



BSc Public Administration and Organizational Science
MSc Public Administration
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

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Summary

BSc Public Administration and Organizational Science (PAOS)

This evaluation concerns a three-year full-time programme of 180 EC taught in Dutch. The PAOS programme stands out among Dutch public administration degrees for its multidisciplinary social scientific approach and its link with the daily practice of organizing and governance.

The profile and ambitions of the PAOS programme are strongly embedded in the mission and educational vision of the university and align with the domain-specific reference framework. The intended learning outcomes take into account the Dublin Descriptors and reflect the substance, level and orientation of the programme. PAOS can rely on a dedicated External Advisory Board, which plays an important role in safeguarding the quality and relevance of the programme.

The teaching-learning environment is strong, an appreciation that encompasses the curriculum set-up and contents, didactical approach, student guidance, and staff qualifications. All PAOS students follow the same set of courses in the first year before they choose a specialisation in Public Administration or Organizational Science and further tailor the study to their interest. The core values of the university – personal, open, and responsible – are embedded in the learning environment and reflected in the teaching methods. Students are well looked after, both academically and personally. The teaching staff has extensive and relevant research expertise, adequate didactic qualifications and a heart for the students.

The PAOS programme has a robust assessment system, which is connected to the provisions and policies of the university and the faculty. The Assessment Plan is a relevant instrument to ensure alignment between teaching and assessment in courses and across the programme. The assessment methods are varied. Since the previous accreditation, the thesis assessment procedures have been enhanced. A sample review showed that assessors give scores that align with the findings of the panel and complete the evaluation forms in an insightful way. The Examination Board has proper expertise and, in addition to its formal duties, plays an important advisory role on assessment issues towards programme management and teaching staff.

PAOS students who eventually graduate the bachelor programme have achieved all learning outcomes. The acquired competencies allow bachelor graduates to pursue a variety of master programmes at VU, elsewhere in the Netherlands and abroad. The sample review of final bachelor products showed that the graduation trajectory featuring both a group research practice and an individual bachelor thesis is relevant; however the panel also found that both products and their learning goals should be closer attuned, and the individual thesis should contain a reflection component.

Diversity and inclusiveness are in the DNA of the university, and are also present in the bachelor programme. Staff is capitalising on this student diversity in the classroom and addresses substantive issues of diversity in society, governance and organizations in their education and research.

The panel's overall assessment of the programme is positive. Nonetheless, it identified a few areas where there is room for improvement. The bachelor programme may want to:

- monitor, and where necessary enhance, the Dutch writing skills of students;
- embrace developments in AI and Digital: in the curriculum, teaching and assessment methods;
- enhance communication on the available academic and non-academic student services;
- better align the two graduation products, safeguard their quality, and adjust the evaluation forms accordingly.

MSc Public Administration (PA)

This evaluation concerns a one-year programme of 60 EC taught in Dutch. The PA programme stands out among similar Dutch degrees because it focuses on the social/societal embedding of public administration and looks at the changing nature of social structures and social problems and their impact on public administration. The profile and ambitions of the PA programme are strongly embedded in the mission and educational vision of the university and align with the domain-specific reference framework. The intended learning outcomes take into account the Dublin Descriptors and reflect the substance, level and orientation of the programme. PA can rely on a dedicated External Advisory Board, which plays an important role in safeguarding the quality and relevance of the programme.

The teaching-learning environment is strong, an appreciation that encompasses the curriculum set-up and contents, didactical approach, student guidance, and staff qualifications. PA students enrol for one of four specialisation tracks – Quality of Governance, Governance of Security, Governance of Health Care Innovation, and Governance of Third Sector Organizations. The core values of the university – personal, open, and responsible – are embedded in the learning environment and reflected in the teaching methods. The curriculum caters simultaneously for fulltime and parttime students who constantly interact in class. The teaching staff has extensive and relevant research expertise, adequate didactic qualifications and a heart for the students.

The PA programme has a robust assessment system, which is connected to the provisions and policies of the university and the faculty. The Assessment Plan is a relevant instrument to ensure alignment between teaching and assessment in courses and across the programme. The assessment methods are varied. The sample review demonstrated that thesis assessment is organized and executed properly: assessors give adequate scores that align with the findings of the panel and complete the evaluation forms in an insightful way. The Examination Board has proper expertise and, in addition to its formal duties, plays an important advisory role on assessment issues towards programme management and teaching staff.

PA students who eventually graduate the master programme have achieved all learning outcomes. The quality of the master theses is good. Students are definitely work-ready by the time they graduate and enter the labour market as reflective, responsible and open professionals with a broad perspective.

Diversity and inclusiveness are in the DNA of the university, and are also present in the master programme. Staff is capitalising on the student diversity in the classroom and addresses substantive issues of diversity in society, governance and organizations in their education and research.

The panel's overall assessment of the programme is positive. Nonetheless, it identified a few areas where there is room for improvement. The master programme may want to:

- update the intended learning outcomes following the forthcoming curriculum changes;
- monitor, and where necessary enhance, the Dutch writing skills of students;
- embrace developments in AI and Digital: in the curriculum, teaching and assessment methods;
- enhance the opportunities for interaction among fulltime PA students;
- monitor the duration of the thesis trajectory and its impact on the completion rate.

Score table

The panel assesses the programmes as follows:

B Public Administration and Organisational Science

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
Standard 5: Diversity	meets the standard
General conclusion	positive

M Public Administration

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
Standard 5: Diversity	meets the standard
General conclusion	positive

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.

Prof. Andrew Massey
Chair

Mark Delmartino
Secretary

Date: 22 March 2024

Introduction

Procedure

Assessment

On 30 November and 1 December 2023, an independent peer review panel visited the Faculty of Social Sciences (FSS) at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU) to assess the quality of two degree programmes: the BSc Public Administration and Organization Science and the MSc Public Administration. This visit is part of the cluster assessment Public Administration, involving 20 degree programmes at eight higher education institutions across the Netherlands. The assessment followed the procedure and standards described in the NVAO-EAPAA agreement signed on 18 May 2021. Programmes and institutions participating in this cluster assessment want to obtain accreditation by both the Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Body (NVAO) and the European Association for Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA).

On request of the cluster Public Administration, quality assurance agency Academion coordinated the assessment of the different programmes. It composed the peer review panel in cooperation with the institutions taking into account the expertise and independence of the members and ensuring consistency within the cluster. The composition of the panel was approved by EAPAA on 11 September 2023 and by NVAO on 14 September 2023.

The coordinator at Academion, Peter Hilderling, instructed the panel chairs on their role in the site visit according to the Panel chair profile (NVAO 2016) in May, and briefed the cluster panel members on the NVAO-EAPAA assessment procedures in June 2023. On behalf of Academion, Mark Delmartino and Esther Poort – both NVAO-certified secretaries – liaised with the institutions and assisted the panels before and during the site visits. Afterwards, they drafted the assessment reports in close co-operation with the chairs and panels.

Assessment of VU programmes

The panel assessed two degree programmes at VU Amsterdam. The BSc *Bestuurs- en Organisationswetenschap* (Public Administration and Organization Science, PAOS) is a three-year full-time programme that amounts to 180 EC and is taught in Dutch. It was established in September 2002 and attracts around 150 students per year. PAOS students enrol together in the first year and choose a specialization – *Besturen* (Governing) or *Organiseren* (Organizing) – in the third semester. The programme stands out in the Dutch higher education landscape of public administration through its focus on both governance and organization and its connection of governance and organization processes with social science perspectives.

The MSc *Bestuurskunde* (Public Administration, PA) is a Dutch-language 60 EC programme that is offered in both a full-time variant for recent bachelor graduates and a part-time variant for students with professional experience. Established in September 2003, the programme intake has fluctuated between 77 and 191 students per year. Master students enrol for one of four specialization tracks: Quality of Governance, Governance of Third Sector Organisations, Governance of Security, or Governance of Health Care Innovation. Compared to other programmes in the Netherlands, the MSc PA at VU focuses not so much on the societal impact of public administration issues, but starts the other way around by looking at the changing nature of social structures and social problems and their impact on public administration. This social/societal embedding is at the core of what PA at VU stands for.

Site visit

In the months preceding the visit, the secretary, panel chair and the accreditation team at VU discussed the programme of the site visit. This resulted in a comprehensive schedule that is presented in Appendix 3. The panel wants to express its gratitude for the way these sessions were organized by the VU accreditation team and for the enthusiasm and openness of the participants towards the panel.

In the run-up to the site visit, the panel studied the self-evaluations and accompanying materials VU had put at disposition. An overview of these materials is provided in appendix 4. Furthermore, the panel reviewed a sample of 15 graduation products per programme, which were representative in terms of final grades and specialization. The products were selected by the panel chair in consultation with the secretary. The selection was based on anonymized lists of students who graduated in the academic year 2022-2023. The panel wants to thank the accreditation team at VU for the high quality materials and for their assistance in making the documents available in time.

The panel members looked into the materials and reviewed the graduation products and assessments, and reported their initial findings to the secretary. The secretary processed this input in a document, which served as a basis for discussion during the preparatory meetings on 20 and 21 November 2023. These meetings focused on mapping the key strengths of the respective programmes, on listing the issues that required further discussion on site, and on identifying pieces of additional information. On behalf of the panel, the secretary reported the outcome of the meetings to the accreditation team at VU on 22 November.

The Open Consultation Hour for students, teaching and support staff involved in the degree programmes under review was scheduled alongside the preparatory meeting. Eventually, nobody used this opportunity to discuss individually and confidentially with the panel.

Towards the end of the visit, the programme representatives and the panel discussed pathways for further development in the so-called Development Dialogue session. A separate report on this session has been produced by the VU accreditation team. The outcome of this session has no impact on the findings, considerations and conclusions in the present assessment report.

At the end of the site visit, the panel chair publicly presented the preliminary findings of the panel on the two degree programmes according to the NVAO-EAPAA framework.

Report

After the site visit, the secretary wrote a draft report based on the panel's findings. This report is structured along the five NVAO-EAPAA standards. The report was first submitted to the coordinator at Academion for peer assessment and then to the panel for feedback. After processing this feedback, the secretary sent the draft report to the programme management in order to have it checked for factual inaccuracies. The secretary discussed the ensuing comments with the panel chair, implementing changes where relevant. The panel then finalized the report, and the coordinator sent it to VU Amsterdam.

Panel

The following panel members were involved in the cluster assessment:

- Prof. Andrew Massey, professor of Government, King's College London – chair;
- Prof. Monique Kremer, professor of Active Citizenship, University of Amsterdam – chair;
- Prof. Ernst ten Heuvelhof, emeritus professor of Public Administration, Delft University of Technology;
- Prof. Peter Bursens, professor of Political Science, University of Antwerp;

- Prof. Ellen Wayenberg, professor of Public Governance and Management at Ghent University and member of the EAPAA Accreditation Committee;
- Prof. Calin Hintea, professor of Public Administration and Management at Babes-Bolyai University and member of the EAPAA Accreditation Committee;
- Prof. Thurid Hustedt, professor of Public Administration and Management at Hertie School Berlin and member of the EAPAA Accreditation Committee;
- Dr. Hester Glasbeek, advisor Leadership Development at Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, and Senior Partner of Reflect Academy: For Leadership in Learning;
- Anje-Margreet Woltjer MSc, director of SPO Utrecht;
- Prof. Ria Janvier, professor of Social Law, University of Antwerp;
- Prof. Leo Huberts, emeritus professor of Public Administration, Vrije Universiteit;
- Prof. Heinrich Winter, professor of Public Administration, University of Groningen;
- Wim de Boer MSc, lecturer Public Administration and Governance at Haagse Hogeschool;
- Prof. Tanja Klenk, professor of Public Administration and Public Policies, Helmut-Schmidt-University Hamburg;
- David Van Slyke PhD, professor of Public Administration, The Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs;
- Prof. Geske Dijkstra, emeritus professor of Governance and Global Development, Erasmus University Rotterdam;
- Prof. Esther Versluis, professor of European Regulatory Governance, Maastricht University;
- Prof. Zoe Radnor, professor of Service Operations Management, Aston University;
- Prof. Sophie Vanhoonacker, professor of Administrative Governance, Maastricht University;
- Prof. Kees van Paridon, emeritus professor of Economics, Erasmus University Rotterdam;
- Prof. Tannelie Blom, emeritus professor of European Integration, Maastricht University – referee;
- Tom Hillenaar BSc, master student Engineering and Policy Analysis, Delft University of Technology – student member;
- Sibel Gökbekir BSc, master student of Complex Systems Engineering and Management at Delft University of Technology, and of International and European Union Law at Erasmus University Rotterdam – student member.

The panel assessing the Public Governance programmes at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam consisted of the following members:

- Prof. Andrew Massey, professor of Government, King's College London – chair;
- Prof. Ellen Wayenberg, professor of Public Governance and Management at Ghent University and member of the EAPAA Accreditation Committee;
- Prof. Ernst ten Heuvelhof, emeritus professor of Public Administration, Delft University of Technology;
- Prof. Zoe Radnor, professor of Service Operations Management, Aston University;
- Sibel Gökbekir BSc, master student of Complex Systems Engineering and Management at Delft University of Technology, and of International and European Union Law at Erasmus University Rotterdam – student member.

Mark Delmartino assisted the panel and drafted the assessment reports.

Information on the programmes

Name of the institution:	Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
Status of the institution:	Publicly funded institution
Result institutional quality assurance assessment:	Positive
Programme name:	B Public Administration & Organizational Science (<i>Bestuurs- en Organisationswetenschap</i>)
CROHO number:	50007
Level:	Bachelor
Orientation:	Academic
Number of credits:	180 EC
Specialisations or tracks:	Governing (<i>Besturen</i>) Organizing (<i>Organiseren</i>)
Location:	Amsterdam
Educational minor:	Applicable
Mode(s) of study:	Fulltime
Language of instruction:	Dutch
Submission date NVAO:	1 May 2024
Programme name:	M Public Administration (<i>Bestuurskunde</i>)
CROHO number:	66627
Level:	Master
Orientation:	Academic
Number of credits:	60 EC
Specialisations or tracks:	Quality of Governance Governance of Security Governance of Third Sector Organizations Governance of Health Care Innovation
Location:	Amsterdam
Mode(s) of study:	Fulltime, part-time
Language of instruction:	Dutch, English
Submission date NVAO:	1 May 2024

Description of the assessment

Organization

The two degree programmes under review are offered by the Faculty of Social Sciences (FSS) and fall under the responsibility of the Portfolio Holder for Education and the Director of Education. FSS consists of five departments representing six scientific disciplines: Social and Cultural Anthropology, Communication Science, Organization Sciences, Sociology, Political Science and Public Administration. The departments are responsible for the deployment of staff in teaching and research.

The bachelor programme PAOS is mainly taught by staff from the Organization Science and the Public Administration & Political Science departments, while the staff on the master programme PA chiefly belongs to the latter department. Each programme is led by a programme director who is responsible for developing the mission and vision, as well as the content and organization of the programme. The director is assisted by one (MSc) or two (BSc) coordinators for supportive and operational management tasks.

The quality and relevance of the programmes is safeguarded by Programme Committees of students and staff members, the faculty-wide Examination Board featuring subcommittees per programme, and dedicated External Advisory Boards. The roles and specific contributions of these bodies will be addressed throughout the report.

Previous accreditation

In the previous accreditation round, the panel arrived at a positive conclusion on both degree programmes. It did not issue any strong recommendations but made a few suggestions for improvement. The current panel noticed that these suggestions have been considered in a systematic way and integrated in the respective programmes. The specific developments and adjustments will be reported in the respective standards.

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 panel gathered from the extensive and informative written materials that the profile of the public administration programmes under review is aligned to the mission and educational vision of VU Amsterdam. The mission of the university is to improve the world by educating students to become responsible, critical and committed academics who continuously want to develop themselves in terms of academic discipline and societal consciousness. In order to achieve this mission, the educational vision of the university underlines the core values of 'personal', 'open' and 'responsible' for its staff and students. The next chapter reports on how these core values are embedded in the learning environment of the two programmes under review at VU.

The university's mission and vision are also reflected in the profile and ambitions of both the bachelor PAOS and the master PA. The bachelor programme is a broad, multidisciplinary study with an emphasis on public administration and organizational science, but also including disciplines such as political science, sociology, communication science and law. Public administrative and organizational processes are studied at different – macro, meso, micro – levels and in interrelationship. Moreover, the programme pays attention to research methods and allows students to develop their own profile: students can opt for specialization courses in internal organizational processes or in government policy and administration, and further broaden or deepen those themes through interdisciplinary electives. Compared to similar programmes in the Netherlands, PAOS stands out for its multidisciplinary social scientific approach and its link with the daily practice of organizing and governance. During their study, students acquire a broad knowledge base and state-of-the-art academic and professional skills. In line with the values personal, open and responsible, PAOS students are stimulated to act ethically. By the time they graduate, students have become academic professionals who can analyse – and contribute to the solution of – complex governance and organizational problems in society and concrete challenges organizations have to deal with.

The master programme is defined in the self-evaluation report as an instance of critical, normative and societal public administration. This implies that staff explicitly relates insights, ideas and concepts from public administration to societal challenges and supports master students to build their own normative orientation vis-à-vis these challenges and the way governance, policy and organization respond to them. The programme focuses not so much on the societal impact of public administration issues, but rather looks at the changing nature of social structures and social problems and their impact on public administration. This social / societal embedding is at the core of what public administration at VU stands for. While master students are trained in academic skills in order to solve scholarly problems, the primary goal of the programme is to develop their competences to become reflective, engaged students who manage to cope with a diversity of views.

Having studied the written materials on both programmes, the panel reported that there is a clear connection between the profile of the bachelor and the master programmes on the one hand, and the mission and educational vision of the university on the other hand. Moreover, the discussions on site with several stakeholders demonstrated according to the panel that these principles are not abstract statements but elements that are internalized by students and staff and effectively implemented in the programmes. In this regard, the panel found that the bachelor PAOS and the master PA are doing justice to both the disciplinary expectations of a public administration programme - as expressed in the domain-specific reference framework PAGO - and the value-based expectations and ambitions of the university.

Intended learning outcomes

At the previous accreditation visit, the then panel stated that the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) of both bachelor and master programmes were adequate in terms of content, level and orientation. While these outcomes also reflected the programmes' vision on teaching and learning, the panel nevertheless suggested to formulate the learning outcomes in a more specific and ambitious way in order to reflect better the 'VU-flavour' of the programmes and their distinctive components among public administration programmes in the Netherlands.

The current panel noticed that in so far as the bachelor programme is concerned, the set of learning outcomes, which are listed in Appendix 1 to this report, has not changed much since the previous accreditation round. The programme management confirmed this finding, but emphasized that a lot of work has gone into redefining and finetuning the course learning goals. As one of the programme representatives stated during the visit: "we did not change the ILOs but changed our self-understanding". Soon after the

previous visit, the programme organized a profiling process with the teaching staff to make the learning goals more measurable and operational with regard to the exit qualifications. This exercise has also impacted on course assessment and was laid down in the programme's assessment plan (*toetsplan*). The panel has looked into the assessment plan and acknowledges that the intended learning outcomes have been concretized and operationalized at course level. Hence, the current panel thinks that the programme has properly addressed the suggestion of the previous panel.

The programme team also indicated during the visit that it is a conscious choice to have one set of learning outcomes for the entire bachelor programme, without dedicated statements on the respective specializations. All PAOS students, irrespective of the chosen specialization, acquire competences in both organization science and public administration. Through a common set of learning outcomes, the programme emphasizes its selling proposition, i.e. that students are confronted with both perspectives. The panel agrees to this approach and its rationale.

The bachelor programme features 11 learning outcomes, which are grouped in four categories along the framework set by the Faculty of Social Sciences: knowledge and understanding, application, attitude, and communication. The panel noticed that this grouping resembles the five categories of the Dublin Descriptors and that the programme is monitoring that its ILOs also abide by the Dublin Descriptors. Moreover, the panel was informed that the exit qualifications are reviewed regularly by the programme management in interaction with the lecturers, the Programme Committee, the Examination Board and the External Advisory Board. Having studied the current set of learning outcomes, the panel established that they are formulated properly in terms of substance (public administration / organization science), level (bachelor) and orientation (academic). According to the panel, the intended learning outcomes also reflect some of the key features and values that set the bachelor PAOS at VU apart from similar programmes in the Netherlands.

In so far as the master programme is concerned, the current set of learning outcomes, which are listed in Appendix 1 to this report, have been adjusted. The panel acknowledges that compared to the previous round, the learning outcomes do more justice to the vision of the programme and the core values (open, personal, responsible) of the university. The master PA features 11 learning outcomes, which are grouped in three categories: knowledge, capacities, and attitudes. The panel noticed that the ILOs also abide by the Dublin Descriptors. The programme team indicated that until now, it has been a conscious choice to have one set of learning outcomes for the entire master programme, without dedicated statements on the respective specializations. Moreover, the panel was informed that the exit qualifications are reviewed regularly by the programme management in interaction with the lecturers, the Programme Committee, the Examination Board and the External Advisory Board. Having studied the current set of learning outcomes, the panel established that they are formulated properly in terms of substance (public administration), level (master) and orientation (academic).

The panel agrees with the master programme management that notwithstanding the adjustments, the ILOS are still formulated in a rather general way. The panel was informed that the faculty is reviewing its portfolio of programmes, which may impact on the future development of the master PA. Moreover, the programme will feature another specialization track on Governance and AI per September 2024. These developments, as well as new focuses in education and teaching (social skills, integrity of governance, stakeholder and transdisciplinary teaching, etc.) may lead to a reformulation of the learning outcomes in the near future. The panel endorses the decision for another specialization track and encourages the programme team to update the learning outcomes in due course.

Professional field

The panel gathered from the written materials and the discussions on site that both programmes have extensive connections to the professional field. Moreover, each programme has a dedicated External Advisory Board (*Veldadviesraad*), which provides a critical external perspective on the current state and future development of the programmes. The boards meet once or twice every year and consist of people who know the discipline and are in a position to judge what the job market requires from programme graduates. Board members are selected for their experience, contacts, knowledge and influence. Some members are alumni.

The previous accreditation panel reported that there was room for enhancing the role and systematic involvement of the External Advisory Boards in matters of curriculum development. The current panel noticed that nowadays the boards play a more extensive and systematic role in monitoring the quality and relevance of the programmes. The panel's impression based on the written materials was confirmed during the session with alumni and advisory board members. In recent years, the boards functioned as a sparring partner of the management in discussions on the curriculum and on the knowledge, skills and competencies to be acquired by graduates. The meetings are well prepared and the suggestions of the board members are picked up in the programmes and followed-up in the next meeting. The panel was informed that in so far as the bachelor programme is concerned, the External Advisory Board has recently supported the further development of the multidisciplinary approach of PAOS and gave advice on how to include career-related skills, such as visualization and presentation skills. The increased attention for the mentoring programme is a consequence of their advice. In its most recent meeting of April 2023, the Advisory Board of the master programme indicated that there is room to enhance professional skills, particularly those that fit the normative and societal approach of the programme. Moreover, it discussed and supported the plans for a new specialization track.

The panel has looked at the composition of the respective boards and think they are relevant as they represent the core domains in which the bachelor and the master programmes and their specializations are active. The panel did wonder, though, why the programmes each have a dedicated board given that the expertise of the individual board members is very often equally relevant (and complementary) for the other programme. The programme management did not see any particular reason why the boards should remain separate and will consider merging the External Advisory Boards in order for both programmes to benefit from an even broader range of expertise. Furthermore, the panel suggested to invite teaching staff more systematically to the meetings of the advisory boards. This will enhance networking and allow to share information on the relevance of the programmes more broadly, as well as on their mutual alignment.

Considerations

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel considers that the profile of the two programmes under review are strongly embedded in the mission and educational vision of the university. Moreover, each programme takes up a particular position in the Dutch higher education landscape of public administration: the bachelor PAOS stands out for its multidisciplinary social scientific approach and its link with the daily practice of organizing and governance. The panel thinks it is a strong feature of the bachelor programme that students can specialize in a domain of their interest. The master PA looks at the changing nature of social structures and social problems and their impact on public administration; its social/societal embedding is at the core of what public administration at VU stands for. In this way, both programmes are doing justice to the disciplinary expectations of the domain-specific reference framework PAGO and to the value-based expectations and ambitions of the university.

The panel considers that the intended learning outcomes of both programmes reflect the key features and values that set them apart from similar programmes in the Netherlands. The learning outcomes of both bachelor PAOS and master PA are formulated adequately in terms of substance, level and orientation. Notwithstanding recent adjustments in the course learning goals (bachelor) or learning outcomes (master), the panel sees room for a further fine-tuning and concretization of the programme learning outcomes. While the panel agrees to the ILO choices made until now by the respective programmes, the (envisaged) programme developments (will) require an update of the intended learning outcomes in due course.

The panel considers that both programmes can rely on an External Advisory Board of relevant professionals and alumni. The role of these boards and their rhythm of consultation has been enhanced since the previous accreditation visit. The panel is therefore convinced that they play an important role in safeguarding the quality and relevance of the programmes from an external and practice point of view. If anything, the programmes may want to consider merging the two boards as the individual expertise of the members is equally relevant and sometimes complementary to the other programme.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programmes meet standard 1 of the NVAO-EAPAA framework.

Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment

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

Findings

Curriculum BSc Public Administration and Organizational Science

The bachelor PAOS is a three-year full-time programme, which amounts to 180 EC. The academic year at VU consists of four eight-week and two four-week periods; courses have a study load of 6 EC. An overview of the PAOS curriculum is provided in Appendix 2 to this report.

All bachelor students at VU follow five academic core courses; four of these courses are common to all FSS students. The fifth semester consists of an Elective Space (30 EC). All FSS students, moreover, participate in the joint elective programme Social Sciences for Society (12 EC), which is scheduled in year two. All PAOS students follow the same programme in year one: four introductory courses, three academic core courses and three Bachelor Working Groups on academic skills. In the second year, students follow four courses in common, take the FSS electives, and decide on the specialization in either Governing or Organizing. The specialization consists of four courses and a dedicated Working Group. The fifth semester is dedicated to a study period abroad, an internship, a minor or a set of electives. The sixth and final semester is mainly dedicated to the research practice and the bachelor thesis.

Compared to similar programmes in the Netherlands, the panel noticed that the PAOS curriculum features quite a few courses that are common to all university or faculty programmes. Furthermore, the programme allows PAOS students quite some room for individual profiling, through the specialization and in the elective space. Bachelor students also get a thorough academic skills training. The discussions on site, moreover, convinced the panel that the programme strikes a good balance between its multidisciplinary approach and the opportunities for students to specialize in either public administration or organizational science. In sum, the panel establishes that the programme set-up is coherent. Further to its findings in the previous section,

the panel acknowledges the connection between the learning goals of the curriculum courses and the learning outcomes at programme level.

During the visit, the panel discussed two curriculum-related topics in particular: professional skills and the graduation trajectory. The previous accreditation panel suggested to enhance the opportunities for students to practice those professional skills they will need on the labour market. The current panel was informed that since the previous visit, the programme combines the acquisition of academic skills such as reading and writing with the training of professional skills such as analysis and communication. All these skills are trained and tested in a series of five Bachelor Working Groups spread over the first and second year. In addition, part of the PAOS-dedicated course on Philosophy is integrated with the university-wide Broader Mind programme which emphasizes personal development and societal orientation. Moreover, the faculty provides a range of extra-curricular services and workshops on professional skills. According to the panel, the programme has taken appropriate steps to ensure that current PAOS students are trained in skills that are relevant on the labour market.

At the time of the previous accreditation, a new approach to the graduation trajectory was being prepared. Since 2018-2019, PAOS students finish their study with a joint research project (an empirical research commissioned by an external party culminating in a group report) and a theoretical bachelor thesis (an individual literature study). The midterm review committee endorsed in 2021 the new approach but suggested to clarify the connection between the respective 'course' goals and the overall programme outcomes. The discussion on site focused on the plans of the programme team 'Towards a future proof Bachelor Project' in which both courses, as well as their products, learning goals and assessment forms would be better connected. The current panel endorses the plans with the caveat that the bachelor thesis should also contain a reflection component.

Curriculum MSc Public Administration

The master PA is a 60 EC programme offered in Dutch. At the time of the site visit, in the academic year 2023-2024, the programme consists of four specializations, which are each offered in a fulltime and a parttime variant. Students on both variants take the same courses, but their timing and sequence differs. Each course has a study load of 6 EC. An overview of the PA curriculum is provided in Appendix 2 to this report.

All PA students follow four courses in common: two advanced introduction courses (Governance and Society; Policy and Governance), a Good Governance course, and a Methods and Techniques course. The four specialization tracks – Quality of Governance, Governance of Security, Governance of Third Sector Organizations, and Governance of Health Care Innovation – each consist of two courses: one course takes societal developments as the main point of departure, while the other course focuses on developments in the governance of the sector. Students finish the programme with a master thesis (24 EC) in their specialization domain. Based on the extensive written materials and the discussions on site, the panel establishes that the programme set-up is coherent. Further to its findings in the previous section, the panel acknowledges the connection between the learning goals of the curriculum courses and the learning outcomes at programme level. The discussions with students confirmed this impression: PA students felt positive about the content and focus of the programme. They indicated that the programme is particularly useful and relevant because it aligns with their academic interests and professional needs. In this regard, the diversity of specializations on offer allows them to tailor the study to their own needs.

During the visit, the panel discussed two curriculum-related topics in particular: the size and length of the thesis trajectory and a new specialization track. The panel was informed that following the previous accreditation visit, the programme decided to increase the size of the master thesis and extend the duration

of the thesis trajectory. While the programme team noticed in the following years that more students managed to finish the thesis in time, it did not see a considerable improvement of the thesis quality, although the increase in study credits should have allowed for more authentic research work. Moreover, the midterm review committee, the External Advisory Board and several master students inquired why the study load of the thesis was increased at the detriment of another specialist track course. Hence the decision of the programme management to return to an 18 EC master thesis and a third specialist course. While these plans had already been announced in the self-evaluation report, the formal decision was taken shortly before the site visit. Taking into account also the results of its own sample review of master theses, the panel endorses the decision of the programme management. The panel nonetheless advises the programme team to check how the methods and techniques course can be used as a direct preparation/lever for the master thesis in order for (fulltime) students to have sufficient time at disposition to propose, research and write the master thesis. Moreover – and anticipating on the panel’s findings on thesis quality and assessment – the programme should find ways in the curriculum to monitor, and where necessary enhance, the Dutch writing skills of its students prior to the master thesis.

The panel was informed on site that the new specialization track will start in 2024-2025 and is part of a more comprehensive curriculum revision, which was approved shortly before the site visit. Following the discussion on site, the master programme team provided the panel with a written note on the programme changes. Per September 2024, the master PA will consist of three Dutch-language specialization tracks, which are offered in a fulltime and a parttime variant: Quality of Governance, Governance of Security, and Governance of Health Care Innovation. Students will no longer be able to enrol in the Governance of Third Sector Organizations. Moreover, a new English-language track Artificial Intelligence and Governance will be offered in a fulltime variant only. All tracks will consist of three common courses, three dedicated specialist courses, a research methods course and a master thesis (18 EC). Based on the discussion and the written note, the panel endorses the plans for the revised master PA.

Language of instruction

The official language of instruction in both the bachelor PAOS and the master PA is Dutch. The panel was informed that several courses in the bachelor programme that are offered in collaboration with other programmes are taught in English. This also applies to a few courses in the Organization specialization. In fact, many FSS programmes offer English and Dutch language tracks. Inclusiveness being an important value at VU, the university promotes that the mixing of Dutch and international students from different programmes into English spoken groups contributes to their mutual understanding. Furthermore, the bachelor programmes want to prepare Dutch students for master programmes that are often taught in English.

In view of its disciplinary domain, the new master track specialization (AI and Governance) will be offered in English, too. This specialization is likely to attract a good amount of interest from Dutch and international students alike and will – contrary to the other tracks – focus also on transnational levels of governance. While it understands the fundamental choice of the university, faculty and programmes to offer PAOS and PA in Dutch, the panel also endorses the policy of VU and FSS to offer certain courses in English. Moreover, the panel fully agrees to the decision of the management to offer the new PA track entirely in English.

Learning environment

Further to its findings in the previous section on the mission and educational vision of the university, the panel acknowledges that the three core values constitute key features of the learning environment at VU: studying at VU is ‘personal’ because students and staff know each other and learn from each other, student are recognized as individuals, and feel free and stimulated to bring in their personal experiences. Hence the

attention in the programmes under review for the mentor programme, for small-scale tutorials, and for smaller sized courses in the two specializations. The programmes at VU are 'open' as they welcome students from all kinds of national, ethnic, religious, and social-economic backgrounds, and provide an inclusive learning environment that suits and sustains this diverse body of students. Teaching staff introduce their PAOS and PA students to different, multidisciplinary perspectives and create an open climate for student-staff dialogue and for sharing different perspectives on scientific and societal issues. VU has the ambition to teach students to be critical citizens, who can act professionally, ethically and 'responsibly' in their careers, and who will consider the consequences of their professional conduct. In the PAOS and PA curricula, students are challenged to adopt the attitudes of an academic citizen and develop the ability to express these attitudes in their future careers. The discussions on site have demonstrated according to the panel that these values are not abstract virtues but effectively implemented in the teaching modes of the bachelor and master programmes.

During the visit, the panel discussed with several stakeholders on teaching and assessment formats. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, digital tools and methods for active and blended learning - ranging from Feedback Fruits to knowledge clips, quizzes and new forms of student assignments such as the production of blogs or short documentaries - have become an integral part of the educational delivery in both bachelor and master programmes. These developments were made possible through the investment of FSS in blended learning and through the support of the university-wide Centre of Teaching and Learning and the faculty-based Blended Learning Team. The panel commends the university, the faculty and the programmes for these initiatives. Nonetheless, the panel also noticed that many teaching and assessment formats still remain quite traditional. In this way the educational delivery seems to reflect and reinforce a predominantly theoretical bachelor and master curriculum. Furthermore, the panel gathered from the discussions that the programmes are somewhat struggling to embrace the most recent developments in generative Artificial Intelligence. The panel therefore encourages the programmes to encompass AI and Digital in the curriculum, and to envisage even more and more advanced forms of innovative pedagogics in the future.

The panel also addressed the specific educational format in the master programme where fulltime and parttime students take all courses together. It gathered from the written materials and the discussions on site that this interaction is a key feature of the PA programme: fulltime and parttime students prepare together discussions and presentations in lectures and workgroups. Parttime students are mostly older, work in sectors of the public domain related to the specialization tracks, and have the ambition to improve the functioning of governance and organization in their domain of specialization. Fulltime students mostly come from a previous academic or professional bachelor study and bring their recently acquired theoretical knowledge and professional training to the table. The interaction among students leads to a mutual improvement of knowledge and skills. While PA students did point to a few organizational obstacles in preparing class – parttime students are difficult to contact for preparation sessions during the week; the study rhythm of fulltime students is very unevenly spread with sessions only on Fridays – both groups of current students and alumni were very positive about the interaction in class among students and with the teaching staff. The panel shares this positive vibe and concludes that the didactic approach is indeed a particular selling proposition of the PA programme. Nonetheless, the panel also advises the programme team to schedule more points of interaction among students and to think of innovative ways to involve fulltime students during the other days of the working week.

Student intake, guidance and success rate

Over the past few years, the student intake has been relatively stable: around 150 students enrol for the bachelor programme. The programme is open for students with a VWO-diploma (all profiles) from a Dutch secondary school and for students with a propaedeutic year from a university of applied sciences. The panel

was informed that PAOS attracts a good number of students who switched their study in the first year, possibly because they failed the Binding Study Advice in their previous programme. According to a recent survey 26% of the PAOS students comes from a university of applied sciences and 20% from another academic study. The drop-out in the first year is comparatively low, between 18% and 25% in the last three years. According to the programme, this can be explained by the attention at university, faculty and programme level for student guidance, support and wellbeing. Data about student success rate shows that about half of the students finish the programme within the nominal duration of three years, while on average 75% does so in four years. According to the panel, these results are good and seem to be another confirmation that PAOS students are not left on their own during the post-propaedeutic phase of their study.

In fact, the panel gathered from the written materials and the discussions on site with staff and students that there are several ways in which students are followed-up throughout their entire bachelor study. The mentor programme for instance helps PAOS students in their socialization and integration in the academic world and supports them in taking responsibility for their own study career. A specific goal of the mentor programme is to support students concerning their personal situation, the fit with the programme they are in and the choices they will make within and outside PAOS. Moreover, academic advisers provide on-demand consultation, while in later years students can use the services of the internship coordinator, the career services, and the thesis lab. Students indicated to the panel that there are indeed many forms of support, even to the extent that it is sometimes difficult to “see the trees in the wood”. Bachelor students for instance appreciated that the mentor programme was extended beyond the first year, although not every student was aware of this extension. In general, students acknowledge the support system and appreciate the options, but think that the programme could do more in communicating the options. This also applies to the Elective Space: students who do not want to follow a VU-minor indicated to the panel that they have to be proactive in arranging for an internship or a study period abroad. Programme staff from their side indicated that the mentorship programme has been extended to second year students per September 2023. A further extension of the scheme, possibly to lay out the different options for the elective space, would be good initiative. The panel commends the university, faculty and programme for their initiatives and services, which confirm that VU is serious about its emancipatory mission, and encourages the programme to enhance the communication on these opportunities, notably with regard to the elective space.

Since the previous accreditation visit, the student intake in the master programme has been fluctuating between 108 (in 2022-2023) and 187 (in 2021-2022). The September 2023 cohort consisted of 77 fulltime and 39 parttime students. The PA programme attracts students with three types of educational backgrounds: those with a related academic bachelor or master degree, those with a bachelor degree from a university of applied sciences, and those with a non-related academic degree. The first group is admitted directly, the second group after a pre-master programme, and the third after completing a tailored course package. Students who took a premaster/tailored package indicated that it had prepared them well for the master programme in terms of both academic skills and substantive knowledge. Nonetheless, almost all students who had not moved on straight from PAOS found the first two blocks to be particularly tough.

Around 10% of the master students drop out, while those who finish the programme tend to take quite some time: less than half of the students graduate within the nominal period of one (fulltime variant) or two (parttime variant) years. The panel was informed that most students manage to finish the courses in time, but take (much) longer to complete the master thesis. In order to mitigate the situation, the thesis trajectory has been revised since September 2021. Current students and recent alumni indicated that the thesis supervision is fine both content-wise and in terms of process/deadlines, but that the sheer size of the master thesis (24 EC) is particularly challenging. Hence, all students and alumni welcomed the envisaged return to a smaller thesis. The panel welcomes the initiatives of the programme with regard to the thesis component.

However, given the rather low success rates of both fulltime and parttime students, the panel suggests the programme to monitor carefully the length of the master thesis trajectory and its impact on the overall completion rates. If appropriate, the programme should undertake action to further reduce study delay.

Staff

The panel gathered from the detailed information in the self-evaluation report and its annexes that a total of 51 teaching staff is involved in the PAOS programme, while 26 teaching staff and 9 external thesis supervisors are active in the PA programme. The PAOS staff mainly belongs to the departments of Political Science & Public Administration and Organizational Sciences. Some courses are shared with teaching staff from other departments such as Sociology and Communication Science. The bachelor programme lives up to its scientific orientation by upholding a clear link between education and research. Hence, all content courses are taught by research staff with a professorial rank, who are supported by junior lecturers for the tutorials and working groups. In order to build and maintain a team/programme spirit, regular staff meetings are held at programme, department and course level. According to the PAOS staff overview, 31 teaching staff have a PhD, 37 hold a basic university teaching qualification (UTQ), 8 obtained the senior teaching qualification (STQ) focusing on curriculum development, and two staff assumed an intensive educational leadership trajectory (LOL). The chair of the Examination Board, who also teaches in both PAOS and PA, holds a senior examination qualification (SEQ).

Most of the PA staff belong to the Political Science & Public Administration department. The PA staff overview showed that 22 teaching staff have a PhD, 24 hold UTQ, 7 obtained or are obtaining STQ, and two staff followed the LOL trajectory. The core staff teaching in the PA specialization tracks are well-known researchers in that specific domain while all other teaching staff also have relevant track-specific research expertise. Because master thesis supervision is a work intensive process that often comes in workload peaks, the programme hired external staff members on 0.15 FTE positions to supervise eight students per year. These additional supervisors have or are finishing a PhD in public administration or another relevant domain to the programme. They fulfil stringent conditions set by the Examination Board in order to qualify as thesis examiners. In order to build and maintain a team/programme spirit, regular staff meetings are held to discuss issues that are relevant to the entire programme, such as blended learning, the thesis trajectory or the design of the specialization track. Moreover, staff takes part in calibration sessions on course and thesis assessment.

The panel establishes that both programmes have a sufficient number of good quality teaching staff with extensive and relevant research expertise and adequate didactic qualifications. Moreover, teaching staff is highly appreciated by the students for their knowledge, skills, and availability. Several staff have good contacts with the professional field and bring their real-life experience into the lectures. When discussing student guidance, support and wellbeing, students indicated that many teaching staff are approachable for informal advice and consultation on study advancement and professional/academic career choices. Moreover, most students the panel spoke to were very positive about the thesis guidance by their supervisor.

Considerations

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel considers that both programmes can rely on a strong teaching-learning environment. This positive appreciation is applicable to all domains: curriculum set-up and contents, didactical approach, student guidance, and staff qualifications. The curriculum of both PAOS and PA programmes is coherent and reflects their respective profiles. In both cases, the learning goals of the course components are connected to the overall programme learning outcomes. The panel thinks highly of the intricate curriculum set-up of the bachelor programme featuring a breadth of foundational, specialist, interdisciplinary, academic, elective and research-oriented courses. The panel

appreciates in particular that throughout the three-year curriculum, bachelor students get increasingly more discretion to create a study programme that reflects their own interests. Following extensive discussions on site, the panel endorses the plans of the bachelor programme and the master programme with regard to the graduation trajectory as well as the envisaged adjustment of the master programme curriculum.

The panel considers that the three core values of the university - Personal, Open and Responsible - are embedded in the learning environment and reflected in the teaching methods of the programmes. The master programme stands out for its particular didactic approach of mixing fulltime and parttime students in advanced specialist courses.

The panel appreciates the broad offer on student support, guidance and wellbeing, and commends the faculty and the programmes for the initiatives and investments on digital learning since the pandemic.

The panel considers that both programmes have a good number of teaching staff with extensive and relevant research expertise, adequate didactic qualifications and a heart for the PAOS and PA students.

In addition to all these positive considerations, the panel identified a few topics that require attention and/or improvement: the bachelor thesis trajectory, Dutch-language writing skills, developments in AI and Digital that impact on the curriculum and the teaching and assessment methods, opportunities for interaction among fulltime PA students, communication on academic and personal support opportunities for PAOS students, and the duration of the master thesis trajectory in the PA programme.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programmes meet standard 2 of the NVAO-EAPAA framework.

Standard 3. Student assessment

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

Findings

Assessment system

The panel gathered from the written materials that assessment in both bachelor and master programmes is embedded in the policies and provisions of the university and the faculty. The assessment of the PAOS and PA programmes is set out in their respective assessment plan, which in turn is based on the FSS assessment policy (2019) and the Assessment Policy chapter in the VU Quality Plan Education 2019-2024. The Faculty Board establishes the assessment policy, the Programme Director determines the assessment plan by finetuning the faculty's assessment policy to the needs of the programme, and the Examination Board supervises its implementation by the programme director, programme coordinators and examiners.

Both programmes consider assessment as an integral part of education. In line with FSS policy, programmes strive for an integrated assessment system that is aligned with the learning objectives and content of the courses. Assessments should be valid, reliable, transparent, and educational, which in the latter case means that students should be able to learn from the assessment. To achieve these goals, the PAOS programmes strive for a variety in types and methods of assessment. The summative assessments in the PA programme often consist of written assignments or papers, which allow students to construct and present their own understanding and reflection of theoretical insights and empirical phenomena.

The panel has studied the assessment plan of both programmes, which consists in each case of a policy document featuring the connection between objective, programme learning outcomes, course goals and assessment methods, the way learning goals are achieved through the assessment formats, and a section on safeguarding the assessment quality. The principles and connections described in the document are furthermore detailed in a spreadsheet with several tables. Taking both instruments together, the panel found that the assessment in both PAOS and PA programmes is well organized and fulfils the requirements set at university and faculty level. Moreover, the discussions on site with students and staff demonstrated that these principles are also effectively implemented in the reality of the courses and the programmes. Both programmes use a mixture of formative and summative forms of assessment, and across the programmes there is a good balance of assessment types covering a range of learning styles. According to the panel, the assessment methods clearly match the learning objectives and content of the courses in both PAOS and PA programmes.

Thesis assessment

Both PAOS and PA programmes culminate in a thesis, which is described in the Bachelor's Thesis Regulations and Master's Thesis Regulations, respectively. These documents cover the entire thesis process and include a section on thesis assessment. Every bachelor and master thesis is assessed by the supervisor and a co-assessor, who evaluate the thesis independently.

As part its external review, the panel studied a representative sample of 15 [bachelor theses](#). Given the particular set-up of the graduation trajectory, it was agreed that the panel would look at the individual bachelor thesis and the group research practice work of the selected student. The thesis evaluation form contains eleven criteria with rubrics, scores and room for feedback. The group work assessment covers all stages of the research cycle; each component should get a pass mark and the overall score is common to all group members. While the quality of the final products is addressed in the next section on Achieved Learning Outcomes, the panel also reviewed the completed evaluation forms.

During the previous visit, the then panel encouraged assessors to provide insightful feedback in all theses and suggested to adjust the bachelor thesis evaluation form to demonstrate the independent assessment of the co-reader. The current panel noticed that in the meantime a new assessment form has been developed for both graduation components, allowing for feedback (the research project) and an independent assessment (the bachelor thesis). The panel members, moreover, reported that they agreed in most cases to the final score (see also the discussion under standard 4), that all evaluation forms had been completed independently and that most assessors had provided insightful feedback to motivate their score.

In so far as the evaluation form of the individual literature study (bachelor thesis) is concerned, the panel found that some of the eleven criteria contained too many indicators, which made it difficult for assessors to give one straightforward appreciation on the criterion. For instance, the criterion research question (*probleemstelling*) covers the formulation of the question, the connection between research question and sub questions, the scientific and/or societal relevance of the question, the argumentation of the research, and the link to the (compulsory) literature. Moreover, the current evaluation form only pays scant attention to the reflection skills of the student. Finally, the panel thought that in several cases the assessors could/should have been more severe in their appreciation of the language use (*taalgebruik*). While they did comment on the poor language qualities in certain theses (see standard 4), the assessors were sometimes too lenient in their scoring of this criterion, according to the panel. As part of the above-mentioned Futureproof Bachelor Project, the panel suggests to also adjust the bachelor thesis evaluation form.

As part of its external review, the panel studied a representative sample of 15 master theses. While the quality of the final products is addressed in the next section on Achieved Learning Outcomes, the panel also looked at the completed evaluation forms. The panel members reported that they agreed in almost all cases to the final score and found that almost all evaluation forms had been completed in an insightful way.

Assuring assessment quality

The Examination Board (EB) is an independent body that guarantees the quality of the examinations, oversees the organization of examinations and validates the qualifications of examiners. The Faculty of Social Sciences at VU has one Central Examination Board, as well as subcommittees for each programme. The EB is responsible for assessment policy issues at faculty level and advises Programme Directors on policy matters. The EB engages in five monitoring activities: (i) evaluating the assessment plan of each programme, (ii) checking course files, (iii) checks the way thesis assessment forms are completed, (iv) taking random samples of exams and theses for quality review, and (v) handling student complaints, as well as fraud cases.

The panel gathered from the written materials and the discussions on site that the central EB is responsible for 13 programmes. It consists of one core committee with three members representing the major programme clusters (communication, organization, public administration), and 13 subcommittees featuring in every case two dedicated programme staff members. Currently, the EB has two external members: one assessment expert working for the central education services of the university, and one member of the Social Sciences Exam Committee at Wageningen University. The latter position is the result of a broader exchange of assessment expertise between VU and the Wageningen University.

The discussion on site focused among others on the quality assurance tasks of the EB, notably with regard to course and thesis assessment. Every two years, EB subcommittees take a random sample of thesis, internship and course assessments. Furthermore, the panel was informed that the EB also has a role as advisor on assessment issues to the programme directors. In several formal and informal discussions throughout the year, the EB provides feedback on assessment plans, course files and assessment matrices. Members of the EB are known in their own departments and programmes, and take up a proactive role in talking to colleagues on how to implement the assessment policies that have been decided at faculty and programme level.

The panel also inquired with the EB about the use of generative AI in the programmes. At the time of the site visit, ChatGPT was mainly considered by the university as a potential source of plagiarism and could therefore not be used. The university is working on a long-term policy, but this has not yet been approved. Nonetheless, the panel was informed that it should be possible to use ChatGPT for education purposes if it is explained as to how its use contributes to the course learning goals.

All in all, the panel found that the EB in general and its members in particular have good expertise and are well qualified for their tasks. The panel appreciates the combination of assuming formal quality assurance tasks as a board and facilitating the informal provision of advice by EB members as programme colleagues. According to the panel, the regular meetings at programme level on the assessment plans are a useful instrument for the programme director and the course coordinators to ensure full alignment between assessment, course goals and learning outcomes. Finally, the panel welcomes the institutional exchange of expertise between the Examination Boards at VU and Wageningen.

Considerations

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel considers that both the bachelor and the master programmes can rely on robust assessment provisions and policies. There is a clear connection

between the university-wide Quality Plan Education, the faculty-wide Assessment Policy, and the Assessment Plans of the PAOS and PA programmes.

The panel found that the assessment plans were not only reflecting the existing assessment policies but also constituted a relevant instrument to ensure alignment between teaching and assessment in courses and across programmes.

The panel considers that the assessment methods of both PAOS and PA programmes are sufficiently varied and that the individual exams are valid, reliable, transparent and educational.

Further to its own sample review, the panel found that thesis assessment is organized properly in both bachelor and master programmes. It welcomes the adjustments made in the bachelor thesis evaluation form since the previous accreditation visit and thinks that the new form is more relevant and completed in an insightful way. If anything, the bachelor programme may want to revise some of the indicators that describe the respective assessment criteria. According to the panel, the master thesis assessment is executed properly.

Both programmes can rely on an Examination Board with good capacity and proper expertise. The panel appreciates in particular the advisory role of the board and its members towards the programme management and their individual teaching staff. According to the panel, the safeguarding of assessment quality at PAOS and PA is in competent hands with the EB.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programmes meet standard 3 of the NVAO-EAPAA framework.

Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes

The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Findings

There are two ways to establish whether the programme learning outcomes have been achieved – through a quality review of the final products and through checking what graduates are doing after they finished the programme. The panel has looked at both elements when assessing the end level qualifications of the bachelor and master programmes.

Thesis quality

The final project of the bachelor programme consists of two courses of 12 EC each: the research project and the bachelor thesis. The courses assess whether students have met the final qualifications. In the research project students conduct in small groups a complete but concise academic project under supervision. The bachelor thesis is an individual theoretical project, often in the form of a literature review, around a range of themes chosen by the teaching staff. As part of its external review, the panel studied a sample of 15 bachelor theses and also looked into the respective research projects, which had all been submitted in the academic year 2022-2023. The sample was representative in terms of final scores and specializations.

Overall, the panel found that in fourteen out of fifteen cases the deliverables fulfilled at least the minimum standards of a final product at academic bachelor level. In one case, the panel found that a bachelor thesis

with a low score should not have passed, at least not without further improvements to the product. Furthermore, the panel agreed to almost all final scores given by the assessors: theses and projects with a high score were indeed of better quality than those which received a lower (pass) mark. The panel thought that most final products were well-structured, had a good use of sub-questions to address the overall research question, a clear focus and a developed theoretical framework. Notwithstanding the overall positive assessment, the panel feels that some elements of the bachelor's thesis set-up and realization could be improved.

While the panel appreciates the set-up of the graduation trajectory featuring two courses and products, its thesis review has shown that the current combination of an empirical research group assignment and an individual theoretical reflection paper makes the latter individual product sometimes relatively simple and straightforward. And even though the final products meet the minimum quality standard, the panel feels that the graduation trajectory does not yet realize its full potential. This is especially true of the papers with lower grades. Furthermore, the panel identified several theses where it thought the writing style and the Dutch language quality of the product downplayed the overall quality of the thesis. Hence, the message expressed by the previous panel - that the new combination of a group research project and an individual literature study will generate better quality products and enhance the students' capacity to demonstrate all intended learning outcomes - did not fully yield the expected results.

In fact, several panel members had difficulties during the thesis review to determine the exact relation between the programme's intended learning outcomes and the learning goals of the combined final products in their current format. This issue confirms the finding of the midterm review committee that the relationship between the learning goals of the research project and bachelor thesis on the one hand and the learning outcomes at programme level on the other hand could be made clearer.

During a dedicated session on site, the programme team indicated that it is working on a revision of the two components in order to better align the last stage of the bachelor PAOS. These plans were further concretized in the note "Towards a future proof Bachelor Project", which the panel has studied and found to be comprehensive. While the graduation trajectory continues to consist of two separate courses with dedicated learning goals, the process, the topics, the products and their respective learning goals will be better connected. The programme team indicated that it will also address the comments of the panel on the bachelor thesis products, notably with regard to writing style, language quality and the reflection component in the individual theses. The extensive discussion, the comprehensive note and the professional expertise of the team have convinced the panel that the futureproof bachelor project will do away with the existing flaws.

In the master programme, the thesis (24 EC) is the final project students undertake to achieve the intended learning outcomes. Students develop their own research question and mostly study a real-world problem in a real-world organization in the public domain. Parttime students often address a problem related to their own work. As part of its external review, the panel studied a sample of 15 master theses submitted in the academic year 2022-2023. The sample was representative in terms of final score and specialization track.

Overall, the panel found that each thesis fulfilled at least the minimum standards of a final product at academic master level. It also agreed in almost all cases with the final score given by the assessors: theses with a high score were indeed of better quality than those which received a lower (pass) mark. In their comments on the sample review, the panel emphasized that the master theses were well structured, featured a good range of literature, adopted a clear methodology, and contained a discussion on the results and the limitations of the study. As one reviewer indicated: "the students introduce multiple theories in their

theses and actually do something with them.” Furthermore, the thesis topics demonstrated that this final product is a great way for fulltime and parttime students alike to work on real-world problems in public organizations. The master thesis, therefore, is particularly relevant for achieving the programme learning outcomes.

Among all positive impressions on the master thesis quality, there was also one weakness: in several theses, the use of Dutch language was sometimes poor. Given that the Dutch language quality had also been earmarked as a point for attention in the bachelor theses, the panel advises the master programme to take appropriate measures to monitor the language quality of written assignments. In fact, the programme may want to adjust its procedures in such a way that adequate language use is a precondition for thesis evaluation.

Performance of graduates

Graduates from the bachelor programme can enter the labour market directly or pursue a master programme at VU, at other universities in the Netherlands or abroad. The panel was informed that PAOS graduates enrol on a large number of different master programmes. According to a recent analysis among PAOS students, about 6% want to enter the labour market directly, 6% plan to pursue another bachelor and 4% will have an interim year upon graduation. All others move on to a master programme. The panel noticed that half of the students who already have a clear idea about their master studies, indicate they will leave VU. According to the programme team, this is a fair share and not a worrying trend, on the contrary: it is VU-wide policy to inform and support students about study opportunities that befit their personal interests and ambitions, even if this means that they leave VU. Moreover, the profile of the PA master programme is such that it attracts a lot of students ‘from the outside’ who did not study at PAOS, FSS or VU.

The panel gathered from the written materials and the discussions on site that graduates from the master programme are doing fine on the labour market. Because there is limited concrete and systematic information on the professional whereabouts of the PA graduates, the programme has recently appointed an alumni coordinator. While parttime students tend to have a job, most of the fulltime students found employment immediately or shortly after finishing the programme. Most often these jobs are with the government; others work in the third or the private sector.

The employers and alumni the panel spoke to emphasized that PA students are definitely work-ready by the time they graduate. One employer indicated that junior staff always have to accommodate to the specific sector and employer, but bring from their studies at VU the capacity to understand politics and decision-making. One alumna mentioned that with hindsight, she realised that the combination of the broad PAOS bachelor and the specialist PA master was particularly relevant (and advantageous) in the first years of her career. Compared to other junior staff, the broad overview gave her a competitive advantage.

The panel was informed that both programmes want to pay more explicit attention to external stakeholders and alumni. Given the variety of master programmes PAOS graduates pursue in the Netherlands and abroad, and in view of the range of sectors PA students and alumni represent, it is important for the programmes not to lose the individual connections. Hence the idea to establish a network of alumni which could be invited and involved systematically in curricular and extra-curricular activities of the programmes. The panel welcomes this initiative and thinks it will be a useful complement to the External Advisory Boards.

Considerations

Based on the written materials, the thesis sample and the discussions on site, the panel considers that the PAOS and PA students who eventually graduate the bachelor and master programme have effectively

achieved all learning outcomes. The sample review of final bachelor products shows that the combination of a group research practice and an individual bachelor thesis – an approach implemented right after the previous accreditation – is relevant; however, the panel also found that both products and their learning goals should be closer attuned to the programme’s intended learning outcomes. Moreover, the individual thesis should contain – and be assessed on – a reflection component. The panel is confident that the necessary adjustments for the so-called Futureproof Bachelor Project will be realised. The quality of the master theses is good. Because it identified several cases of poor Dutch language quality in both bachelor and master theses, the panel advises both programmes to evaluate the Dutch language quality of students prior to the thesis trajectory.

Furthermore, the panel considers that upon graduation students find a job that is in line with the objective of their respective programme. In this regard, the panel is convinced that the PAOS and PA programmes constitute an important lever for the career of their graduates. The competencies acquired by the bachelor graduates allow them to pursue a wide variety of master programmes at VU and elsewhere in the Netherlands or abroad. The PA students are definitely work- and society-ready by the time they graduate and stand out as reflective, responsible and open professionals/citizens with a broad perspective.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programmes meet standard 4 of the NVAO-EAPAA framework.

Standard 5. Diversity

Staff and student populations should adequately reflect society, in various ways. The programme has an adequate strategy for dealing with the diverse backgrounds of students.

Findings

Policy

The panel gathered from the written materials that in accordance with Dutch government policies, universities and programmes do not register the diversity of students or teaching staff in terms of ethnic or cultural backgrounds. VU Amsterdam is known as the most ethnically diverse university in the Netherlands in terms of its student population: an average 21% of the students has a non-Western background. This is reflected in culturally diverse classrooms where an important number of the students are from mostly Turkish or Moroccan descent. The university considers this heterogeneous student population as valuable because it contributes to the cultural diversity in the classroom. Both staff and student mentors are given guidance on how to deal with diversity. Moreover, VU offers special activities for so-called first generation students: the ‘Better prepared’ courses take place in the middle of August, right before the programmes start. In addition, there are various diversity networks at VU, such as Family of Academic Minds (FAM). During the visit, the panel acknowledged this cultural diversity by walking around on the university campus, as well as through the topics that were discussed with programme stakeholders. In fact, the discussions on site demonstrated that the concepts of diversity and inclusiveness are very much on the radar of the university, faculty and programmes. Moreover, diversity at VU consists of different dimensions (gender, socio-economical, ethnic, age, etc.) which are all cherished in line with its emancipatory ambitions.

Student diversity

The panel gathered from the written information and the tables in the report annexes that there is a gender balance among bachelor and master students: about 57% of the PAOS students and 54% of the PA students

are female. Moreover, the bachelor programme attracts a considerable number (between 20 and 35%) of students who switched from other programmes such as Law, Business Administration or Economics. In addition, about a quarter of the yearly intake enters the programme after the propaedeutic exam at a university of applied sciences. More than half of the PA students enter the master programme through a pre-master programme, which indicates that they have a different – often professionally oriented – educational background. The master programme is also diverse with respect to the seniority of its students: the 2022 cohort consists of 68% of fulltime (mostly younger) and 32% of parttime (mostly older) students who follow the same curriculum and interact with each other in all courses. The panel acknowledges that the set-up of both bachelor and master programmes is such that they facilitate and welcome this diversity of students, which again is fully in line with the emancipatory ambitions of the university.

Staff diversity

According to the information in the self-evaluation report, it is the explicit goal of both bachelor and master programmes to have a diverse staff, with diversity showing itself in a range of aspects. In terms of gender, the teaching staff in the bachelor programme is balanced: 26 male and 25 female staff. In the master programme, there is no gender balance as only three staff (14%) are female. The panel was informed that three more female staff members were hired recently and will be involved in the PA programme soon, bringing the male-female ratio in the master programme up to 3:1.

The previous panel advised the programmes to attract more ethnically diverse and more female teaching staff. Over the past years, the faculty has focussed on recruiting international staff and staff with a more diverse background in terms of ethnicity, gender and age. This has resulted in a staff team that is currently more diverse than six years ago, with more international staff and more staff with a diverse, ethnic background. Although the programmes are taught in Dutch, the departments have attracted a number of international scholars lately to increase diversity. Currently, six staff on the programmes have an international background.

In terms of gender, the current panel noticed a considerable discrepancy between the department of Organization Sciences, which has about 70% female staff, and the department of Public Administration & Political Science with 30% female staff. The panel welcomes the efforts of the faculty and the programmes to pay attention to diversity in recruitment and encourages to continue these efforts, notably in the Public Administration & Political Science department and the master programme.

Diversity in the curriculum

In so far as the PAOS and PA programmes are concerned, the panel noticed that diversity and inclusiveness are important themes. In many bachelor courses, a central question is how to deal with diversity and how governance and organizations can be inclusive. In the mentor programme and the Broader Mind module, students are encouraged to openly choose their own position on this. Teaching staff also express their own positions and connect this to the scientific debate. One of the FSS-wide electives concerns a critical view on diversity and inclusion, where students learn how to provide conditions that encourage and sustain diversity within organizations.

In the master programme, there is diversity in the employment experience of the students, which is actively used in the didactic vision and delivery of the programme. In the classroom, teaching staff build on the differences among the fulltime and parttime master students by having them interact based on their own understanding of and experiences in the societal environment in which the respective specialization tracks are situated. Moreover, the programme covers a variety of scientific and methodological approaches in the

different specialization tracks. Teaching staff explicitly address in their courses issues of diversity of cultural background, political position, educational background and their implications for public administration.

Furthermore, the panel was informed that several staff in FSS focus in their research on diversity and on non-Western paradigms regarding governance and organization. One research staff involved in the programme is for instance specialized in issues of diversity in the security domain. Another recently hired staff is professor of Diversity; she will contribute to a better understanding of diversity in all its dimensions among staff.

In sum, the panel acknowledges that diversity has many dimensions and that students and staff on the PAOS and PA programmes are addressing the issue in various ways.

Considerations

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel considers that diversity is an important dimension of the university, the faculty and the programmes. Diversity and inclusiveness are in the DNA of the university, and its mission and educational vision are such that students and staff operate in a diverse and inclusive learning environment. The panel considers that this is a particularly strong and distinctive feature of studying at VU.

According to the panel, this attention to diversity and inclusiveness is also very much present in the PAOS and PA programmes. Compared to other similar programmes in the Netherlands, PAOS and PA students are more diverse in different ways: gender, cultural and educational background, age. Staff and programmes are making active use of this diversity in class and in the services on offer. In line with the university-wide ambitions, the programmes are welcoming this diversity as a lever for cultural and personal emancipation.

The panel endorses the efforts of the faculty and the programmes to pay attention to diversity in recruitment. In so far as gender diversity is concerned, the panel sees room for advancement in the Public Administration & Political Science department and the master programme.

Furthermore, the panel considers that diversity is also present in the programme curricula and the research themes. It appreciates in particular that teaching staff in common, foundational and specialist courses explicitly address issues of diversity and their implications for society, organizations and public administration.

In sum, the panel has noticed in the materials and during the discussions with programme stakeholders an impressive commitment to diversity in all its manifestations.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programmes meet standard 5 of the NVAO-EAPAA framework.

General conclusion

The panel has established that both degree programmes at VU Amsterdam meet all five NVAO-EAPAA standards under consideration: intended learning outcomes, teaching-learning environment, assessment, achieved learning outcomes and diversity.

As a result, the panel's overall assessment of the quality of the bachelor programme Public Administration and Organizational Science is **positive**.

As a result, the panel's overall assessment of the quality of the master programme Public Administration is **positive**.

Development points

Given its overall positive conclusion, the panel does not issue any strong or binding recommendations. However, the materials and discussions revealed a number of areas where the panel sees room for improvement.

It advises both bachelor and master programmes to:

- update the intended learning outcomes, in alignment with the curriculum adjustments;
- merge the programmes' External Advisory Boards;
- embrace developments in AI and Digital: in the curriculum, teaching and assessment methods;
- monitor, and where necessary enhance, the Dutch writing skills of students.

The panel advises the bachelor programme to:

- better connect the two thesis products, safeguard their quality, and adjust the evaluation forms accordingly;
- enhance communication on academic and personal support opportunities.

The panel advises the master programme to:

- enhance the opportunities for interaction among fulltime PA students;
- monitor the duration of the thesis trajectory and its impact on the completion rate.

Appendix 1. Intended learning outcomes

BSc Public Administration and Organizational Science

The graduate of the bachelor's programme in PAOS has knowledge and understanding of:

- K1. the basic concepts and theories involved in policy and decision-making, organization and management, communication, the relationships and interactions between public and private organizations and the environments in which they operate.
- K2. complementary concepts, theories, and approaches to the academic disciplines of political science, sociology, economics, law and communication science; the actual structure of public administration in daily practice in the environment in which it operates.
- K3. the principles of the social sciences and appropriate approaches to the study of social sciences. K4. methods and techniques in social science research.

Application: The graduate of the bachelor's programme in PAOS is capable of:

- Ap1. analysing public administrative and organizational problems and phenomena by using scientific concepts and theories.
- Ap2. reframing practical problems into researchable questions.
- Ap3. applying scientific knowledge and understanding to solve (basic) practical problems of administration and organization.
- Ap4. collecting and processing scientific sources and research literature; conducting a simple research project under supervision.

Attitude: The graduate of the bachelor's programme in PAOS demonstrates:

- At1. inquisitiveness and a critical reflection about backgrounds, causes, implications and solutions to public administrative and organizational phenomena and problems.
- At2. integrity and awareness of ethical and normative aspects of management and organization.

Communication: The graduate of the bachelor's programme in PAOS has the capacity to:

- C1. collaborate and communicate clearly in a diverse environment and with different partners (e.g. fellow students, societal partners) about for example expectations, understandings and results.

MSc Public Administration

Knowledge: The graduate possesses knowledge of recent approaches, insights and theories with respect to:

- K1. issues of the governance of society;
- K2. the differentiation and partial socialization (*'vermaatschappelijking'*) of public governance and the changing distribution of tasks and responsibilities between public and private sectors and modern techniques of policy making, policy implementation and management;
- K3. issues of good governance, among which the management of public values like integrity.

Capacities: The graduate is able:

- C1. to discern theoretical approaches and methods in different disciplines and is able to usefully select those in order to apply them to issues of policy, governance and organization in the public domain and is able to substantiate these choices;
- C2. to integrate empirical, normative and action-oriented argumentations, in such way that he or she can independently analyse and evaluate social and governance problems, using well-defined research methods and techniques and reports on findings in that regard and make propositions that contribute to possible responses;

C3. to critically reflect on the results of his or her own research and relate this to theoretical debates in the discipline;

C4. to report on (the own) scientific research into an issue of policy, governance and organization in a clear manner, written and orally, and oriented to a diverse public;

C5. to independently work in both public and private organizations in the public domain.

Attitude: The graduate shows:

A1. to be able to critically reflect on the own analytical competencies and the own future or current professional role and the social responsibilities that accompany this role;

A2. to search for new, original, interdisciplinary and creative approaches to problems, by showing the ability to first critically analyse a problem and if necessary redefine it, before searching for new responses;

A3. to show academic citizenship, apparent from mastery of a consistent set of norms and values with respect to the practice of scientific and professional activities

Appendix 2. Programme curricula

BSc Public Administration and Organizational Science

JAARSCHEMA BACHELOR Bestuurs- en organisatiewetenschap 2022 - 2023																																									
WEEK	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
JAAR 1	Periode 1								periode 2								Periode 3					Periode 4					Periode 5					Periode 6									
	Kernthema's Bestuurs- en Organisatiewetenschap [100] S_KBO								The Governance and Politics of Social Problems [100] S_GPSP													Gedrag en communicatie in organisaties [200] S_GCO					Beleid en besluitvorming [200] S_BLB														
Bachelorkwintet Bestuurs- en Organisatiewetenschap 1 [100] S_BWGB01								Methodologie van sociaal-wetenschappelijk onderzoek [100] S_MTSWO													Beschrijvende en inferentiële statistiek [100] S_BIS					Geschiedenis van de sociale wetenschappen [200] S_GSW															
								Bachelorkwintet Bestuurs- en Organisatiewetenschap 2 [100] S_BWGB02													Bachelorkwintet Bestuurs- en Organisatiewetenschap 3 [100] S_BWGB03																				
Mentoraat Bestuurs- en Organisatiewetenschap jaar 1 S_MB1																																									
Afstudeerrichting Besturen																																									
JAAR 2	Periode 1								Periode 2								Periode 3					Periode 4					Periode 5					Periode 6									
	Individen, sociale netwerken en technologie [300] S_ISNT								Economie, markt en overheid [200] S_EMO													Filosofie van besturen en organiseren [300] S_FBO					Recht voor besturen en organiseren [200] S_RBO														
Public Management [200] S_PM								EU Governance in an International Context [300] S_EUGIC													- Beyond Gender Inequalities [300] S_BGI OR - Confronting Commodity Chains [300] S_CCC OR - Towards Better Care and Welfare: let's stick together [300] S_TBCW					- AI & Society: Fixing Algorithmic Decision Making [300] S_AIS OR - Improving Planetary Health: A Learning Lab for Social-Entrepreneurship [300] S_JPH OR - The Human Dimension of Sustainable Development: From Ideal to Reality [300] S_HDSD															
Bachelorkwintet Bestuurs- en Organisatiewetenschap 4 [200] S_BWGB04																					Bachelorkwintet Bestuurs- en Organisatiewetenschap 5: Besturen [300] S_BWGB05B																				
Mentoraat Bestuurs- en Organisatiewetenschap jaar 2 S_MB2																																									
JAAR 3	Periode 1								Periode 2								Periode 3					Periode 4					Periode 5					Periode 6									
	Keuzerimte (30 EC), bijvoorbeeld • studeren in het buitenland • stage • minor • keuzevakken																					Besturen van de samenleving [300] S_BS					Bachelorthesis Bestuurs- en Organisatiewetenschap [300] S_BTBO12														
																					Onderzoekspracticum Bestuurs- en Organisatiewetenschap [300] S_OPBO																				
Mentoraat Bestuurs- en Organisatiewetenschap jaar 3 S_MB3																																									
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> MAJORVAK VAK SOCIAL SCIENCES FOR SOCIETY (SS45) VAK ACADEMISCHE KERN KEUZERIIMTE TENTAMENWEEK </div>																																									
Niveau vak: [100] / [200] / [300]																																									
Afstudeerrichting Organiseren																																									
JAAR 2	Periode 1								Periode 2								Periode 3					Periode 4					Periode 5					Periode 6									
	Individen, sociale netwerken en technologie [300] S_ISNT								Strategic Management of Organizations [200] S_SMOO													Filosofie van besturen en organiseren [300] S_FBO					Instituten, identiteit en imago [300] S_III														
Public Management [200] S_PM								Organizational Culture and Change [300] S_OCC													- Beyond Gender Inequalities [300] S_BGI OR - Confronting Commodity Chains [300] S_CCC OR - Towards Better Care and Welfare: let's stick together [300] S_TBCW					- AI & Society: Fixing Algorithmic Decision Making [300] S_AIS OR - Improving Planetary Health: A Learning Lab for Social-Entrepreneurship [300] S_JPH OR - The Human Dimension of Sustainable Development: From Ideal to Reality [300] S_HDSD															
Bachelorkwintet Bestuurs- en Organisatiewetenschap 4 [200] S_BWGB04																					Bachelorkwintet Bestuurs- en Organisatiewetenschap 5: Organiseren [300] S_BWGB05O																				
Mentoraat Bestuurs- en Organisatiewetenschap jaar 2 S_MB2																																									
JAAR 3	Periode 1								Periode 2								Periode 3					Periode 4					Periode 5					Periode 6									
	Keuzerimte (30 EC), bijvoorbeeld • studeren in het buitenland • stage • minor • keuzevakken																					Organiseren in de 21e eeuw [300] S_O21					Bachelorthesis Bestuurs- en Organisatiewetenschap [300] S_BTBO12														
																					Onderzoekspracticum Bestuurs- en Organisatiewetenschap [300] S_OPBO																				
Mentoraat Bestuurs- en Organisatiewetenschap jaar 3 S_MB3																																									
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> MAJORVAK VAK SOCIAL SCIENCES FOR SOCIETY (SS45) VAK ACADEMISCHE KERN KEUZERIIMTE TENTAMENWEEK </div>																																									
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MSc Public Administration

JAARSCHEMA MASTER BESTUURSKUNDE 2022 - 2023																																									
WEEK	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	Periode 1							Periode 2							Periode 3					Periode 4					Periode 5					Periode 6											
Afstudeerrichting Kwaliteit van besturen voltijd	Bestuur en samenleving: kritische perspectieven [500] S_BSKP							Openbaar bestuur en kennis [500] S_OBK							Goed bestuur voltijd [500] S_GBvt					Methoden en technieken voor bestuurskundig onderzoek [600] S_MTVBO					Masterthesis Bestuurskunde (24 EC) [600] S_MTBKvt																
	Beleid en management [500] S_BLM							Dynamiek van internationaal besturen [500] S_DIB																																	
Afstudeerrichting Kwaliteit van Besturen deeltijd	Bestuur en samenleving: kritische perspectieven [500] S_BSKP							Dynamiek van internationaal besturen [500] S_DIB							Openbaar bestuur en kennis deeltijd [500] S_OBKdt					Methoden en technieken voor bestuurskundig onderzoek [600] S_MTVBO					Goed bestuur deeltijd [500] S_GBdt																
	Beleid en management [500] S_BLM																								Masterthesis Bestuurskunde (24 EC) [600] S_MTBKdt																
Afstudeerrichting Besturen van veiligheid voltijd	Bestuur en samenleving: kritische perspectieven [500] S_BSKP							Veiligheid in de samenleving [500] S_VIS							Goed bestuur voltijd [500] S_GBvt					Methoden en technieken voor bestuurskundig onderzoek [600] S_MTVBO					Masterthesis Bestuurskunde (24 EC) [600] S_MTBKvt																
	Beleid en management [500] S_BLM							Samenwerking in veiligheid [500] S_SIV																																	
Afstudeerrichting Besturen van veiligheid deeltijd	Bestuur en samenleving: kritische perspectieven [500] S_BSKP							Samenwerking in veiligheid [500] S_SIV							Veiligheid in de samenleving deeltijd [500] S_VISdt					Methoden en technieken voor bestuurskundig onderzoek [600] S_MTVBO					Goed bestuur deeltijd [500] S_GBdt																
	Beleid en management [500] S_BLM																								Masterthesis Bestuurskunde (24 EC) [600] S_MTBKdt																
Afstudeerrichting Besturen van maatschappelijke organisaties voltijd	Bestuur en samenleving: kritische perspectieven [500] S_BSKP							Maatschappelijke organisaties in transitie [500] S_MOT							Goed bestuur voltijd [500] S_GBvt					Methoden en technieken voor bestuurskundig onderzoek [600] S_MTVBO					Masterthesis Bestuurskunde (24 EC) [600] S_MTBKvt																
	Beleid en management [500] S_BLM							Besturen van maatschappelijk initiatief [500] S_BMI																																	
Afstudeerrichting Besturen van maatschappelijke organisaties deeltijd	Bestuur en samenleving: kritische perspectieven [500] S_BSKP							Maatschappelijke organisaties in transitie [500] S_MOT							Besturen van maatschappelijk initiatief deeltijd [500] S_BMIdt					Methoden en technieken voor bestuurskundig onderzoek [600] S_MTVBO					Goed bestuur deeltijd [500] S_GBdt																
	Beleid en management [500] S_BLM																								Masterthesis Bestuurskunde (24 EC) [600] S_MTBKdt																
Afstudeerrichting Besturen van zorgvernieuwing voltijd	Bestuur en samenleving: kritische perspectieven [500] S_BSKP							Zorg in de samenleving [400] S_ZIS							Goed bestuur voltijd [500] S_GBvt					Methoden en technieken voor bestuurskundig onderzoek [600] S_MTVBO					Masterthesis Bestuurskunde (24 EC) [600] S_MTBKvt																
	Beleid en management [500] S_BLM							Besturen van zorgvernieuwing [600] S_BVZ																																	
Afstudeerrichting Besturen van zorgvernieuwing deeltijd	Bestuur en samenleving: kritische perspectieven [500] S_BSKP							Besturen van zorgvernieuwing [600] S_BVZ							Zorg in de samenleving deeltijd [500] S_ZISdt					Methoden en technieken voor bestuurskundig onderzoek [600] S_MTVBO					Goed bestuur deeltijd [500] S_GBdt																
	Beleid en management [500] S_BLM																								Masterthesis Bestuurskunde (24 EC) [600] S_MTBKdt																

Appendix 3. Programme of the site visit

Thursday 30 November 2023

- 09.00 Arrival, welcome and internal meeting
- 10.00 Interview Management
- 11.00 Interview Bachelor students
- 12.00 Interview Bachelor staff
- 12.50 Lunch and internal meeting
- 13.30 Campus tour + looking at posters and products
- 14.30 Interview Master students (and recent alumni)
- 15.30 Interview Master staff
- 16.30 Interview Professional field and alumni
- 17.30 Session dedicated to the Bachelor thesis trajectory
- 18.00 End of day 1

Friday 1 December 2023

- 08.45 Arrival and internal meeting
- 09.30 Interview Exam Committee
- 10.15 Internal meeting
- 10.30 Final interview management
- 11.30 Internal deliberations + lunch
- 13.00 Development Dialogue
- 14.00 Plenary Feedback
- 14.30 End of site visit

Appendix 4. Materials

Prior to the site visit, the panel studied 15 theses and their evaluation for each of the two programmes under review. Information on the selected theses is available from Academion upon request.

In the run-up to the site-visit VU Amsterdam provided a Surfdrive environment with the following materials:

- Self-Evaluation Report Bachelor Public Administration and Organization Science
- Self-Evaluation Report Master Public Administration

Annexes:

- Organogram Faculty Social Sciences (FSS)
- Domain specific reference framework PAGO
- Teaching and Examination Regulations BSc and MSc (2022-2023)
- Study guide
- Scheme education programme
- Factsheets BSc and MSc
- Annual Reports BSc and MSc
- Overviews staff members BSc and MSc
- Assessment plans BSc and MSc programmes
- Faculty testing policy guidelines
- Examination Board Annual Report
- Examination Board Rules and Regulations
- Course manuals bachelor thesis and master thesis
- Theme descriptions bachelor and master theses
- Diversity BSc and MSc students
- Composition Field Advisory Boards bachelor and master programmes
- Podcast student chapter BSc programme
- FSS Bachelor internship regulation
- FSS Bachelor thesis regulation
- FSS Master thesis regulation
- Actions taken since the last accreditation MSc programme

During the visit, the team at VU Amsterdam put at disposition the following documents:

- Overview of curriculum changes MSc programme 2023-2024
- Proposal new track MSc programme 2024-2025
- Towards a future proof Bachelor Project