directly involved in teaching and programme planning, which ensures that there is a close link between the classroom and the professional world. The mandatory internship is the third aspect that highlights the practical orientation.

The panel appreciates that the master's programme European Public Affairs has chosen a broad, comprehensive approach to the policy process as the stages are intimately connected and alumni will likely be confronted with all of them. It acknowledges the programme's practice-oriented niche, which it regards as an asset. It is further pleased with the cooperation with EIPA. This is an enrichment of the programme and will add to students' preparation for practice. The panel nonetheless recommends, when marketing the programme, placing the academic elements in the profile more in the foreground as equivalent counterparts to the more practice-oriented elements, as these are invaluable prerequisites for being a well-equipped *academic* professional. Graduates should for instance be able to work as researchers for MPs or lobbying firms and even when they write a blog or a tweet, this should be research- and insight-based. A focus on practice is a good niche, but the real value of a university education is that graduates can conduct sound independent research and base their practical insight and judgement on this ability. Although the panel notes that academic competences are scrupulously documented in the intended learning outcomes, they could be profiled more, so that future students and graduates are imbued with their value.

### *Intended learning outcomes*

The programme's intended learning outcomes correspond to the master's level Dublin Descriptors. Among other competences, students must demonstrate advanced knowledge of academic concepts and theories relevant to polity, policy and politics. They must demonstrate the ability to tackle a specific EU-related issue by retrieving the appropriate sources, applying relevant theories and



methods, analysing the collected data, formulating feasible solutions and reporting on the process. They must demonstrate digital skills in the use of social media and digital data sources for both communicative and research purposes.

Through the External Advisory Board – which convenes every two years with alumni and representatives from the professional field – the programme management stays in touch with the labour market. The intended learning outcomes are regularly revised, taking account of changes in academia and the professional world.

The panel finds the intended learning outcomes for the master's programme European Public Affairs thoroughly and concisely formulated and apposite, of the appropriate level and orientation and balancing academic and professional skills. It appreciates the active External Advisory Board. It thinks however that the programme's profile could be sharpened by pinpointing how different disciplines interact within the programme and add value. The faculty calls it a 'primary feature that teaching and research take place within an interdisciplinary setting'. And in the self-evaluation, the programme describes its graduates as professionals 'transcending the mono-disciplinary boundaries and instead applying a multilevel, multifaceted, multidisciplinary approach to understanding and addressing contemporary, international policy problems'. Nevertheless, the panel found that these ambitions are not reflected in the intended learning outcomes. These merely state that graduates 'constructively work and cooperate in international and interdisciplinary teams'. Harmonising these claims about mono-, multi- and interdisciplinarity and integrating them into the intended learning outcomes would give more clarity to the programme's profile and ambitions.

### **Considerations**

The panel appreciates the broad scope in the programme's profile and acknowledges its practice-oriented niche in combination with theoretical reflection. It is satisfied with the thorough and concise intended learning outcomes which demonstrate a good balance between academic and professional skills. It recommends advocating the academic skills stronger in the presentation of the programme as valuable assets of the academic professional. The intended learning outcomes could be further improved, in the panel's view, by pinpointing the relation between different disciplines and their added value.

### **Conclusion**

*Master's programme European Public Affairs:* 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**

#### *Programme language and name*

Given the objective to prepare specialists in European public affairs for professions with an international orientation, the programme's courses are taught in English. Also, both staff and students in this programme form an international community; this is in fact one of its strong points. The panel endorses the decision to teach the programme in English.

#### *Curriculum content and structure*

The academic year at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Maastricht University consists of three periods per semester, with an 8-8-4 week model per semester, where the last period in each academic year is used for independent study. All students in the master's programme European Public Affairs follow three substantive modules, (each 10 EC): 'Perspectives on European governance', 'Lobbying in the EU' and 'Implementation and evaluation'. Part of the lobbying course is a three-day study trip to Brussels. Parallel to the substantive modules runs the integrated skills

track (6 EC), where students learn academic skills such as research design, operationalisation and research methods, and professional skills such as policy writing, digital competences, project management and personal reflection. The third period – in January – is entirely dedicated to intensive workshops in academic and professional skills in preparation for the internship and thesis. In April, students embark on their final work package. This consists of three elements: an internship (or 'internship work', 10 EC), a work report (3,000 words, 4 EC) and an 'internship thesis' (9,000 words, 10 EC).

The panel studied the programme and also a sample of the course literature. The programme's structure, in its view, is clear and well-designed, making it easy to navigate for students. All modules are mandatory, but within each of them there is room for choice. Students can suggest their own preferences for assignments, staff told the panel, and students are nurtured in developing their own interests. Students endorsed this practice to the panel. They feel that the programme gives them much freedom to follow their own learning path. Also, in a more general sense, they mark the programme as highly satisfactory, matching their expectations of offering a thorough preparation for the labour market. The combination of covering much material in a relatively short period, while responding to individual students' wishes and maintaining high student satisfaction, is worthy of a compliment.

The course content is up to standard, the panel found. It lives up to the practice-oriented profile of the programme, by its choice of subjects, the cooperation with EIPA and such elements as the trip to Brussels. At the same time, the programme management is clearly aware of the tension between the orientation on practice and the more academically inclined intended learning outcomes. The panel can see that the programme management tries to balance these and fully endorses this endeavour. The panel would suggest the following areas as a possible enrichment of the master's programme: public leadership, the status and typical role of NGOs in EU policy-making, and risk management.

#### *Final work package*

Students have to write an academic internship thesis, in which they demonstrate their ability to conduct research and communicate their findings to an academic community. Students are advised to choose a thesis topic related to their internship and prepare the thesis during the integrated skills track. The mandatory internship is intended to help students gain first-hand insight into a professional field, to further develop their skills and to help them build a network. Within the boundaries set by the *Thesis and internship manual*, students are free to choose their internship organisation. They receive some examples of previous internships, and vacancies are advertised, but most of all students are urged to be proactive in securing a place. After finishing their internship, students write a report, describing their host organisation, the type of work they have exercised/performed, an example of this work and a reflection on the internship in relation to the learning goals of the EPA master's programme.

The thesis report was added to the final work package on the recommendation of the previous re-accreditation panel to strengthen the academic component of the programme. There are still some teething problems, however. These mainly regard the feasibility of the final work package, both in terms of manageability and workload. Students are asked to draw up a thesis proposal by mid-December, but by this time many of them have not found an internship yet. This makes it hard to create synergy between the two elements. Also, many students experience an intense workload in the final months of the programme, when they simultaneously work full-time in their internship, and in parallel have to complete the thesis and internship report. Furthermore, the lecturers perceive a motivational problem with some students, who find it hard to integrate academic knowledge with practical skills and who ask for less theory and more practice.

The panel first of all lauds the serious efforts the programme management has made to increase the academic component in the programme, while still honouring its practice-oriented character. The present panel fully agrees with the previous panel that this is of critical value. Given the fact that the EPA master's programme attracts practically oriented students, it is understandable that they initially



feel overwhelmed by having to do academic research. However, lecturers told the panel that after overcoming this obstacle, some students express satisfaction and pride. The panel feels strongly that the programme should build on this achievement and seek to extend it to all students.

The panel suggests that cutting the academic thesis loose from the internship and encouraging students to finish it as a stand-alone project before embarking on the internship. This may lighten the burden of the final work package. The internship and the thesis will in most cases be in the same domain anyway, since this is what interests the student, but the synergy that is to be expected from a direct relation between thesis and internship does not outweigh the stress involved with planning this.

Secondly, the panel agrees with the limited size of the thesis. Whereas 9,000 words is relatively short for a master's thesis, this is fully justified by the explicitly practical orientation of the programme and by the combination with the internship and internship report. The panel endorses the strict cap on the number of words (10,000). Not only will this protect students against themselves and staff against excessive workload, being succinct is excellent training for academic professionals. The requirements for the thesis should be in accordance with its limited size and as such correspond with the intended learning outcomes. In general, the panel strongly recommends all programmes in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to harmonise the learning goals, requirements and allotted ECs for theses. If a thesis in one programme is required to be 15,000 words for instance and in another programme 9,000, there should be an explicit rationale for this and the number of EC's given for a thesis should be a proportional to the work that it involves.

Finally, much can be gained, in the panel's view, by painting a positive image of the academic element in the EPA master's programme as inseparably linked with the practical element. Both are necessary attributes of an academic professional. Alumni and guest lectures could for instance be asked to underscore and illustrate the added value of thinking academically and critically. While balancing academic and practical dimensions in the programme will probably remain a challenge, the panel is satisfied to see that the programme made significant positive choices and moved forward since the last re-accreditation. Given the responsiveness, agility and capability of the programme management, the panel has no doubt that the present arrangement will be kept under watch and continually improved.

#### *Teaching methods*

Like the other programmes at Maastricht University, the EPA master's programme follows the problem-based learning method, which encourages students to take charge of their own learning process. Students select their own topics for the debate that takes place in each module, for instance, and they select the topic they wish to work on for their research paper in module 1. They are not seen as consumers of knowledge but encouraged to work actively to deepen their own knowledge. Since the programme embraces 'authentic learning', assignments are inspired by current real-life challenges. Students are invited to examine such challenges from different perspectives, and taught that there are often competing solutions and a diversity of outcomes instead of one correct answer.

The idea behind problem-based learning is that students not only acquire new knowledge, but also skills, such as working towards a solution, doing research, collaborating in groups, presenting results and receiving feedback. Moreover, since students remain active throughout the whole learning process, the knowledge they acquire will be more deeply rooted, as research has shown.

Teaching methods used throughout the programme are interactive lectures, expert seminars, workshops, debates, quizzes and skills training, simulations and role-playing. A highlight in the programme is the study trip to Brussels, during which students see the EU at work by visiting the European Parliament, the Commission, the Council, consultancy firms, a business lobby, Business Europe and the Permanent Representation of the Netherlands to the EU. The trip also offers interesting networking opportunities, for instance to find an internship.

The panel is satisfied with the teaching methods used in the EPA master's programme. It values the problem-based learning format, which fits well with the subject matter of European Studies where problems are mostly complex and can be approached from different angles. Moreover, in the panel's view, it is a great asset for the Dutch academic landscape that problem-based learning is an option for students. Staff told the panel that the problem-based learning method is not applied dogmatically in the EPA master's programme, particularly in the skills courses. The panel fully endorses such a pragmatic approach. Students also told the panel that they are happy with the mix of experts sharing their knowledge on the one hand and self-guided study on the other. The panel recognises that the principles of problem-based learning – such as activating students and a focus on collaborative processes where tutors are facilitators – are prominent in the programme. The panel also much appreciates the 'authentic' character of the teaching, with real-life, topical problems, role-playing and the trip to Brussels as a high point. This is true to the programme's profile and in the panel's view adds greatly to preparing students for a professional career.

One of the programme's strengths is the diversity of its student population, with students having different academic backgrounds, different nationalities and different professional experiences. Students and alumni say they see this diversity as a source of learning. The panel is also highly appreciative of this diversity. It encourages the programme to nurture and stimulate it purposefully. The programme may for instance invest in attracting more students from European regions that are now underrepresented in the student population.

#### *Feasibility and student guidance*

Apart from the final work package discussed above, the panel found no significant obstacles in the programme that prevent a timely completion. In their student chapter of the self-evaluation, students of the 2018 cohort state that the study load of period one, two and four was manageable, but that during their time the study load of period three 'Lobbying in the EU' was too high for a four week, 5 EC course. Students raised this with the programme management and now the course is 8 EC. This demonstrates the responsiveness of the programme managers.

For student guidance, the programme director is the main contact person. He or she meets with students on an individual basis throughout the year. In addition, a mentor programme has been in place since 2018, to help students manage their course load and to encourage continuous progress on the thesis. Each of the core teaching staff mentors five to six students, meeting them at least once a month. The first few are group meetings, the rest is individual. Support in academic writing is offered by the faculty's writing advisor. Apart from group training sessions, students can make individual appointments with the writing advisor to discuss their writing. A study advisor is available for additional assistance. Finally, students can seek peer advice in a closed Facebook group in which students and alumni participate. This group also offers alerts to job openings and internship possibilities. With all these arrangements, the panel finds that student guidance in the master's programme is more than sufficient.

#### *Staff*

Teaching staff in the EPA master's programme that are affiliated with the university are all active researchers and most belong to the department of Political Science. All of the course coordinators are tenured staff, have a PhD and a university teaching qualification. Courses follow the lecturers' research interests, which is stimulating for both students and staff. The programme makes use of many guest lecturers. They either come from the European Institute of Public Administration, or are active lobbyists, staff members to European institutions, journalists, researchers etc. The team of lecturers and tutors in the EPA master's programme thus represents a broad range of expertise and experience. Students are very happy with the expertise of staff -- they even told the panel that some experts are 'mind-blowing'. Because the student cohort in the EPA master's programme is relatively small (25 to 35 new students each year), this enables intensive contacts between staff and students, which the students enjoy.



The panel found that staff is of the appropriate professional level and it is particularly enthusiastic about the impressive pool of guest lecturers. The combination of university staff and guest lecturers provides a good mix of practice orientation and academic rigour.

#### *Programme-specific services*

The Maastricht University library has extensive academic resources and databases useful for the study of European integration. The library facilitates group work by offering dedicated spaces. The geographical situation of Maastricht University close to Brussels, the presence of a Brussels campus, the traditionally strong links between Maastricht and the European Union and the university's status as a centre of expertise about European matters, not only facilitate the organisation of frequent events such as lectures and debates starring protagonists from the EU, but together also offer a uniquely inspiring environment for EPA master's students. The panel suggests that this should be maximally underscored in marketing efforts.

#### **Considerations**

The panel finds the EPA master's programme clearly structured and overall well-designed in principle. Although the programme is fully pre-structured, the free choice of assignment and debating topics leave students with enough freedom to direct their own learning process. The panel is satisfied by the content of the courses, as are the students. More attention for public leadership, the role of NGO's, and risk management could further enrich the curriculum, according to the panel.

The programme management is aware of the tension between a practical orientation on the one hand – which is a key characteristic of the programme and is cherished by students – and the more academically oriented intended learning outcomes. It clearly makes an effort to balance the two. The panel fully supports this and compliments the programme on the progress that has been made since the latest accreditation in strengthening the academic element in the curriculum. The final work package also reflects the double orientation of practice and theory. It combines a master's thesis based on research with an internship and an internship report. In the panel's view, a few adaptations could make the final work package more manageable for students. It recommends making the thesis a stand-alone project and separating it both substantively and in time from the internship. Given the practical orientation, the thesis may be relatively short, according to the panel, and the requirements for the thesis should correspond with its limited size. Finally, the panel strongly advocates underlining to students, both prospective and current, that the academic elements in the programme are indispensable elements in the learning environment and are an effective preparation for a successful career.

The panel found the teaching methods in the EPA master's programme excellent. They are varied, rooted in professional practice, and follow the problem-based learning method without being dogmatic about it. The programme has a diverse student population in terms of disciplinary background, nationality and professional experience, which is seen as a source of learning in itself. The panel recommends the programme actively stimulating this diversity, since it is one of the programme's strengths.

The quality of staff is good and well-balanced, the panel found, with an impressive body of guest lecturers, which is much appreciated by the students. There are sufficient tenured staff members, whose research inspires students and who guard academic rigour. Study feasibility, student guidance and services are satisfactory. The panel endorses the decision to teach this international programme in English. All in all, the panel is convinced that the learning environment offered by the EPA master's programme enables students to realise the intended learning outcomes.

#### **Conclusion**

*Master's programme European Public Affairs:* the panel assesses Standard 2 as 'meets the standard'.

**Standard 3: Student assessment**

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

Over the past four years the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Maastricht University has redefined and enhanced its assessment policy. This policy currently specifies all roles and responsibilities related to assessment within its programmes, and sets the standards for the organisation of exams, the procedures to counter fraud etc. At the programme level, the Education Plan specifies the relationship between the intended learning outcomes, the teaching and the assessment methods. The management and teaching staff ensure the overall quality of assessment based on the Education Plan, the faculty regulations, and guidelines formulated by the Board of Examiners. Throughout the year, the programme director monitors the implementation of the Education Plan by checking the exam results and student evaluations, discussing courses and assessment during meetings of the teaching staff, and annually meeting with course coordinators to talk about past performance and possibilities for improvement.

The Board of Examiners consists of representatives from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and assures assessment quality in the whole faculty. It does so by organising checks, audits and screenings to verify that the intended learning outcomes are realised, and by providing advice to the management. As an example of the first, the Board of Examiners provided scenarios for three different types of calibration sessions and provided guidelines on how to protect academic integrity and counteract fraud. As an example of the second, the Board of Examiners systematically screens and evaluates the distribution of grades in all courses, screens the assessment forms for the final works, participates in thesis grading calibration workshops and re-assesses a sample of final works, on the basis of which it provides an audit report to the programme management. With its thesis assessment audit, the Board of Examiners rotates among the programmes. Each programme gets audited at least once every three years. The audit report is shared with the programme director, and the Board of Examiners subsequently checks whether required actions have been taken. In addition to these regular activities, the Board of Examiners chooses a special focus point each year for screening and advice. This could for instance be the Educational Plans, or the application of the plus/minus grades for participation in tutor groups (see below).

The panel finds the assessment system of the EPA master's programme solid. The assessment methods are linked to the courses and the intended learning outcomes, and all the formal procedures are in place. The panel considers the efficacy and efficiency of the Board of Examiners as exemplifying good practice. With its combination of regular audits and focal points, it could serve as a source of inspiration for other programmes, in the panel's view. The panel congratulates the board members and its supporting staff and encourages them wholeheartedly to follow the chosen course.

*Assessment at course level*

Each of the courses in the EPA master's programme is concluded with a final examination. A range of assessment methods is used throughout the programme, including written exams, take-home exams, papers, group and individual presentations, debates, book reviews and reading commentaries. Particular attention is given to testing via exam formats that are relevant to the professional field. Students are asked, for instance, to make a lobby pitch. All modules are graded by a combination of assessment methods and thus work with a composite grade. The course coordinator and the programme director decide on the relative weight of each partial assessment. Wherever possible and feasible, a first round of feedback is given on drafts, prior to the summative assessment. The feedback is stored on the electronic platform Files4Students and can be accessed by the student at any time.

The panel is satisfied with the assessment in the courses. The forms of assessment are varied and well thought-out. They fit the goals of the courses and are an excellent preparation for professional practice.



### *Assessment of final work package*

The programme's focus on training academic professionals is expressed in the assessment of the final work package. This contains three elements: a thesis (10 EC), internship work (10 EC) and an internship report (4 EC). In order to graduate, students need to receive a 'pass' for their internship work and get satisfactory grades for both their internship report and thesis. These two grades translate into a grade for the final work package on a fifty-fifty basis.

Assessment criteria for the thesis consist of structure, research question and argumentation, and contribution to the professional field. Key criteria for the assessment of the internship are professional attitude, insight into work, analytical ability, writing competence, communication and problem-solving skills. Assessment criteria for the internship report comprise structure, the presentation of host organisation and unit, the internship in practice, the evaluation of the internship, including in relation to the programme. It is the second – or 'responsible' – examiner who takes primary responsibility for the assessment of the thesis and the internship report. He or she is matched with the supervisor by the programme director, who takes into account that the grading pairs should be diverse and vary as much as possible. The responsible examiner is not involved in the thesis trajectory before the final assessment. He or she independently fills out designated assessment forms for the internship report and the thesis and proposes grades for both. The first examiner or supervisor can then add feedback or propose revisions to the feedback and grade. If the two examiners disagree, the programme director appoints a third examiner. The third form assessing the internship work is filled out by the student's supervisor based on communication with the internship host. The internship work is assessed with 'pass' or 'fail'.

The assessment procedure for the final work package seems to function well in the panel's view. The final work package does justice to both the practice-oriented and the academic intended learning outcomes, and the panel finds it cleverly crafted. However, if the programme accepts the panel's suggestion (as mentioned under standard 2) to cut the thesis loose from the package in order to make the whole package more manageable for students, then it would make sense to divide up the assessment as well. The thesis grade would then stand alone and not be part of the mark for the final work package.

The panel appreciates that the second examiner is in the driving seat for two of the three forms. The panel finds this an excellent idea, worthy of emulation, since it guarantees an independent and fresh look at the thesis. Equally impressive are the calibration workshops which stimulate a shared grading practice. Each year, the programme organises three calibration workshops, during which the thesis assessment forms and the ways of providing comments are discussed and calibrated, using the previous year's anonymised versions of a thesis and assessment forms. The calibration workshops are intended for reflection on the weighting of criteria, and for creating awareness of the required standards.

The panel studied a sample of the final work packages and the accompanying assessment forms. It had no reservations about the quality of assessment. All panel members agreed with the marks awarded. The panel also approved of the feedback given on theses, finding that it appropriately captures the strengths and weaknesses of the theses and justifies the grade. This unanimous consent of the panel indicates the existence of a healthy, mature assessment culture. The assessment of the internship reports was found generally adequate, but in some cases overlooked that certain required elements were missing in the reports.

A few formal points could add to the already good quality of the assessments, in the panel's view. Firstly, the criteria on the assessment forms should be more directly linked to the intended learning outcomes, so as to make the relationship more explicit. Secondly, the panel strongly recommends making the independent roles of both examiners more transparent. As it is, their respective input cannot be distinguished on the form. The panel discussed this with the Board of Examiners. Its members say that the one 'unanimous' form is used in order to give students consistent feedback. However, the panel is of the opinion that students have a right to know on what points both

examiners differed, if they did. If the programme chooses not to communicate these differences in judgement with students, then at least they should be recorded and archived. The Board of Examiners conceded this point and told the panel that in practice the exchange of views between both examiners is already documented in e-mail correspondence, but that this custom could be formalised. The panel agrees that this would be the right way to move forward.

### **Considerations**

The panel is satisfied with the assessment in the EPA master's programme. In fact, some of the assessment procedures are state-of-the-art practices that could serve as sources of inspiration and models of emulation for other programmes. The assessment calibration workshops are an example of such best practices, as are the role of the 'responsible examiner' in thesis assessment and the efficient and effective *modus operandi* of the Board of Examiners.

Quality of assessment is soundly assured, the panel found. The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences developed an assessment policy which specifies all roles and responsibilities and sets the standards for various assessment procedures. The programme's Education Plan explicitly connects forms of assessment to the courses and intended learning outcomes. The Board of Examiners assures that the intended learning outcomes are realised by performing regular checks, screenings and audits. In addition to a recurring agenda of quality checks, the Board of Examiners chooses a specific focus point each year on which it advises the programme management. As such, the panel concludes that the Board of Examiners safeguards the quality of assessment and the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and thus carries out its formal tasks well.

At course level, the assessment methods are sufficiently varied and effective. They fit the goals of the courses and offer an excellent preparation for professional practice. The assessment procedure for the final work package functions well in the panel's view. The panel agreed with the marks awarded and found them well justified on the forms, which indicates the existence of a healthy and mature assessment culture. The panel also values that the responsible examiner is not the thesis supervisor, so that he or she can form an independent judgement. For further improvement, the panel recommends documenting the first and second examiner's comments to increase transparency. It also recommends aligning the criteria on the thesis assessment forms more directly with the intended learning outcomes. In general, the panel concludes that the validity, reliability and transparency of the assessments meet the standard.

### **Conclusion**

*Master's programme European Studies*: 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**

#### *Final work package*

The explicit alignment between intended learning outcomes, teaching activities and assessment assures that graduates of the EPA master's programme have met the programme's goals. On top of that, the final work package is a direct measure of what students are capable of. The thesis demonstrates that they can formulate a research question, select empirical data and develop a convincing line of argumentation. Successful completion of the internship demonstrates that students are able to apply their knowledge and understanding to a specific professional environment, while the internship report demonstrates that they can apply skills like reflection and communication, and can connect the knowledge they acquired to practice.

The panel studied a sample of the theses and internship reports. It found the theses of varying quality, but all of them met the intended learning outcomes. At their best, the theses show ambitious,



precisely formulated research questions, a thorough literature review, specialised knowledge, a solid analysis and strong findings. In a few cases, the panel saw that students fail to motivate their choice of analytical framework. The panel judges this to be a point of attention for the research skills training. The best internship reports demonstrate passion, overcoming a steep learning curve and an ability to link real world issues back to the programme. On the whole, though, the panel thinks that there could be more reflection on personal development in the internship reports. This would further strengthen their didactic value. In some internship reports, the required work samples were missing, or at least not archived. Only in a few cases, the panel saw strong synergy between the internship and the theses. That supports the panel's recommendation under standard 2 to separate the thesis from the internship.

#### *Alumni*

The programme keeps track of its alumni after graduation. Of a 36 alumni sample, the overwhelming majority (32) works outside the Netherlands. Of these, 19 per cent work for the European Parliament, for instance as assistant to an MP, 47 per cent hold other jobs in Brussels, and 9 per cent in other European cities. In addition to the European Parliament, consultancy firms and business associations also frequently employ EPA alumni.

The panel talked to some of the EPA alumni. They say that the programme prepared them very well for their careers. Practical assignments such as debates and presentations in particular, were said to have greatly improved their knowledge and skills. They perceive themselves as very much prepared to take responsibility and oriented towards finding solutions. They easily adapt to changing work environments and pick up new knowledge quickly. The programme management told the panel they receive very positive feedback from internship supervisors, who confirm that EPA students are flexible, out-of-the-box thinkers, with an independent attitude.

The panel fully endorses the programme in exploring possibilities to enhance contacts with alumni. This can become a great resource for the programme, future students and the alumni themselves.

#### **Considerations**

The panel found that the EPA master's programme offers its students a good preparation for the labour market. This view is shared by the programme's alumni, who feel very well prepared, especially by the practical assignments. At the same time, the internship hosts value students' academic capabilities, and say that the students are flexible, critical thinkers, which they appreciate. This is the panel's impression as well, based on its dialogue with some of the students and alumni.

Based on the data in the self-evaluation report, a sample of the final work packages and a dialogue with some of the alumni, the panel concludes that graduates of the EPA master's programme attain the intended learning outcomes set by the programme.

#### **Conclusion**

*Master's programme European Public Affairs: the panel assesses Standard 4 as 'Meets the standard'.*

## GENERAL CONCLUSION

The panel assessed standards 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the master's programme European Public Affairs at Maastricht University as 'meets the standard'. Based on the NVAO decision rules regarding limited programme assessments, the panel therefore assesses the programme as 'positive'.

#### **Conclusion**

The panel assesses the *Master's programme European Public Affairs* as 'positive'.

## **APPENDICES**



## APPENDIX 1: INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Dublin descriptors	Intended learning outcomes – upon completion of the MA EPA graduates are able to
1. Knowledge and understanding	<p>1.1 Demonstrate advanced knowledge of contemporary events, developments and debates related to the process of European integration and European public affairs.</p> <p>1.2 Demonstrate advanced knowledge of academic concepts and theories relevant to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>polity</i>: the system of European multilevel governance and the institutional structures forming the framework for political action, while covering normative aspects and dynamics of decision-making.</li> <li><i>policy</i>: the content of the decision-making process as an outcome of actor's behaviour and strategies within the institutional structures, with an understanding of the specificities of policy-making in the European Union across the different policy domains and stages in the policy-making process.</li> <li><i>politics</i>: an understanding of who gets what when and how, with a focus on stakeholders and their agendas, strategies employed to work towards favoured outcomes and the sequencing of time-dependent actions.</li> </ol> <p>1.3 Understand and navigate the field of European Public Affairs.</p>
2. Applying knowledge and understanding	<p>2.1 Demonstrate the ability to tackle a specific EU-related polity, policies and politics issues, by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>retrieving the appropriate primary and secondary sources</li> <li>applying the relevant academic theories and methods</li> <li>analysing the collected data</li> <li>formulating feasible solutions</li> <li>reporting on the above process</li> </ol> <p>2.2 Apply the skills and knowledge gained in a specific professional environment.</p>
3. Making judgements	<p>3.1 Reflect upon and manage the complexity of EU-related policy problems.</p> <p>3.2 Formulate specific courses of action and policy recommendations, whilst being aware of their impact.</p> <p>3.3 Use and reflect upon different theoretical perspectives on policy analysis, critically revise and improve design of policy.</p> <p>3.4 Formulate relevant research questions and related research designs taking into account various actors, relationships and public decision makers.</p>
4. Communication	<p>4.1 Write policy relevant documents for different audiences.</p> <p>4.2 Demonstrate an advanced level of presentation and 'pitching' skills of policy analyses and solutions.</p> <p>4.3 Demonstrate an advanced level of debating skills.</p> <p>4.4 Write an academic thesis.</p>
Dublin descriptors	Intended learning outcomes – upon completion of the MA EPA graduates are able to
5. Learning skills	<p>5.1 Identify relevant (academic) sources for research projects.</p> <p>5.2 Constructively work and cooperate in international and interdisciplinary teams.</p> <p>5.3 Jointly plan and manage (group) projects within a strict time frame (use time-management skills).</p> <p>5.4 Reflect upon one's own learning process.</p> <p>5.5 Demonstrate digital skills in the use of e.g. social media and digital data sources, for both communicative and research purposes.</p>

## APPENDIX 2: OVERVIEW OF THE CURRICULUM

	Substantive Modules	Integrated Skills Track (6 EC)			
September, October	<b>Module 1 Perspectives on European Governance</b>  EC: 10 Core question: Which domestic backgrounds and theoretical concepts matter for European integration? How does Brussels work?  Core disciplines: political science, comparative politics, economics, law, cultural studies, history	<b>Research and Writing skills cluster</b>  QUIZ + DEBATE  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>academic writing</li> <li>research agendas in public affairs</li> </ul>	<b>Writing skills cluster</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>policy writing (brief/ factsheet)</li> <li>EU documents</li> <li>information retrieval</li> </ul>	<b>Communication cluster</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>debating</li> <li>conveying insight from legal and economic data</li> </ul>	Thesis writing
November, December	<b>Module 2 Lobbying in the EU</b>  EC: 10 Core question: How can one influence the EU policy process?  Core disciplines: political science, public administration, cultural studies international relations	<b>Research and Writing skills cluster</b>  QUIZ + DEBATE  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>literature review</li> <li>research designs - conceptualisation - theorisation - operationalisation - methods</li> </ul>	<b>Writing skills cluster</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>policy writing (speaking notes)</li> <li>cover letter writing</li> <li>CV writing</li> </ul>	<b>Communication cluster</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reinforcing debating</li> <li>pitching</li> <li>negotiating</li> </ul>	
January	<b>Intensified Integrated Skills Track</b>  Core question: How to move from thesis proposal to blue-print of thesis? How to match theory with case study and methods?  Core disciplines: political science, public administration	<b>Research skills cluster</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>case study method</li> <li>interviewing</li> <li>survey design</li> <li>document analysis</li> </ul>	<b>Personal effectiveness cluster</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>project and time management</li> <li>peer feedback</li> <li>international</li> </ul>	<b>Communication cluster</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>communicating complexity</li> <li>presenting insight systematically</li> </ul>	
February, March	<b>Module 3 Implementation and Evaluation of EU Policy</b>  EC: 10 Core question: How do EU policies fare in action at the Member State level?  Core disciplines: Public administration, policy analysis, law	<b>Research and Writing skills cluster</b>  QUIZ + DEBATE  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>implementation</li> <li>analyse evaluations</li> <li>policy studies</li> </ul>	<b>Writing skills cluster</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>digital sources</li> <li>evaluating implementation and evaluation studies</li> </ul>	<b>Communication cluster</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reinforce debating</li> <li>presentation</li> <li>reporting</li> </ul>	
April, May, June	<b>Internship Thesis, Work and Report</b>  EC: 24 Core question: How can one apply the acquired knowledge and skills in research practice, and how can one academically reflect upon the practical work experience?	<b>Research, Writing, and Communication skills cluster</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>writing of thesis</li> <li>supervisor's feedback</li> </ul>	<b>Personal effectiveness cluster</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>multi-tasking</li> <li>task prioritisation</li> <li>context switching</li> </ul>	<b>Research, Writing and Communication cluster</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>applying skills</li> </ul>	

The Intensified Integrated Skills Track exist of 6 ECTS. The Track runs in parallel with all modules and is split into two specialisations: (1) research skills and (2) professional skills.

## APPENDIX 3: PROGRAMME OF THE SITE VISIT

### Wednesday 11 December Dag 1

10.45 – 11.15	Aankomst en welkom, incl. korte presentatie FASoS
11.15 – 12.30	Intern overleg en inzage documentatie; incl. inloopspreekuur (12:15-12:30)
12.30 – 13.15	Lunch
13.15 – 13.45	<b>Interview inhoudelijk verantwoordelijke BA ES</b>
13.45 – 14.15	<b>Interview inhoudelijk verantwoordelijke MA ES</b>
14.15 – 14.45	<b>Interview inhoudelijk verantwoordelijke MA EPA</b>
14.45 – 15.30	Uitloop /intern overleg
15.30 – 16.00	<b>Interview studenten bachelor</b> (incl. OC-lid)
16.00 – 16.30	<b>Interview docenten bachelor</b> (incl. OC-lid)
16.30 – 17.00	Pauze / intern overleg
17.00 – 17.30	<b>Interview studenten masters: MA ES/MA EPA</b> (incl. OC-lid)
17.30 – 18.00	Uitloop/ intern overleg

### Thursday 12 December Dag 2

08.45 – 10.30	Aankomst, voorbereiding, inzage documentatie
10.30 – 11.15	<b>Interview docenten masters: MA ES/MA EPA</b> (incl. OC-lid)
11.15 – 11.45	<b>Interview alumni BA</b>
11.45 – 12.15	<b>Interview alumni MA ES/MA EPA</b>
12.15 – 13.00	Lunch
13.00 – 13.30	<b>Interview inhoudelijk verantwoordelijken ESST</b>
13.30 – 14.00	<b>Interview studenten ESST</b> (incl. OC-lid)
14.00 – 14.15	Intern overleg
14.15– 14.45	<b>Interview docenten ESST</b>
14.45 – 15.15	Intern overleg
15.15 – 15.45	<b>Interview examencommissie en studieadviseurs</b> (totaal 7 personen)
15.45 – 16.45	Vorbereiding slotinterviews
16.45 – 17.30	<b>Interview alumni ESST</b>
17.30 – 18.00	Intern overleg

### Friday 13 December Dag 3

08.45 – 09.30	Inzage documentatie
09.30 – 10.00	<b>Slotinterview formeel verantwoordelijken BA ES</b>
10.00 – 10.30	<b>Slotinterview formeel verantwoordelijken MA ES</b>
10.30 – 10.45	Pauze
10.45 – 11.15	<b>Slotinterview formeel verantwoordelijken MA EPA</b>
11.15 – 11.45	<b>Slotinterview formeel verantwoordelijken ESST</b>
11.45 – 14.00	Lunch en Opstellen oordelen
14.00 – 14.30	<b>Mondelinge terugkoppeling BA ES/MA ES/MA EPA/MA ESST</b>
14.30 – 14.45	Uitloop/pauze
14.45 – 15.15	<b>Ontwikkelsprek BA ES</b>
15.15 – 15.45	<b>Ontwikkelsprek MA ES</b>
15.45 – 16.00	Pauze
16.00 – 16.30	<b>Ontwikkelsprek MA EPA</b>
16.30 – 17.00	<b>Ontwikkelsprek ESST</b>
17.00 – 17.30	Afronding (Borrel)



## APPENDIX 4: THESES AND DOCUMENTS STUDIED BY THE PANEL

Prior to the site visit, the panel studied 15 final work packages of the master's programme European Public Affairs. Information on the selected final works 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):

Ma OER 19-20  
Rules & Regulations  
UM Strategisch programma 2017-2021  
FASoS Strategic Plan  
UM Language Policy 2018-2021  
Gedragcode Voertaal van de Universiteit Maastricht  
UM taalbeleid 2018-2021  
Assessment policy FASoS  
Assessment Support Team

Annual Report BoE 2018-19  
Annual Report BoE 2017-2018  
Annual Report European Studies (ES) 2017-18  
Annual Report PC MTI 2017-18  
Annual Report PC MTI 2017-18 appendix 1  
Annual Report PC MTI 2017-18 appendix 2  
Annual Report 2018-2019 PC European Studies  
Annual Report 2018-2019 PC MTI  
Annual Report PC MTI 2018-19 appendix 1  
Annual Report PC MTI 2018-19 appendix 2  
Annual Report GPC Europe and a Globalising World 2019  
Minutes Meeting External Advisory Board  
Minutes Meeting EAB European Studies Programmes  
Notes EAB ES GDS  
Course Book ES Master Thesis  
Mentor Programme  
Data on dropouts (all programmes)  
Keuzegids Ma (2019 and 2020)  
Distribution of thesis grades (all programmes)  
Plagiarism check report for one of the theses studies  
Format Scripts for calibration workshops  
Minutes MA ES calibration workshop 2018/19  
Format BoE audit  
Instruction for auditors BoE audit  
Handbook MA EPA  
Internship and Thesis Manual  
Overview Internship Hosts  
Overview Thesis Topics  
Skills Training Track

Full portfolios (study material, assignments, exams, evaluation forms) of the following courses:

'Implementation and Evaluation of EU Policy'  
'Perspectives on European Governance'  
'Lobbying in the European Union'