

ONDERZOEKERIJ

Research Master Development and  
Socialisation in Childhood and  
Adolescence

Utrecht University

Report of the limited programme assessment

De Onderzoekerij  
Vondellaan 58  
2332 AH Leiden

Email: [info@onderzoekerij.nl](mailto:info@onderzoekerij.nl)  
Internet: [www.onderzoekerij.nl](http://www.onderzoekerij.nl)



# Contents

Contents.....	3
Executive summary.....	4
1. Introduction .....	6
1.1 Administrative data .....	6
1.2 Introduction .....	6
1.3 Panel composition .....	6
1.4 Working method.....	7
2. Review .....	9
2.1 Intended learning outcomes .....	9
2.2 Teaching-learning environment .....	10
2.3 Student assessment.....	14
2.4 Achieved learning outcomes .....	15
3. Strengths and recommendations.....	17
3.1 Strengths of the programme .....	17
3.2 Recommendations.....	17
4. Conclusion.....	18
Appendix A – Panel composition and programmes of the cluster.....	19
Appendix B – Schedule of the visit .....	21
Appendix C – Documents studied .....	22
Appendix D – Abbreviations .....	23



## Executive summary

The outcome of the external assessment of the research master's programme Development and Socialisation in Childhood and Adolescence (DaSCA) of Utrecht University (UU) by an NVAO approved panel is positive.

The programme aims to train students to become qualified researchers with a solid theoretical and methodological basis for the analyses of psychosocial development during childhood and adolescence in the context of family, peers, school and the larger society. The programme distinguishes itself by offering a specialised programme on psychosocial development of children and adolescents in context with a focus on both normal and abnormal development. DaSCA prepares students for both an academic career and employment in a research setting outside the university.

The academic objectives of the programme are adequate in terms of content, orientation and level. The panel greatly values the attention for both methodology and theory in the objectives.

The two-year programme is an appropriate reflection of the intended learning outcomes, offering theoretical and methodological knowledge and skills as well as academic and research skills. According to the panel there is a strong research orientation and students are actively trained and guided to identify their own research interests and ambitions. The panel appreciates the attention to ethics given in the programme. The programme focusses mainly on academic research. The panel recommends the programme to further incorporate an applied focus in the curriculum.

According to the panel, the programme can make some improvements in its efforts regarding internationalisation. The panel recommends the programme to better encourage students to spend part of their studies at a university abroad more extensively and put more effort in attracting international students. Furthermore, the panel advises the programme to pay more attention to the perceived study load of students, especially in the first semester. It recommends dividing the study load more evenly over the year.

The panel regards the lecturers in the programme to be renowned researchers with strong international reputations. The panel also considers the lecturers to be very committed.

The research master's programme has an adequate assessment system. All tests are valid, reliable and transparent, and students get feedback on assessments. Moreover, the panel thinks highly of the expertise and operational capacity of the Board of Examiners.

All academic objectives are assessed in an integrated way in the master thesis. The panel is impressed by the thoughtful and extensive procedure to safeguard the quality of the master theses. It solely encourages the programme to make the process on how the different assessors involved come to the final decision about the grade more visible for students.

The panel established that the academic objectives of the research master's programme are achieved by the end of the curriculum. The theses are of good quality and reflect the research context of the programme. Based on the performance of alumni the panel concludes that the programme prepares students very well for a research career.



The chair and the secretary 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 May, 2021

Janke Cohen-Schotanus  
(chair)

Annemarie Venemans  
(secretary)



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Administrative data

Name of the programme:	Development and Socialisation in Childhood and Adolescence (research)
CROHO number:	60382
Level of the programme:	Master of science
Orientation of the programme:	Academic
Study load:	120 EC
Location:	Utrecht
Variant:	Full-time
Expiration of accreditation:	1 November 2021

## 1.2 Introduction

This report focuses on the assessment of the research master's programme Development and Socialisation in Childhood and Adolescence (DaSCA). This assessment forms part of a cluster assessment of thirteen research master programmes at seven universities. In total, fifteen panel members participated in this cluster assessment. Appendix A provides an overview of the thirteen participating research masters and the composition of the total panel.

The assessment is based on the standards and criteria described in the NVAO Assessment framework for the higher education accreditation system of the Netherlands 2018 (limited framework). Research master's programmes must meet a number of additional criteria as described by the NVAO (specification of additional criteria for research master's programmes, 2016).

## 1.3 Panel composition

For every online visit, a (sub)panel was composed, based on the expertise and availability of panel members. Each (sub)panel consisted of five members, including the chair and the student member. The panel that assessed the research master programme DaSCA consisted of the following members:

- Prof. dr. Janke Cohen-Schotanus (chair) Professor emeritus of research of education in the medical sciences;
- Prof. dr. Caroline Braet, Professor of Developmental Psychopathology, Department of Developmental, Personality and Social Psychology at Ghent University;
- Prof. dr. Detlev Leutner, Professor of Instructional Psychology, Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Duisburg-Essen;
- Yvonne Schittenhelm, BSc (student member), Master Individual Differences and Assessment, Tilburg University;
- Prof. dr. Karine Verschueren, Professor School and Developmental Psychology, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, KU Leuven.



The panel was supported by dr. Annemarie Venemans-Jellema, who acted as secretary.

All panel members and the secretary have signed a declaration of independence and confidentiality. In this declaration they affirm not to have had any business or personal ties with the programme in question for at least five years prior to the review.

The NVAO approved the composition of the panel on 26 November 2020.

## 1.4 Working method

### *Preparation*

On 14 January, the panel of the entire cluster held a general online kick off meeting. In this meeting, the panel received an introduction to the assessment framework and discussed the working methods in preparation to and during the online visits.

The programme drew up a self-evaluation describing the programme's strengths and weaknesses. This self-evaluation included a chapter in which the students reflected on the programme. The panel members prepared the assessment by analysing the self-evaluation report and the appendices provided by the institution. The panel also studied a selection of fifteen master theses and the accompanying assessment forms from the programme. The theses selection was made by the panel's secretary based on a provided list of at least fifty theses of the most recent years. In the selection, consideration was given to a variation in assessments (grades) and topics.

The panel members individually formulated their preliminary findings and a number of questions they want to raise during the online visit. The secretary made an overview of these preliminary findings and questions and sent it to the panel members as a starting point for the preparation of the panel during the online visit.

To further ensure that the different panels used the same working method and approach for all thirteen programmes in the cluster, the two chairs and the two secretaries had two additional meetings: one prior to the first visit and one halfway through all the visits.

### *Online visit*

The online visit took place on 11 March, 2021 (see Appendix B). During the preparatory meeting, the panel discussed the preliminary findings and decided which questions to raise in their meetings with the programme representatives. During the visit, the panel spoke with representatives of the management, students, lecturers, alumni, and the Board of Examiners. Everybody involved in the programme had the opportunity to inform the panel in confidence about matters they consider important to the assessment. No one made use of this opportunity. The panel used the last part of the online visit to evaluate the interviews and had a second meeting with the programme's management to receive answers to any remaining questions. At the end of the visit, the chair presented the panel's preliminary findings and impressions of the programme.



### *Report*

The secretary drew up a draft report based on the panel's findings. This draft report was presented to the members of the panel and adjusted on the basis of their feedback. After adoption, the draft report was sent to the institution for verification of factual inaccuracies. The secretary discussed the programme's comments with the chair, after which the secretary drew up the final report and circulated it to the panel for a final round of comments.

The report follows the four standards such as set of in the NVAO's Assessment Framework 2018 (limited framework): 1) the intended learning outcomes, 2) the teaching-learning environment, 3) assessment, and 4) achieved learning outcomes. Regarding each of the standards, the assessment panel gave a substantiated judgement on a three-point scale: meets, does not meet, or partially meets the standard. The panel subsequently gave a substantiated final conclusion regarding the quality of the programme, also on a three-point scale: positive, conditionally positive, or negative.

### *Development dialogue*

Although clearly separated from the process of the programme assessment, the assessment panel members and programme representatives met to conduct the development dialogue, with the objective to discuss future developments of the programme in light of the outcomes of the assessment report.





## 2. Review

### 2.1 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, analysis, and considerations*

The research master DaSCA is one of seven research master's programmes of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences (FSBS) of Utrecht University (UU), which are organised within the Graduate School of Social and Behavioural Sciences (GSSBS). GSSBS is chaired by the vice-dean, who is advised by the Board of Studies (BoS), comprised of the programme coordinators of the seven research masters. Most teachers of the programme work together as researchers within Child and Adolescence Studies (CAS), a research programme of the FSBS.

The programme aims students to become qualified researchers with a solid theoretical and methodological basis for the analyses of psychosocial development during childhood and adolescence in the context of family, peers, school and the larger society. DaSCA prepares students for both an academic career and employment in a research setting outside the university.

The programme has compared itself to other research master's programmes in the field of psychology, behavioural sciences or developmental sciences in the Netherlands. The programme at the UU distinguishes itself by offering a specialised programme on psychosocial development of children and adolescents in context with a focus on both normal and abnormal development. In addition, the programme specifically focusses on developmental psychology, psychopathology and the study of psychosocial development, rather than on educational sciences and the study of cognitive development and learning. According to the panel, a research-oriented programme with this focus is unique in the Netherlands.

DaSCA formulated intended learning outcomes (the programme uses the term academic objectives) in line with the Dublin descriptors. Based on these objectives, the programme distinguishes theoretical-analytical skills, research skills, and communication skills. The panel studied this overview and deems the academic objectives and corresponding skills appropriate and insightful for a research master's programme. The academic orientation and master's level are clearly visible through the link with the Dublin descriptors. The panel greatly values the attention for both methodology and theory in the objectives. It is also pleased with the way ethical issues are addressed in the academic objectives.

The programme facilitates a selection of highly motivated students to meet the entry-requirements for the postmaster training in health psychologist (*GZ psycholoog*) or remedial educational generalist (*Orthopedagoog Generalist*). As evidence-based clinical practice is much needed, the panel applauds the intentions of the programme to educate researchers who can effectively bridge the gap between research and clinical practice.



*Conclusion*

The panel concludes that the final qualifications of the programme are of the right level and depth. They well-reflect the unique characteristics and the research orientation of the programme. The programme therefore meets standard 1.

**2.2 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, analysis, and considerations*

DaSCA is a full-time programme of 120 EC, divided into four semesters. In the first year, each semester consists of four courses (each of 7.5 EC). The first year consists of three types of courses: (a) general courses on theory and research in development and socialisation in childhood and adolescence, (b) methodology and statistics courses, and (c) two research practica.

The theoretical courses focus on: 'Human Development and Developmental Psychopathology', 'Context of Psychosocial Development Family Processes', 'Peer Relationships, and Culture', 'Relationships, Personality, and Adjustment in Adolescence', and 'Societal and Cultural Perspectives on Development and Socialisation'. The methodology and statistics courses are 'Multivariate statistics in practice' and 'Introduction in multilevel and structural equation modelling'. The research practica integrate the knowledge and insights from the theoretical and methodological courses.

The panel is of the opinion that there is an adequate balance between theoretical courses, methodology, and research skills in the first year. Some students mentioned during the interview that they would appreciate a more extensive focus on younger children in addition to older children and adolescents. The programme management explained that focusing on older childhood and adolescence is a deliberate choice, in line with the research focus of the teachers. However, students have the opportunity to focus on early childhood during assignments. The panel understands this choice, but encourages the programme to think of other ways to accommodate this desire, for example by offering an elective in this field.

The second year of DaSCA includes a course on academic and research skills, a course on assessment, treatment and evaluation, an elective course, an internship (each of 7.5 EC), and a master thesis (30 EC). The elective is a course from another research master, a course from a disciplinary academic one-year master programme extended by an additional assignment, or an additional internship of 7.5 EC within or outside the university. During the internship, students have to get acquainted with various steps in doing research, as well as with the daily routines and workings of a research group. Writing and developing the master's thesis is the major integrating activity in the second year of the programme. Under supervision, students conduct all aspects of the empirical cycle.

Although the programme comprises only one elective, students experience sufficient opportunities to personalise their study path by choosing specific topics of course assignments, by choosing the specific research group for their internship, and by choosing the topic of their thesis.

The DaSCA programme offers the possibility of obtaining a clinical starting qualification for the postmaster training in health psychologist or remedial educational generalist. In the first year, the programme is exactly the same for both the academic and the clinical track. The most important difference in the second year is the replacement of the elective and internship with a clinical



internship. The previous panel recommended to critically consider the added value of the clinical track. According to the self-evaluation report, there is a clear need for education that enables students to prepare for a career that integrates research and clinical practice. During the online visit, the programme management explained that only highly motivated students can enroll in the clinical track. The panel agrees with the programme that there is a clear need for scientist practitioners. It is of the opinion that the programme found a good way to implement the clinical route in the programme. It agrees that also in the clinical track there is an equally strong research focus.

The panel is of the opinion that the programme is organised in a structured manner. According to the panel there is a gradual build-up of theoretical courses to integration in practicals and research projects. Students wrote in the student chapter of the self-evaluation report that the rigorous coursework they complete in the beginning of the programme prepares them well for the research they complete in the second year of the programme.

The panel values the research-oriented nature of the programme, evidenced by a total of 30 EC of courses in methodology & statistics and research skills, 7.5 EC internship, and 37.5 EC allocated to research seminars and thesis. Although the programme offers non-academic internships and thesis topics, students and alumni feel that non-academic internship opportunities are limited and not particularly encouraged by the programme. In addition, the panel got the impression that the courses particularly focus on conducting scientific research, and they prepare for a position as a PhD student. As the programme's aim is to also deliver researchers ready for a position at a non-academic research institute, the current learning environment does not seem to be fully aligned with the academic objectives. The panel recommends the programme to further incorporate an applied focus in the curriculum.

According to the self-evaluation report, there is a strong emphasis on ethical standards in the DaSCA programme. During the online visit, the programme management explained that in all theoretical courses ethical issues are discussed. During one of the research practica, students conduct an experiment in which they have to reflect on ethical issues. In addition, all thesis projects include the need to obtain ethical approval. The panel appreciates the attention to ethics given in the programme.

The language of instruction for the DaSCA programme is English. FSBS wants to offer all research master programmes in an international environment, that students when they graduate are likely to encounter in their future career. English is the current lingua franca of scientific research and renowned research is carried out in an international context. According to the programme, English is therefore considered to have substantial value for the students / graduates since it is an elementary requirement on the labour market. The panel endorses this.

The previous accreditation panel recommended to work on students' mobility during the programme. The programme has rearranged the schedule of the first semester in the second year, enabling second-year students to broaden their horizon internationally. However, the panel noted that hardly any student makes use of this opportunity. The panel states that going abroad helps students to develop a truly international orientation and to start building their own international research network. It therefore recommends the programme not only to allow students to spend part of their studies at a university abroad, but also encourage it.

The didactical concept of the programme is active learning. Feedback is seen as an essential part of effective learning, so DaSCA students receive feedback (formative assessment) about their progress and accomplishments at multiple points throughout each course. The panel feels that this didactical concept is supportive for the learning process of the students. A strong feature of the programme is



its small scale which stimulates collaboration and provides ample opportunities for feedback between students and staff.

The panel noted that the programme pays a lot of attention to community building. Students follow each of the courses and research seminars of the first year together. In addition, students and staff regularly meet together. For example, the self-evaluation report states that during the internship, students participate in different projects, attend staff meetings, give presentations of their own projects, and share the social and the intellectual life of the departments involved. Students mentioned that they feel part of the scientific community.

### *Admission*

The DaSCA programme is primarily designed for talented students with a strong motivation for scientific research. Admission procedures and criteria are clearly presented in the self-evaluation report. The programme is a selective master programme with a yearly intake between thirteen and twenty students of which roughly 25% is of foreign origin. The programme aims at enrolling fifteen to twenty new students per academic year, because of the individualised education.

Strict criteria are in place, such as an academic bachelor's degree in social or behavioural sciences, academic achievements, methodological and statistical skills (courses for about 20 EC), and English language proficiency. Requirements that are lacking can be remedied in a Summer School in Methods and Statistics offered by the FSBS. The panel is positive about the sophisticated admission procedure, which carefully looks for a good match between prospective students and programme. It is clear to the panel, that the programme has been able to attract a high-quality group of students. However, despite the efforts made by the programme for attracting international students, the number of international students is still somewhat limited. The panel recommends further stimulating the inflow of international students.

### *Staff*

One of the appendices of the self-evaluation report contains a list of the academic staff members. All staff members involved in the programme (n=14) are assistant, associate or full professors, having a University Teaching Qualification (UTQ) or even a Senior university Teaching Qualification (STQ). All teachers are involved in current research activities of five departments: Clinical Child and Family studies, Youth and Family, Interdisciplinary Social Science, Developmental Psychology, and Methodology and Statistics.

During the online visit, the panel confirmed the extensive involvement and enthusiasm of the staff. In addition, students were very pleased about the involvement of staff members. According to the students, there is always a lot of interaction between the staff and the students. Students appreciate the open-door policy and accessibility of the staff. One minor concern of the panel is the relatively small number of staff members involved in the programme. According to the panel, this size of the teaching staff may make the programme somewhat more vulnerable to consequences of potential drop-out.

The content of the programme is closely connected to the research that is executed by the five participating departments, which is visible in the content of the curriculum and theses. In 2017, the research of the departments Developmental Psychology and Methodology and Statistics was evaluated in the Research Assessment Psychology by an international review board of senior scholars according to the guidelines of the Standard Evaluation Protocol 2015-2021 (SEP). The research of the



departments Clinical Child and Family studies, Youth and Family, and Interdisciplinary Social Science was evaluated in the Research Assessment Pedagogical and Education Science in 2018. All of the departments scored very good to excellent on all the assessment points.

The panel recognises the staff's scientific quality and international academic reputation. Their main areas of research indicate that the scientific staff has sufficient expertise to execute the programme.

#### *Study load and study guidance/mentoring*

During the online visit the panel asked about the feasibility of the programme. Students reported to the panel that they feel that especially the first part of the programme is challenging. In the student chapter, the students recommended easing students more gradually into the programme. In addition, students requested that teachers coordinate more amongst themselves to prevent overlapping deadlines throughout the semester.

The panel is of the opinion that this has to do with the high concentration of teaching, learning and assessment in a relatively short period of time. It therefore strongly recommends the programme to divide the study load more evenly over the year. In addition, extending the first semester with, for example, an introduction week, in which the working method and didactical concept are introduced would help to get acquainted with the programme.

Throughout the programme, students receive extensive supervision and tutoring. Besides supervision of research, students also get a tutor who monitors the study progress of students throughout the entire two years, advises students on programme-related issues, discusses with them possible causes of problems or delays, and helps them improve their planning and results. The panel highly appreciates the support and guidance the tutor offers to the students. During the online visit, students explained to the panel that they are very pleased with this mentoring by the tutor.

#### *COVID-19*

Due to COVID-19 almost all education of the programme switched to online teaching and assessment in the past year. The panel asked students and teachers about their experience with online teaching. Whilst covid-19 evidently had an impact on the interaction between student and teachers, they both mentioned that there was still a lot of social interaction and discussion possible. Given the nature of the assessments in DaSCA, the impact in terms of required changes in the form of the assessments was relatively small. Also, the thesis defense and graduation ceremony were held in the more or less same format as before, but now online.

The programme management told they will soon evaluate what lessons can be learnt from this pandemic. There might be some measures to be kept after COVID-19, for example the '*kennisclips*', short movies on certain topics. The panel concluded that the programme adequately adapted to the COVID-19 situation and still allows students to achieve the academic objectives.

#### *Conclusion*

The panel concludes that the programme fulfils all specific requirements for the teaching and learning environment of a research master's programme and therefore meets standard 2.



### 2.3 Student assessment

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

#### *Findings, analysis, and considerations*

##### *Assessment policy and methods*

The panel speaks highly of the assessment policy, that is described in the self-evaluation report. DaSCA's assessment policy is based on four pillars: validity, reliability, utility and impact. To safeguard validity, the programme aligns assessments with the learning goals. To safeguard reliability, the programme uses the four-eye principle in grading the Research seminar, the internships and the master thesis. To safeguard utility, students are informed about the assessments in for example the study guide and course manual. To safeguard the impact, there is a good alignment between intended learning outcomes, teaching and learning activities and assessment.

The panel is pleased that the intended learning outcomes are measured with a variety of assessment methods, such as written essays, reviews, exams, presentations, and discussion questions. It is also positive about the implementation of peer feedback and other types of formative assessments.

##### *Grading of the theses*

The panel established an extensive process for grading the thesis project. First, two members of the BoS and the thesis proposal supervisor evaluate the thesis proposals. In addition, the proposal must be approved by the Ethical Review Committee of the FSBS.

Second, the master thesis is graded by the supervisor and an independent second grader who is a DaSCA teacher not involved in the supervision. In case of a large discrepancy between the grade of the supervisor and the second grader, the DaSCA coordinator acts as a moderator to achieve more agreement. The thesis is graded on scientific contribution, theoretical embeddedness, appropriateness of methodology, appropriate reporting of the results, depth of discussion and written presentation. In addition, the supervisor (but not the second grader) grades the student's work independency. Thus, the supervisors assess the product and the process separately.

The thesis is publicly defended in a meeting of a Thesis Examination Committee. Students shortly present their thesis and respond to questions raised by two examiners, one from the DaSCA programme, the other examiner is a teacher from another research master programme of the GSSBS. The final decision on the grade is made after the defence by the Thesis Examination Committee. This decision is based on the proposed grade by the supervisor and second grader, the two examiners and the DaSCA coordinator.

The panel is impressed by the thesis assessment procedure. In its opinion, it is an intensive procedure, but it guarantees quality of research and uniformity of quality standards across all research master's programmes of FSBS. Based on the completed assessment forms the panel studied, it established that the forms include extensive written feedback of the supervisor and second assessor.

However, the panel has two points of improvement with respect to the thesis assessment. First it suggests the programme to make more transparent for students how the different assessors involved, come to the final decision about the grade. Second, the panel learnt during the interview with members of the Board of Examiners (BoE) that the benchmark the programme uses for thesis



assessment is an average of 7.5. The panel wonders if this benchmark shouldn't be higher, given the relatively low grades that have been given to theses the panel assessed (see also standard 4).

#### *Board of Examiners*

There is one BoE for all seven research master programmes of FSBS. Each research master programme has one person in the BoE that is responsible for that specific programme.

The panel reviewed the activities of the BoE in monitoring the quality of examinations. Once a year, the vice-dean, each research master coordinator, the chair of the BoE and the DaSCA member of the BoE, have a meeting in which they discuss the assessment plan and theses. Yearly, the BoE checks the level of theses by reading the best and worst theses. In addition, the BoE yearly prepares the Education and Examination Regulations (EER) and communicates this in a meeting with the programme coordinators. The BoE reports to the vice-dean who may use this information in the annual quality assurance meetings with the programme coordinators. The panel is of the opinion that the BoE is very well organised and safeguards the quality of the assessments in a structured and accurate manner.

#### *Conclusion*

The panel concludes that DaSCA has an adequate assessment system and pro-active BoE. The programme therefore meets standard 3.

## **2.4 Achieved learning outcomes**

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

#### *Findings, analysis, and considerations*

The panel read fifteen theses of the programme. In general, it considered these to be of high quality. According to the panel, students paid a lot of attention to high standards for all phases of the research, like a (recent) theoretical framework, high-quality design, advanced statistics, thorough discussion, and attention for the implications. The theses demonstrated that DaSCA graduates are capable of performing scientific research on a high level. The panel noted that the grades it would have given are slightly higher than the grades the assessors of DaSCA gave. The panel is convinced that graduates achieve the intended learning outcomes of the programme.

The panel established that many theses led to joint publications, which underlines their general quality. Since the last evaluation in 2015, no less than forty DaSCA theses have been published, some even in top journals in the field. Also, several students have received awards and prizes for their master thesis and their contributions to the field. According to the panel, these achievements are further evidence of the high quality of graduates of the programme.

The panel noticed that the alumni of the programme generally appear to find appropriate positions: 42% have entered a PhD programme at different universities in the Netherlands and internationally, 24% work at clinical institutions, often combining clinical work and research, others found jobs as researcher (9%), policy maker (8%) or other professions.



*Conclusion*

The panel concludes that students of the programme achieve an adequate final level and find suitable jobs. The programme therefore meets standard 4.





## 3. Strengths and recommendations

### 3.1 Strengths of the programme

- Curriculum – There is a balanced mix of theoretical and methodological courses in the curriculum;
- Didactical concept – The active learning approach stimulates students to actively develop new knowledge and skills. Working in small groups contributes to students' community feeling;
- Teaching team – The teaching staff is enthusiastic, well-qualified and knowledgeable in their respective areas. They are active researchers and able to bring in the latest developments in their field;
- Master thesis procedure and outcome – The programme has a thoughtful and extensive procedure to safeguard the quality of the master thesis both in terms of contents and assessment and theses are of high quality;
- High quality end products – The overall academic quality of the studied theses is very high.

### 3.2 Recommendations

- Study load – Pay more attention to the perceived study load of students, especially in the first semester, by dividing the study load more evenly over the year;
- Internationalisation – Encourage students to do part of their study abroad and increase the inflow of international students;
- Final grade – Make more visible for students how the different assessors involved in the thesis come to the final decision about the grade;
- Applied research focus – Further incorporate an applied focus in the curriculum in order to pay more attention for career opportunities outside academia.



## 4. Conclusion

In sum, the panel concludes that the academic objectives of DaSCA meet the standards required for a research master's programme. The panel is positive about the content of the curriculum, meeting the programme's academic objectives. The panel regards the lecturers in the programme to be both skilled and motivated. According to the panel, the assessment procedures are up to standard. The quality of the theses is very good and students feel well-prepared for a research career.

Standard	Judgement
Standard 1	Meets the standard
Standard 2	Meets the standard
Standard 3	Meets the standard
Standard 4	Meets the standard
Final conclusion	<b>Positive</b>



# Appendix A – Panel composition and programmes of the cluster

Panel composition of the cluster:

- Prof. dr. Janke Cohen-Schotanus (chair) Professor emeritus of Research of Education in the Medical Sciences;
- Prof. dr. Rob Ruiters (chair), Professor of Health and Social Psychology, Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience at Maastricht University;
- Prof. dr. Lidia Arends, Professor of Statistics and Research Methodology, Department of Psychology, Education & Child Studies at Erasmus University Rotterdam;
- Prof. dr. Caroline Braet, Professor of Developmental Psychopathology, Department of Developmental, Personality and Social Psychology at Ghent University;
- Prof. dr. Rachel Gibson, Professor of Politics, Department of Politics, University of Manchester;
- Prof. dr. Harm Hospers, Professor emeritus of Applied Health Psychology;
- Prof. dr. Detlev Leutner, Professor of Instructional Psychology, Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Duisburg-Essen;
- Prof. dr. Maike Luhmann, Professor of Psychological Methods, Department of psychology, Ruhr University Bochum;
- Hanne Oberman, MSc (student member). Methodology and Statistics for the Behavioural, Biomedical, and Social Sciences, Utrecht University (graduated in 2020);
- Prof. dr. Arne Roets, Professor of Social Psychology, Faculty of psychology and educational sciences, Department of Developmental, Personality, and Social Psychology, Ghent University;
- Prof. dr. Guus Smeets, Professor of Education in Psychology, Erasmus School of Social and Behavioural Sciences at Erasmus University Rotterdam;
- Yvonne Schittenhelm, BSc (student member), Master Individual Differences and Assessment, Tilburg University;
- Marie Stadel, MSc (student member), Behavioural and Social Sciences Research Master, University of Groningen (graduated in 2020);
- Prof. dr. Lieven Verschaffel, Professor of Educational Psychology, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, KU Leuven;
- Prof. dr. Karine Verschueren, Professor School and Developmental Psychology, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, KU Leuven.

The cluster is composed of thirteen programmes:

- M Individual Differences and Assessment (research), Tilburg University;
- M Behavioural Science (research), Radboud University;
- M Clinical and Developmental Psychopathology (research), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam;
- M Social Psychology: Regulation of Social Behaviour (research), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam;
- M Psychology (research), University of Amsterdam;
- M Communication Science (research), University of Amsterdam;
- M Educational Sciences: Learning in Interaction (research), Utrecht University;



- M Methodology and Statistics for the Behavioural, Biomedical and Social Sciences (research), Utrecht University;
- M Development and Socialisation in Childhood and Adolescence (research), Utrecht University;
- M Social & Health Psychology (research), Utrecht University;
- M Behavioural and Social Sciences (research), University of Groningen;
- M Psychology (research), Leiden University;
- M Developmental Psychopathology in Education and Child Studies (research), Leiden University.



## Appendix B – Schedule of the visit

11 March, 2021

Time	Session
08.30 – 10.00	Preparation panel
10.00 – 10.45	Management
10.45 – 11.00	Evaluation
11.00 – 11.45	Students
11.45 – 12.00	Evaluation
12.45 – 13.30	Lecturers
13.30 – 13.45	Evaluation
13.45 – 14.15	Alumni
14.15 – 14.30	Evaluation
14.30 – 15.00	Board of Examiners
15.00 – 15.30	evaluation and preparing questions for management
15.30 -16.00	Second meeting management
16.00 – 17.30	Evaluation
17.30 – 17.45	Presentation of first findings



## Appendix C – Documents studied

- Self-evaluation report with appendices
  - Appendix 1, Assessment report of the previous accreditation
  - Appendix 2, Recommendations from the previous accreditation and the follow-up of these recommendations
  - Appendix 3, List of intended learning outcomes
  - Appendix 4, Overview of DaSCA curriculum with a short course description
  - Appendix 5, Inflow and outflow of students
  - Appendix 6, Overview of DaSCA staff
  - Appendix 7, Education and Examination Regulations
  - Appendix 8, Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education
- Fifteen theses with assessment forms
- Assessment plan DaSCA 2021
- List of published DaSCA theses



## Appendix D – Abbreviations

BAPD	basic entry psychodiagnostics
BoE	Board of Examiners
BoS	Board of Studies
CAS	Child and Adolescence Studies
DaSCA	Development and Socialisation in Childhood and Adolescence
EC	European Credit
EER	Education and Examination Regulations
FSBS	Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences
GSSBS	Graduate School of Social and Behavioural Sciences
NVAO	<i>Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie</i>
STQ	Senior university Teaching Qualification
UU	Utrecht University
UTQ	University Teaching Qualification

