



Media Studies
University of Groningen

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Summary

Standard 1. Intended learning outcomes

The bachelor Media Studies aims to equip students to analyse media production and consumption and to work in the field of media. Students learn to understand and reflect on (the impact of) a wide variety of media (platforms). The programme focuses on the international nature of media studies and teaches students to analyse media from a comparative perspective, taking into account the cultural, historical, economic, and political contexts. The programme combines insights from theories and methodologies from the humanities and social sciences, resulting in an interdisciplinary approach. Addressing practices of both the use and the production of media, it provides insight into the interconnectedness of the perspectives of media users and producers. Besides academic training, the programme also provides students with professional skills, such as media production skills. The master Media Studies builds on the bachelor's programme's vision and aims to educate skilled media professionals and scholars. The programme is characterized by its focus on both academic and professional training. This profile is reflected in the extended study period of 1,5 years (90 EC) which allows for an internship as well as a thesis project.

The panel is positive about both programmes' profiles, which are well aligned with the developments in the professional and academic field of media studies. Both programmes have a strongly international orientation and are well embedded in the university's media studies department, which enjoys a good reputation. The panel appreciates the interdisciplinary approach of both programmes and the attention for both academic and professional skills. In the master, the tracks Journalistiek and Journalism have a specifically strong profile, as they are leading in academic journalism education at master's level. The panel agrees with the planned revision of the other three master tracks, which will be reduced to two tracks as of academic year 2026-2027, and expects the revision will lead to a more steady inflow of students. The panel considers the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) of both programmes to be well formulated and well aligned to the bachelor's and master's level. They cover all relevant topics and skills and match with the international academic field as well as the professional field.

The panel sees that the programmes have close relations with the professional field, for example through internships, guest lecturers, and real-life assignments. For the master tracks Journalism and Journalistiek, more systematic and formal alignment with the professional field is realized through the professional advisory board for these tracks. To ensure systematic alignment for the bachelor and the other master tracks as well, the panel recommends to install a professional advisory board for these tracks and the bachelor, and to include alumni in the board. The professional advisory boards should be consulted regularly in order to structurally align the profiles and ILOs with the needs of the professional field.

Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment

According to the panel, the curricula of both programmes are coherent as they are designed along theoretical, methodological, and professional learning pathways. The curricula are aligned with the programmes' ILOs and profile, covering all relevant topics. Strong aspects include the close connections with the professional practice, the solid link between research and education, a good balance between foundational knowledge and state-of-the-art insights and societal developments, and the way in which students are trained to use artificial intelligence (AI) in a responsible way. The 90 EC setup of the master enables students to develop both academic and professional skills at an advanced level, and the scheduling of the internship after the thesis allows for a smooth transition into the labour market. The bachelor is in the process of a curriculum revision, in response to a faculty-wide policy change. The panel is impressed with

how the staff has embraced the required revision with an open attitude, seeing it as an opportunity for a redesign and improvement of the curriculum.

Both programmes are taught in English, which, according to the panel, follows logically from the inherent international nature of the field of media studies. For students who aspire a career in the Dutch journalism field, the Dutch-taught track Journalistiek is available. The learning environment of both programmes is characterized by a focus on active learning in small-scale teaching settings allowing for interaction and collaboration between students and staff. Students appreciate the activating environment and teaching methods. They also value the open atmosphere, which makes them feel heard. The programmes are strongly internationally focused, allowing for a culturally diverse classroom. The panel considers this intercultural and inclusive environment to be a strength of the programmes, enriching the learning process.

According to the panel, the admission criteria are appropriate. The panel also considers the programmes to be feasible within the allocated time. The panel is very positive about the overall student guidance in the programmes, provided by study advisors and mentors. The mentoring system in the master track Journalistiek (where alumni act as mentors) is much appreciated by the panel. The panel thinks this system may be expanded to other tracks as well. Facilities for students with a disability are appropriate and sufficient. Furthermore, thesis supervision as well as internship supervision are well structured. Students have easy access to all relevant information through the well-structured Brightspace environment. The various specific facilities, such as the newsroom, studios, and available recording equipment, are valuable aspects of the programme.

The teaching staff of the programmes represents high quality and expertise in all relevant areas. Lecturers are didactically qualified and firmly embedded in research groups. The team also includes lecturers with experience in the professional field, which adds to the link with the professional field. The panel appreciates the international composition of the teaching team and notes that this clearly contributes to the intercultural learning environment. Furthermore, lecturers are responsive and accessible towards students. Finally, there is good collaboration and alignment within the teaching team.

Standard 3. Student assessment

The panel considers the assessment in both programmes to be well designed, allowing students to achieve the final exit level for all ILOs. In both programmes, a wide variety of appropriate assessment methods is applied, reflecting a good mix of formative and summative assessment as well as theoretical and practical assessment. Appropriate measures are taken by the programmes to improve and assure the quality of assessment, such as the peer-review of assessments, the use of assessment forms, and calibration. The panel appreciates how the programmes handle AI-related issues in a proactive way. The thesis assessment procedure is appropriate, as theses are assessed by two assessors, based on an assessment form, including written feedback. Thesis assessment is regularly calibrated among thesis assessors. Assessment of the internships is also well structured, according to the panel, with a transparent and well-substantiated grading process. Furthermore, there is good alignment between internship assessors. The panel considers the Board of Examiners (BoE) to be independent, competent, in control, and proactive with regard to safeguarding the assessment quality in the programmes. Because the internship is an important assessment in the master (as it concludes the professional learning pathway), the panel suggests that the BoE examine a sample of internship reports and assessments each year.

Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes

Based on the review of a sample of 15 theses from the bachelor and 17 theses from the master, the panel concludes that the level demonstrated in the theses is appropriate for an academic bachelor's/master's

programme. The documentation and the interviews indicate that graduates of the bachelor are well equipped to follow a master's programme. Graduates of the master are well prepared for and prove to be successful in the professional field.

Score table

The panel assesses the programmes as follows:

Bachelor's programme Media Studies

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

General conclusion positive

Master's programme Media Studies

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

General conclusion positive

em. prof. dr. A.M. (Anneke) Smelik (panel chair) drs. Anne-Lise Kamphuis (panel secretary)

Date: 1 October 2025

Introduction

Procedure

Assessment

On 2, 3 and 4 June 2025, the bachelor's programme and master's programmes Media Studies of the University of Groningen were assessed by an independent peer review panel as part of the cluster assessment WO CIW and Media. The assessment cluster consisted of 23 programmes, offered by the Erasmus University Rotterdam, Radboud University, University of Amsterdam, Utrecht University, Leiden University, Tilburg University, University of Groningen, Maastricht University and Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. The assessment followed the procedure and standards of the NVAO Assessment Framework for the Higher Education Accreditation System of the Netherlands (April 2024).

Quality assurance agency Academion coordinated the assessment upon request of the cluster WO CIW and Media. Fiona Schouten acted as coordinator for the visit to the University of Groningen. Anne-Lise Kamphuis acted as panel secretary for the assessment of the programmes of the University of Groningen. They have both been certified and registered by the NVAO.

Preparation

Academion composed the peer review panel in cooperation with the institutions and taking into account the expertise and independence of the members as well as consistency within the cluster. On 22 January 2025, the NVAO approved the composition of the panel. The coordinator instructed the panel chair on her role in the site visit according to the Panel chair profile (NVAO 2016).

The faculty composed a site visit schedule in consultation with the coordinator (see appendix 3). They selected representative partners for the various interviews. It was also determined that the development dialogue would be made part of the site visit. A separate development report was made based on this dialogue.

The bachelor's and master's programmes Media Studies provided the coordinator with lists of graduates from the academic years 2022-2023 and 2023-2024. In consultation with the coordinator, the panel chair selected 15 theses of the bachelor's programme Media Studies. The bachelor's programme does not offer tracks.

The panel selected a total of 17 theses from the master's programme Media Studies. Before the site visit, 15 theses were selected: 1 thesis was selected from the track Journalism, 3 theses were selected from the track Datafication and Digital Literacy, 6 theses were selected from the track Media Creation and Innovation, and 5 theses were selected from the track Social Media and Society. This selection reflected the number of graduates in each particular track proportionally. The chair and coordinator took the diversity of final grades and examiners into account. During the site visit, the thesis selection was expanded with 2 theses from the track Journalistiek, to ensure that all specializations were represented in the thesis sample.

Prior to the site visit, the programme provided the panel with the theses and the accompanying assessment forms. It also provided the panel with the self-evaluation reports and additional materials (see appendix 4).

The panel members studied the information and sent their findings to the secretary. The secretary collected the panel's questions and remarks in a document and shared this with the panel members. In a preliminary

meeting, the panel discussed the initial findings on the self-evaluation reports and the theses, as well as the division of tasks during the site visit. The panel was also informed on the assessment framework, the working method and the planning of the site visit and report.

Site visit

During the site visit, the panel interviewed various programme representatives (see appendix 3). The panel also offered students and staff members an opportunity for confidential discussion during a consultation hour. No consultation was requested. The panel used the final part of the site visit to discuss its findings in an internal meeting. Afterwards, the panel chair publicly presented the preliminary findings.

Report

The secretary wrote a draft report based on the panel's findings and submitted it to the coordinator for peer assessment. Subsequently, the secretary sent the report to the panel for feedback. After processing this feedback, the secretary sent the draft report to the University of Groningen in order to have it checked for factual irregularities. The secretary discussed the ensuing comments with the panel chair and changes were implemented accordingly. The panel then finalized the report, and the coordinator sent it to the University of Groningen.

Panel

The panel assessing the bachelor's and master's programmes Media Studies at the University of Groningen consisted of the following members:

- Em. prof. dr. A.M. (Anneke) Smelik, professor emeritus in Visual Culture at the Department of Modern Languages and Cultures of Radboud University (panel chair);
- Prof. dr. H. (Hilde) Van den Bulck, professor of Communication at the College of Arts and Sciences of Drexel University (United States);
- Prof. dr. V. (Veronique) Hoste, professor in Computational Linguistics at the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy of Ghent University (Belgium);
- Prof. dr. M.J.P. (Margot) van Mulken, professor in Persuasive Communication and Stylistics at the Department of Modern Languages and Cultures of Radboud University;
- Prof. dr. J. (Joris) van Eijnatten, professor in Digital History at the Faculty of Humanities of Utrecht University and Director of the Netherlands eScience Center in Amsterdam;
- V.C.T. (Vincent) Heijboer BA, master's student Mediastudies, track Film and Photographic Studies, at Leiden University (student member).

Each panel member and the panel secretary filled out the Statement of Impartiality and non disclosure agreement, as required by the NVAO. They can confirm that the assessment was carried out in complete independence.

Information on the programmes

Name of the institution:	University of Groningen
BRIN-number:	21PC
Status of the institution:	Publicly funded institution
Result institutional quality assurance assessment:	Positive

Programme name: B Media Studies (Media en Cultuur)
CROHO number: 50906
Orientation of the programme: academic
Level of the programme: Bachelor (NLQF 6)
Number of credits: 180 EC
Language of instruction: English
Tracks: -
Location: Groningen
Mode(s) of study: Fulltime
Awarded degree: BA
Submission date NVAO: 1 November 2025

Programme name: M Media Studies (Mediastudies)
CROHO number: 60831
Orientation of the programme: academic
Level of the programme: Master (NLQF 7)
Number of credits: 90 EC
Language of instruction: Dutch, English
Tracks: Journalistiek
Journalism
Datafication and Digital Literacy
Media Creation and Innovation
Social Media and Society
Location: Groningen
Mode(s) of study: Fulltime
Awarded degree: MA
Submission date NVAO: 1 November 2025

Description of the assessment

About the programmes

The bachelor's and master's programmes Media Studies are offered by the Faculty of Arts of the University of Groningen. The University of Groningen consists of eleven faculties, offering 45 bachelor's programmes and 120 master's programmes. More than 34,000 students are enrolled at the university. The Faculty of Arts is a broad arts faculty with over 5,000 students. It offers 16 bachelor's programmes and more than 20 master's programmes in a wide range of academic fields, including the humanities and social sciences, as well as the beta domain. The bachelor Media Studies is an international BA-programme with an intake of over 100 students per year. The master Media Studies is an international MA-programme that offers four English-taught tracks and one Dutch-taught track. The programme's annual intake numbers have fluctuated over the past few years between roughly 70 and 130 students.

Recommendations previous panel

The previous accreditation of the bachelor and master Media Studies took place in 2019. The panel assessed all four standards as satisfactory for the bachelor's programme. For the master's programme, standards 1, 3, and 4 were assessed as satisfactory, and standard 2 was assessed as good. The panel gave a number of recommendations. In response to these recommendations, the programmes implemented several improvements, including improving the balance of workload and deadlines across courses, strengthening the compulsory methodology courses in the bachelor, and organizing sessions for thesis supervisors about assessment procedures. The panel examined the programmes' response to the recommendations and concludes that they have been seriously acted upon by the programme. The panel is content with the improvement measures taken.

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 and vision

Bachelor

The bachelor Media Studies aims to equip students to analyse media production and consumption and to work in the field of media. Students learn to understand and reflect on (the impact of) a wide variety of media (platforms). The programme focuses on the international nature of media studies and teaches students to analyse media from a comparative perspective, taking into account the cultural, historical, economic, and political contexts. The programme combines insights from theories and methodologies from the humanities and social sciences, resulting in an interdisciplinary approach. Addressing practices of both the use and the production of media, it provides insight into the interconnectedness of the perspectives of media users and producers. Besides academic training, the programme also provides students with professional skills, such as media production skills. The panel agrees with the programme's vision and considers it to be well aligned with the developments in the professional and academic field of media studies. The programme is well embedded in the university's media studies department, which enjoys a good reputation in this field. The panel appreciates the interdisciplinary focus and the attention devoted to

critical reflection, comparative analysis, and professional skills. The international positioning is a specifically strong aspect of the programme.

Master

The master Media Studies builds on the bachelor's programme's vision and aims to educate skilled media professionals and scholars. The programme is characterized by its focus on both academic and professional training. This profile is reflected in the extended study period of 1,5 years (90 EC) which allows for an internship as well as a thesis project. The programme offers five tracks: two long-established tracks on journalism (the English-taught track 'Journalism' and the Dutch-taught track 'Journalistiek'), and three recently implemented tracks: Datafication and Digital Literacy (DDL), Social Media and Society (SMS), and Media Creation and Innovation (MCI). The three recent tracks were introduced in 2019. The Journalistiek track focuses on the Dutch media field and job market, enabling students to develop language proficiency for a journalism career in Dutch-speaking contexts. The Journalism track is geared towards English-language and international newsrooms. The English-taught tracks DDL, SMS, and MCI are multidisciplinary and address three thematic lines: scholarly, societal, and policy. The panel appreciates the programme's profile. As with the bachelor, the international positioning of the master is very strong. The programme clearly benefits from the university's media studies department's standing. According to the panel, the tracks Journalistiek and Journalism have a specifically strong profile, since they are leading in academic journalism education at master's level. Moreover, the track Journalism has a unique position, given the fact that it is the only English-taught academic master's programme in journalism within the European Union.

The panel is positive about the tracks, including the recently introduced tracks, which fit well with the field of media studies. In the self-evaluation report, the programme indicated that the three new tracks will be reduced to two tracks ('Media, Cultural Industries and Innovation' and 'Media, Social Transformations and Society') as of academic year 2026-2027. In the interview, the programme explained this revision is needed in terms of viability, as relatively few students choose these tracks. While the tracks and courses will be re-organized, the theoretical focal points of the current three tracks will continue to be addressed in the two new tracks, as they are integral to the programme. The panel agrees with the revision of the tracks, considering the low inflow numbers of the tracks, and expects that it will lead to a more steady inflow of students.

Intended learning outcomes

Bachelor

For the bachelor, 26 intended learning outcomes (ILOs) were formulated, categorized along the five Dublin descriptors and thereby reflecting the corresponding level 6 of Dutch qualification framework NLQF (see appendix 1 for an overview). The ILOs have been aligned with the subject benchmark statement for communication, media, film, and cultural studies of the UK Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. The panel considers the ILOs to be well formulated and appropriate for the academic bachelor's level as described in the Dublin descriptors and NLQF. The ILOs reflect a programme that provides foundational knowledge and understanding about media at an academic level and that helps students develop important (research) skills to analyse and reflect on the developments in the field of media. The panel appreciates how critical thinking is highlighted in the ILOs. The ILOs are well aligned with the academic field, especially since the subject benchmark statement was taken into account. Also, the ILOs match well with the needs and expectations of the professional field, according to the panel.

Master

For the master, 15 ILOs were defined, classified by the Dublin descriptors, reflecting the corresponding NLQF level 7 (see appendix 1 for an overview). Several ILOs were further specified per track. According to the panel, the ILOs are solid and well aligned with the academic master's level. They also match well with both the labour market and the (wide) field of media studies, as they reflect advanced theoretical knowledge and understanding of relevant topics in media studies as well as academic research skills and professional skills needed to perform in the professional media field.

Professional field

The panel observes that the programmes have close contacts with the professional field, which is a strength of the programmes. The curricula incorporate a lot of interaction with the professional field in terms of internships, guest lecturers, and real-life assignments. The panel appreciates this and sees that it improves the alignment of the curricula and course content to developments in the professional field. However, the panel does see room for improvement with respect to systematic and formal alignment of the profiles and ILOs with the professional field. In the interview, the programme management explained that, at the moment, there is a professional advisory board for the Journalistiek and Journalism master tracks. There is no professional advisory board for the other master tracks and the bachelor. This relates to a recent change in faculty policy. Previously, the professional advisory board was organized by the faculty, but now this is the responsibility of the programmes. The panel recommends to install a professional advisory board for the other tracks and the bachelor, and to include alumni in the board. Both professional advisory boards (the existing one for Journalism/Journalistiek and the new one) should be consulted regularly in order to structurally align the profiles and ILOs of the programmes and tracks with the needs of the professional field.

Considerations

The panel is positive about both programmes' profiles, which are well aligned with the developments in the professional and academic field of media studies. Both programmes have a strongly international orientation and are well embedded in the university's media studies department, which enjoys a good reputation. The panel appreciates the interdisciplinary approach of both programmes and the attention for both academic and professional skills. In the master, the tracks Journalistiek and Journalism have a specifically strong profile, as they are leading in academic journalism education at master's level. The panel agrees with the planned revision of the other three master tracks, which will be reduced to two tracks as of academic year 2026-2027, and expects the revision will lead to a more steady inflow of students. The panel considers the ILOs of both programmes to be well formulated and well aligned to the bachelor's and master's level. They cover all relevant topics and skills and match with the international academic field as well as the professional field.

The panel sees that the programmes have close relations with the professional field, for example through internships, guest lecturers, and real-life assignments. For the master tracks Journalism and Journalistiek, more systematic and formal alignment with the professional field is realized through the professional advisory board for these tracks. To ensure systematic alignment for the bachelor and the other master tracks as well, the panel recommends to install a professional advisory board for these tracks and the bachelor, and to include alumni in the board. The professional advisory boards should be consulted regularly in order to structurally align the profiles and ILOs with the needs of the professional field.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programmes meet standard 1.

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

Bachelor

The bachelor consists of 180 EC and is offered as a three-year fulltime programme (see appendix 2 for an overview of the curriculum). The curriculum structure is based on three learning pathways: theoretical, methodological, and professional. The first year consists of mandatory courses from all three learning pathways and focuses on acquiring foundational knowledge and skills. It offers a broad overview of topics related to media studies. The second year builds on the first and deepens students' theoretical and methodological understanding. It consists of 30 EC of mandatory courses and 30 EC of restricted choice courses. Students choose one out of five thematic profiles, each consisting of an introductory theory course, a theory seminar, and a research seminar. Also, students choose one out of four professional skills courses and one out of four methods courses. The third year includes a 30 EC minor in the first semester. Students can take a minor at the University of Groningen or another university (abroad), take the career minor, or do an internship (15 EC) combined with 15 EC from a faculty minor. The second semester of the third year includes an advanced theory course (5 EC), a research seminar (10 EC, to prepare for the thesis), the bachelor's thesis (10 EC), and a Specialisation Course (5 EC). The bachelor thesis concludes the theoretical and methodological learning pathway and consists of an individual paper based on semi-independent research. The Specialisation Course concludes the professional learning pathway and enables students to engage with professionals from their future line of work.

Master

The master consists of 90 EC and is offered as a 1,5 year fulltime programme (see appendix 2 for an overview of the curricula for the various tracks). Similar to the bachelor, the curriculum is designed along three learning pathways: theoretical, methodological, and professional. The first year consists of courses from all three learning pathways, including courses in the second semester to prepare for the thesis. The second year consists of an internship (typically 15 EC) and the thesis (15 EC). The panel notes that the curricula for the Journalism track and the Journalistiek track have some shared courses and a partly similar structure. The curriculum for the DDL, SMS, and MCI tracks differs entirely from the Journalism/Journalistiek curricula, resulting in essentially two separate curricula within this master's programme.

For the Journalism and Journalistiek tracks, half of the curriculum (45 EC) is dedicated to professional skills courses. In the first year, students take several courses on skills in newswriting, audio, online media production, and investigative journalism research. Students also have room to specialize in certain skills, such as online, radio, or television. In the second year, the professional learning pathway includes one 5 EC course ('Business and Ethics' in the Journalism track and 'Journalistieke Innovatie en Ondernemerschap' in the Journalistiek track) and the internship (scheduled after the thesis), which is 15 EC for the Journalistiek track and 10 EC for the Journalism track. A shorter internship was chosen for the Journalism track to better align with expectations of news organizations abroad. Students in this track can also choose not to do the internship but perform an extended thesis project instead.

The other half of the curriculum (45 EC) is devoted to theoretical and methodological courses. In the first semester, students take the 10 EC course 'Journalism Studies: Theory and Method' and choose one of three theoretical specialization courses (5 EC). In the second semester, students take a research seminar (10 EC), in which they perform empirical research, and a 5 EC thesis preparation course. In the second year, students write their thesis (15 EC), which is based on an individual empirical research project. In the Journalism track, students can opt for a Thesis Plus of 25 EC, which replaces the internship.

The curriculum of the DDL, SMS, and MCI tracks is also structured along the three learning pathways. The theoretical learning pathway includes two shared courses across the tracks and three track-specific courses in the first year (25 EC in total). For the methodological learning pathway, students choose two out of four methods courses in the first semester (10 EC in total). In the second semester of the first year, students take the track-specific Research Seminar (10 EC) in which they work on individual research projects, and the Thesis lab (5 EC), in which they prepare for their thesis (an individual empirical research project). For the professional learning pathway, students choose two out of four skills courses in the second semester (10 EC in total). The second year consists of a 15 EC thesis and a 15 EC internship. The internship is scheduled after the thesis. As in the Journalism track, students can choose to do a 25 EC Thesis Plus trajectory instead of an internship. This needs to be motivated and approved by the thesis supervisor and programme coordinator. These students also need to take an extra 5 EC Tutorial (or other course).

Both programmes

The panel considers the curricula of both the bachelor and the master to be well designed, with the three learning pathways providing coherence and structure. The curricula cover all relevant topics and skills to enable students to achieve the ILOs. The panel appreciates the strong link with the professional practice which is evident in the professional learning pathways and the attention for professional skills. Also, the curricula are well embedded in the department's research groups, allowing for a strong link between research and education. The panel was pleased to hear how the programmes succeed at finding the right balance between offering solid foundational knowledge and incorporating state-of-the-art knowledge and current societal developments. In the interview, lecturers explained how they combine basic theories with critical reflection on these theories in their classes. Also, foundational theory is always applied to current developments. Students mentioned that they are content with the balance between foundational theory and contemporary examples and developments. They recognize that foundational knowledge is necessary in order to be able to reflect on current themes. The panel was also pleased to hear how the curricula train students to use artificial intelligence (AI) in a responsible way. There are courses in which the use of AI is not allowed, as students need to learn basic writing skills. In other courses, however, students are trained to use AI in an ethical and accountable way. Also, professionals from the field are invited to share how they use AI in their work.

The panel appreciates the 90 EC setup of the master's curriculum as it allows students to develop both academic and professional skills at an advanced level. Another positive point is the fact that the internship is scheduled after the thesis. From the interviews with lecturers, students and alumni, it became clear that this allows for a smooth transition into the labour market.

Bachelor students indicated that they feel there is repetition in the course content, as several topics and theories return in subsequent courses. In the interviews, the programme explained that they are familiar with this complaint and recognize part of the students' observations. They have already implemented some changes in courses to decrease redundancy. At the same time, some repetition is inevitable and even necessary in light of scaffolding and deepening the understanding of and reflection on topics. The panel agrees with the programme and is happy to hear that the programme is reflecting on how to better signpost

this to students. It underlines the importance of enhancing students' awareness of how courses build on each other.

According to the panel, attention for professional skills and the link to the professional field are strengths of the programmes. However, students mentioned that they felt that the attention for professional skills and career preparation could be improved. Since the panel thinks that the programmes provide students with a lot of opportunities for developing professional skills and getting acquainted with the labour market, it wondered whether this complaint is partly an issue of expectation management. In the interviews, the programmes indicated that they agree with the panel: the programmes do include professional skills and career orientation but students can feel ill-prepared for the labour market nevertheless. This may partly be caused by the fact that the programmes do not necessarily prepare for very specific job profiles, which may cause some anxiety among students. The programmes explained they are reflecting on how to better highlight the professional skills in the curricula for students and how to better inform them about career options, e.g. by inviting alumni to share career stories. Also, academic skills are transferable skills, much like professional skills. This can be made clearer to students, so that they become more aware of the relevance of academic skills in the labour market. The panel agrees with the programmes and encourages them to continue to communicate with students about this.

At the moment of the site visit, the bachelor was in the process of curriculum revision, in response to faculty-wide policy regarding all bachelor's programmes. This new policy is related to budget cuts and entails that all courses need to be converted into 10 EC courses and two 10 EC faculty-wide courses have to be incorporated in the curriculum. According to the panel, the interviews demonstrate that the new policy has been well communicated by the faculty. Also, lecturers were invited to actively participate in the development of the faculty-wide courses. The panel is impressed with how the staff has embraced the revision with an open attitude. Even though the revision undoubtedly requires some difficult and painful decisions, the staff mostly sees it as an opportunity for a redesign and improvement of the curriculum. The panel commends the staff for this mindset. It is confident that the process of redesign will be properly executed.

Learning environment

In line with the university-wide teaching philosophy, the didactics centre on active learning. Teaching typically takes place in small-scale settings with a lot of opportunities for interaction and collaboration between students and staff. Students are stimulated to take ownership of their learning process. The panel is impressed with the activating learning and teaching methods applied in the programmes, such as the bachelor's course Social Lab in which students work on an assignment for a client from the local professional field, the real-life newsroom in the Journalism/Journalistiek master tracks, and the Start-Up Lab from the DDL, MCI, and SMS master tracks in which students design real-life media production businesses. Students indicated that they are content with the small-scale and interactive learning environment which allows them to take on an active role and develop critical thinking skills. The panel hopes that the small-scale and activating learning environment can be maintained in spite of budget cuts. Students also appreciate the open atmosphere. They indicated that lecturers and the programme management are open to their feedback and that improvement points are taken seriously, creating an environment in which they feel heard.

Both programmes are characterized by an international environment. On average, around half of the student population is international, creating a culturally diverse classroom. This also applies to the students in the Journalistiek track, since they share courses with the Journalism students. In these shared courses, the Journalistiek students also participate in the international classroom. The panel considers the international

nature of the programmes to be a very strong aspect. From the interviews, it is clear that this intercultural and inclusive environment is perceived as a very valuable aspect of the programmes by both staff and students. The diversity in the student group clearly enriches the learning process of students as they benefit from getting acquainted with diverse perspectives and examples. The students also mentioned that they appreciate the international composition of the teaching team.

Language of instruction

Both programmes are taught in English and have an English programme title, with the exception of the master track Journalistiek, which is largely taught in Dutch. According to the panel, the choice for English as the language of instruction is justified as it follows logically from the inherent international nature of the field of media studies. Students are educated for professional environments that are international and in which English is the common language. For students who aspire a career in the Dutch journalism field, the Dutch-taught track Journalistiek is available.

Guidance

In terms of individual courses, students are guided by the lecturers. For the bachelor thesis, students have an individual supervisor for the entire thesis project. To further support the students, several plenary introductory sessions are scheduled and students are provided with a structured week-by-week schedule with deadlines. In the master, students also have an individual thesis supervisor, who is a research-active member of the academic staff with a PhD. Students prepare their thesis project in the Thesis Lab course in the second semester. In this course, students are linked to their thesis supervisor and prepare a research proposal, which needs to be approved.

For the internships in the master, there are designated internship coordinators for the tracks. The internship coordinator informs students about the internship procedures and advises them about the internship. During the internship, students are guided by an internship supervisor (from the host organization) and a supervising lecturer. Besides the final assessment of the internship, there is a start meeting and a midterm evaluation. Before starting the internship, students write an internship plan that describes the host organization, the work they will do, and their (personal) learning goals for the internship. The internship plan needs to be approved by the internship coordinator.

At programme level, student guidance is provided by study advisors. There are two dedicated study advisors for the bachelor. The master has one study advisor. The study advisors provide information about the curriculum and advise students about the choices they can make. They are also the central point of contact for questions about study delay or personal issues. When needed, study advisors can refer students to extra support offered by the Student Service Centre, such as student psychologists and counsellors, or courses and support groups related to study skills. The study advisors also provide information about studying with a disability and assist students in the application process for special arrangements. The Board of Examiners (BoE) decides on special arrangements, based on the university-wide policy plan about studying with a disability.

Besides support from the study advisors, guidance for bachelor students is also provided through the mentoring programme. Each cohort has two designated mentors: a lecturer and a second/third-year student. The mentors provide guidance with regard to the programme, study skills, social issues, and intercultural awareness. The master does not have an overall mentoring programme. However, the track Journalistiek did implement a mentoring system in 2020. At the start of the second semester, students in this track are linked to alumni who act as mentors. These mentors show students their workplace, share their experiences, give advice, and help them connect with their network. This mentoring system has proven to

help students in finding an internship and/or job, and to facilitate a smooth transition into the labour market. The panel is very positive about this mentoring system and sees it as a best practice that may be implemented in the other tracks as well. During the interviews, the programme indicated that it is more complicated to set up a similar system for the other tracks. At the moment, the programme is working on gathering alumni from the other tracks. These alumni are already involved in the bachelor, to share their stories on possible career options.

The panel is very positive about student guidance in the programmes. This was confirmed by the students, who indicated that they are satisfied with the guidance from supervisors, study advisors, and mentors. Supervision during the thesis project and the internship is well organized. Overall guidance is provided by the study advisors, and extra support is available through the Student Service Centre. The panel considers the facilities for students with a disability to be appropriate and sufficient. The panel appreciates the mentoring programme in the bachelor and encourages the master's programme to further explore how the mentoring system from the Journalistiek track could be expanded to other tracks as well.

Intake and feasibility

The admission criteria are laid down in the Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER). The Admissions Board assesses applications and decides on admission. To be admitted to the bachelor, applicants need to have a VWO-diploma or a propaedeutic certificate from a HBO-programme (university of applied science). Applicant who are 21+ years old, can take an entrance examination (colloquium doctum) to be admitted. For the master, a relevant academic bachelor's degree is required including at least 30 EC of course content related to journalism and/or media studies. There are also language requirements for Dutch (Journalistiek track) or English (all other tracks). For students with a professional bachelor's degree (HBO), a 60 EC premaster is required. For the Journalism and Journalistiek tracks, students must submit a motivation letter, curriculum vitae, and a proof of writing/journalistic work, and take an entrance examination consisting of an essay and a motivated personal selection of their top 5 news items. The intake for the Journalism and Journalistiek tracks is capped at 60 students per year, distributed across the two tracks. The panel agrees with the admission criteria for both programmes and considers them appropriate.

In the past few years, around half of the bachelor students finished the programme within three years, and around three-quarters finished within four years. For the master, around half of the students finished within two years, and about two-thirds within three years. The panel considers the programmes to be feasible within the time allocated. No major obstacles to study progress were identified in the curricula or teaching-learning environment. In the interviews, students confirmed the feasibility of the programmes. They mentioned that the master tracks Journalism and Journalistiek specifically are intensive because students have to spend a lot of time at the university (e.g. in the newsroom projects). Still, these tracks are doable, according to students, who also mentioned that they were well informed about the expected time investment.

Teaching staff

The programmes are taught by a team of nearly 60 lecturers (33 fte in total). Nearly all permanent staff has a University Teaching Qualification (UTQ). The panel is impressed with the teaching team, that, according to the panel, represents all relevant areas of expertise. Lecturers are research-driven, experts in their field, and didactically qualified. The team also includes lecturers with ample experience in the professional field, which adds to the strong link with the professional field. The panel appreciates the international composition of the teaching staff, which contributes to the intercultural learning environment. No registration of English proficiency was available in the documentation. However, based on the documentation and the interviews,

the panel has no reason to suspect any problems in this area and considers the English proficiency of lecturers who teach in English to be sufficient.

The panel also notes that the staff functions as a true team. The interviews made clear that there is good communication, collaboration, and alignment within the team and between the various levels in the faculty. Furthermore, students are very positive about the lecturers. According to the students, lecturers are competent and very responsive. They have a personal approach, are easily accessible and are willing to offer extra help.

Facilities

The programmes offer various specific facilities, such as a newsroom including recording, production and editing facilities (for the Journalism and Journalistiek master tracks), a state-of-the-art (television and radio) studio, and a podcast studio. Students can also borrow equipment, such as cameras and microphones, for assignments in the field. Necessary software is available for free. During the site visit, the panel took a tour around some of these facilities. It considers the facilities to be valuable aspects of the programmes.

For the online learning environment, the programmes make use of Brightspace. On Brightspace, students can find course syllabi and other information on course details. Students indicated that they are positive about the information provision. The panel thinks that the Brightspace environment is well designed. All relevant information is available to students in a structured way.

Considerations

According to the panel, the curricula of both programmes are coherent as they are designed along theoretical, methodological, and professional learning pathways. The curricula are aligned with the programmes' ILOs and profile, covering all relevant topics. Strong aspects include the close connections with the professional practice, the solid link between research and education, a good balance between foundational knowledge and state-of-the-art insights and societal developments, and the way in which students are trained to use AI in a responsible way. The 90 EC setup of the master enables students to develop both academic and professional skills at an advanced level, and the scheduling of the internship after the thesis allows for a smooth transition into the labour market. The bachelor is in the process of a curriculum revision, in response to a faculty-wide policy change. The panel is impressed with how the staff has embraced the required revision with an open attitude, seeing it as an opportunity for a redesign and improvement of the curriculum.

Both programmes are taught in English, which, according to the panel, follows logically from the inherent international nature of the field of media studies. For students who aspire a career in the Dutch journalism field, the Dutch-taught track Journalistiek is available. The learning environment of both programmes is characterized by a focus on active learning in small-scale teaching settings allowing for interaction and collaboration between students and staff. Students appreciate the activating environment and teaching methods. They also value the open atmosphere, which makes them feel heard. The programmes are strongly internationally focused, allowing for a culturally diverse classroom. The panel considers this intercultural and inclusive environment to be a strength of the programmes, enriching the learning process.

According to the panel, the admission criteria are appropriate. The panel also considers the programmes to be feasible within the allocated time. The panel is very positive about the overall student guidance in the programmes, provided by study advisors and mentors. The mentoring system in the master track Journalistiek (where alumni act as mentors) is much appreciated by the panel. The panel thinks this system may be expanded to other tracks as well. Facilities for students with a disability are appropriate and

sufficient. Furthermore, thesis supervision as well as internship supervision are well structured. Students have easy access to all relevant information through the well-structured Brightspace environment. The various specific facilities, such as the newsroom, studios, and available recording equipment, are valuable aspects of the programme.

The teaching staff of the programmes represents high quality and expertise in all relevant areas. Lecturers are didactically qualified and firmly embedded in research groups. The team also includes lecturers with experience in the professional field, which adds to the link with the professional field. The panel appreciates the international composition of the teaching team and notes that this clearly contributes to the intercultural learning environment. Furthermore, lecturers are responsive and accessible towards students. Finally, there is good collaboration and alignment within the teaching team.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programmes meet standard 2.

Standard 3. Student assessment

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

Findings

Assessment system

Assessment in the programmes is based on their vision on teaching and assessment, as described in the assessment plans. This vision emphasizes a combination of formative and summative assessment in each course, in order to provide students with sufficient feedback to learn and grow. The assessment plans include matrices that demonstrate how the ILOs relate to the courses and in which courses each ILO is assessed at exit level. The matrices show that each ILO is assessed in multiple courses, enabling students to gradually achieve the final exit level in all areas.

The panel considers the assessment in both programmes to be well designed. In the bachelor, a wide variety of appropriate assessment methods is applied, including written exams, individual and group assignments, literature and research essays, oral presentations, portfolios, and participation. The master also makes use of diverse and appropriate assessment methods, such as written assignments (both group and individual), essays, digital exams, portfolios, testimonials, presentations, research papers, and peer-reviews. According to the panel, the mix of formative and summative assessment is well balanced in both programmes. Furthermore, the panel appreciates the fine mix of theoretical and practical assessment and the use of creative assessment methods, such as exhibitions and the fair organized for the final presentations of the bachelor course Social Lab with all students, staff and organizations involved. Assessment is also transparent and clearly communicated to students of both programmes. Students are informed about the details of assessment in the course syllabi.

The assessment plan requires that assessments are peer-reviewed before they are administered. Assessment forms with criteria are used for grading assignments and presentations. The interviews made clear that calibration among the lecturers involved in a course usually takes place afterwards. In a calibration session, the teaching team discusses a sample of assessments from the course together. The panel concludes that appropriate measures are taken to improve and assure the quality of assessment in the programmes.

In the interviews, the panel was informed about how the programmes deal with AI with respect to assessment. There is a university-wide policy on AI, which allows individual courses to determine if and how AI can be used. The programmes explained that in some courses, students are not allowed to use AI, especially when writing is one of the learning goals. In other courses, students are allowed to use it responsibly when appropriate, which means that they have to be transparent about what they have done. In yet other courses, students have to work with AI as critical users. The panel sees that the programmes are well aware of AI-related issues and are quite up-to-date and proactive in handling these.

Thesis assessment

For both programmes, the thesis is considered to be the final student project in which students demonstrate that they have achieved the ILOs. The thesis is always assessed by the supervisor and a second reader. Assessment of the bachelor thesis is based on the content (quality of the research), the report, and the process. The first two aspects are assessed by the supervisor and the second reader. The third aspect is assessed by the supervisor only. For both the bachelor and the master thesis, assessment forms are used for grading. The two assessors first grade the thesis independently and then decide on a final grade together. In case the two assessors cannot agree on the grade or when there is a difference of more than 1 point between their individual grades, the BoE can appoint a third reader.

According to the panel, the thesis assessment procedure is well set up. The panel is pleased to see that the four eyes principle is applied. The panel was happy to learn that thesis assessors also calibrate their grading each year. This calibration can be organized in different ways, such as a meeting in which the assessors compare their grades on a sample of three recent theses. The panel is also positive about the thesis assessment form. As part of the preparation for the site visit, the panel reviewed a sample of 15 theses from the bachelor and 17 theses from the master, including the filled-in assessment forms. The panel generally agrees with the grades awarded to the theses included in the sample. It is positive about the assessment process demonstrated in the forms. The procedure is transparent and scores are substantiated with written feedback.

Internship assessment

The master includes a mandatory internship, which concludes the professional learning pathway. Assessment of the internship is based on an internship report for four out of the five tracks. For the track Journalistiek, assessment of the internship is based on the internship report, the internship plan, and the internship essay. In all tracks, the internship is assessed by the supervising lecturer. In the grading process, the supervising lecturer takes the assessment by the internship supervisor (from the host organization) into account. To gain insight into the assessment process of the internship, the panel examined a selection of 10 internship reports (2 per track) and the accompanying filled-in assessment forms. The panel concludes that the internship assessment is well structured. The grading process is transparent and well substantiated. The panel was happy to learn that each year, meetings with all internship assessors take place to align the assessment. According to the panel, this is essential for safeguarding reliable assessment of the internships.

Board of Examiners

The programmes fall under the responsibility of the faculty-wide BoE. For each cluster of programmes, there is an expert team that handles most of the programme-specific tasks. The chair of each expert team is a member of the BoE. Besides appointing examiners and handling requests and complaints, the BoE and the expert teams perform several activities to safeguard the quality of assessment in the programmes. One of these activities is the yearly examination of a sample of assessment dossiers. In this process, the assessment in a course is checked with regard to alignment, assessment criteria, quality of the exam, consistency between assessors, quality of the feedback, and whether the procedures were followed correctly. Each

course is evaluated by the expert team once every five years. Another activity is the examination of a sample of theses and their assessments. In the interview, the BoE and expert team indicated that no major issues were identified with regarding the bachelor and master Media Studies in the past few years.

The panel is very positive about the BoE and the expert team. It considers the BoE to be independent, competent, in control, and proactive with regard to safeguarding the assessment quality in the programmes. The BoE has a firm position in the faculty and collaborates well with the programmes and Faculty Board. The panel is pleased to see that the BoE is proactive with regard to AI policies, and is closely involved in the development of faculty- and university-wide policy on AI. It is clear that valuable discussions take place about how AI may be used by students in an ethical and responsible way. The expert team mentioned that it has highlighted the master internships this year, and is in the middle of examining the internship assessments in detail. For the master, the internship is seen as an important assessment as it is the culmination of the professional learning pathway. The panel agrees that the internship is an important part of the achieved level of students, and therefore suggests that the expert team include a sample of internship assessments to examine each year, similar to the thesis samples.

Considerations

The panel considers the assessment in both programmes to be well designed, allowing students to achieve the final exit level for all ILOs. In both programmes, a wide variety of appropriate assessment methods is applied, reflecting a good mix of formative and summative assessment as well as theoretical and practical assessment. Appropriate measures are taken by the programmes to improve and assure the quality of assessment, such as the peer-review of assessments, the use of assessment forms, and calibration. The panel appreciates how the programmes handle AI-related issues in a proactive way. The thesis assessment procedure is appropriate, as theses are assessed by two assessors, based on an assessment form, including written feedback. Thesis assessment is regularly calibrated among thesis assessors. Assessment of the internships is also well structured, according to the panel, with a transparent and well-substantiated grading process. Furthermore, there is good alignment between internship assessors. The panel considers the BoE to be independent, competent, in control, and proactive with regard to safeguarding the assessment quality in the programmes. Because the internship is an important assessment in the master (as it concludes the professional learning pathway), the panel suggests that the BoE examine a sample of internship reports and assessments each year.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programmes meet standard 3.

Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes

The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Findings

Theses

As mentioned earlier, both programmes regard the thesis as the final student project, demonstrating the achieved level of students. The panel reviewed a sample of 15 theses from the bachelor and 17 theses from the master. The panel concludes that the theses from both programmes are of high quality, reflecting a level that is appropriate for an academic bachelor's/master's programme. The theses are well structured and demonstrate a good integration of and reflection on theory and methodology.

To get a more comprehensive view of the achieved level in the professional learning pathway of the master, the panel also examined the internship reports of a selection of 10 students (2 per track). The panel concludes that the internship reports are well-written and of a high level. They clearly demonstrate that the ILOs related to the professional learning pathway have been achieved.

Alumni

According to the panel, it is evident from the documentation and the interviews that bachelor graduates are well prepared to continue in a master's programme or to enter the labour market. Many students choose to pursue a master's programme. Some alumni start working in positions such as social media editors, digital content creators, or radio producers.

Based on the documentation and the interview with alumni, the panel is positive about how master alumni perform in the professional field. Alumni indicated that they generally felt well prepared for the labour market and found a job relatively easily. The internship, scheduled in the final block of the curriculum, helped them in finding a job. For the panel, it is evident that graduates benefit from the internship and the fact that is scheduled after the thesis, as it prepares them for the transition into the labour market. In terms of data, the master has more elaborate information on alumni from the Journalism and Journalistiek tracks than from the other three tracks. Data from Journalism and Journalistiek graduates shows that the majority finds a job in journalism or a related field. Data on alumni from the DDL, MCI, and SMS tracks are less extensive, since these tracks were recently implemented. However, according to the programme, the contacts with these alumni indicate that they are successful in the professional field as well. Alumni of the master often work in jobs such as journalist, copywriter, newsroom editor, policy advisor, media/data analyst, communications/marketing advisor, social media manager, AI and digital innovation consultant, SEO consultant, and researcher. In addition, some alumni continue with a PhD trajectory.

Considerations

Based on the review of a sample of 15 theses from the bachelor and 17 theses from the master, the panel concludes that the level demonstrated in the theses is appropriate for an academic bachelor's/master's programme. The documentation and the interviews indicate that graduates of the bachelor are well equipped to follow a master's programme. Graduates of the master are well prepared for and prove to be successful in the professional field.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programmes meet standard 4.

General conclusion

The panel's assessment of the programmes is positive.

Recommendations

1. Both programmes: Install a professional advisory board for the bachelor and the DDL, MCI, and SMS tracks of the master, similar to the professional advisory board already in place for the Journalism and Journalistiek tracks. Include alumni in the board. The professional advisory boards should be consulted regularly in order to structurally align the profiles and ILOs with the needs of the professional field.

Appendix 1. Intended learning outcomes

Bachelor's programme Media Studies

1. Knowledge and understanding

- a. have broad comparative and interdisciplinary knowledge and understanding of media in their cultural, historical, institutional, political, economic, social and technological contexts;
- b. have knowledge and understanding of the role and impact of media in their global context, in (inter-) national, regional and local communities, and in the daily lives of audiences and users;
- c. have an understanding of cultures and practices of media use and production, including the role of platforms and institutions;
- d. have knowledge and understanding of new media forms and their relation to earlier and established forms in the domain of media and information;
- e. have general knowledge and understanding of key theories and concepts in the domain of media studies;
- f. have general understanding of the main methodologies used in the domain of media studies to study media content, use and production.
- g. have demonstrated knowledge and understanding of a complementary discipline domain, delivered as a designated minor programme, aimed at deepening or broadening the major programme.

2. Applying knowledge and understanding

- a. can apply the requisite research skills to gather, process and critically evaluate information relating to media;
- b. are able to critically examine media content, use and production in relation to their diverse social and cultural contexts, applying the acquired methodological skills and tools;
- c. are able to apply knowledge of key theories and scholarship to academically and socially relevant issues and debates in the domain of media and information;
- d. can produce conceptually, methodologically and theoretically sound essays, empirical research papers and other academic output;
- e. are able to devise creative and feasible solutions for problems related to media and information, demonstrating the ability to adopt multiple perspectives and tools;
- f. are able to plan, manage and execute individual and group projects, work under time pressure and show initiative;
- g. are able to develop various media products, applying acquired knowledge, methodological tools and practical skills.

3. Making judgments

- a. are able to conduct guided and semi-independent research, to evaluate relevant primary and secondary sources and other information within the domain of media studies;
- b. are able to develop empirically and/or theoretically informed judgments about transformations in the field of media and information and their impact on culture and society;
- c. are able to critically engage with different theories and approaches in media studies and reflect on their historical and (inter-)cultural specificity;
- d. are able to critically engage with different methods in media studies and reflect on their limitations
- e. are able to reflect critically on the strengths and limitations of their own work and that of peers

4. Communication

- a. have the ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, the results of research and to present complex information in a clear and concise manner to specialist and non-specialist audiences;

- b. is able to select the most effective media format for different audiences, communicative purposes and contexts;
- c. have the skills to interact respectfully and constructively with others, share and discuss academic knowledge, and work towards attaining common goals;
- d. have acquired the requisite intercultural awareness and respect to act ethically and effectively in an international academic environment, and in future international employment contexts.

5. Learning skills

- a. have the ability to collect, select and process relevant information quickly and efficiently, demonstrating a high level of responsibility, self-discipline and initiative;
- b. have the ability to think in a problem- and solution-oriented way and possess the appropriate learning skills and strategies to independently identify, analyse and evaluate specific knowledge gaps and stay up-to-date with developments in the field of media studies;
- c. have the ability to successfully undertake specialized second cycle degree programs requiring BA-level domain-specific knowledge and understanding as well as independent research skills, in particular in media studies and related fields, as well as research master programmes.

Master's programme Media Studies

1. Graduates have demonstrable knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances what is typically associated with the Bachelor's level and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and /or applying ideas within a research context.

1a Knowledge and understanding of the main academic theories on media with regard to specific programmes, i.e.

1a.1 [J] Journalism and Journalism Studies;

1a.2 [DDL] Data, Datafication, and Digital Literacy;

1a.3 [MCI] Media Production and Media Innovation;

1a.4 [SMS] Social Media, Networks, and their relation to Society.

1b Knowledge and understanding of the historical, sociocultural, technological, economic and political-judicial aspects of media, media policy and media culture.

1c Knowledge and understanding of the influence of technological, social and cultural developments on the media profession and the process of:

1c.1 [J] gathering, selecting and presenting news;

1c.2 [DDL] datafication within society, including its relation to digital literacy and policy;

1c.3 [MCI] cultural production, use, and innovation within media industries;

1c.4 [SMS] the development of social media, networks, and their place in society.

1d Knowledge and understanding of media types, audiences, national and international news flows, media systems and genres.

2. Graduates can apply their knowledge and understanding, and problem-solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study.

2a The ability to contribute independently to academic research on media cultures, professions, and production.

2b The ability to transform an academic standard, based upon an excellent command of techniques and skills, into high quality individual or joint:

2b.1 [J] journalistic productions, in a multimedia setting if required;

2b.2 [DDL] data and digital literacy strategies, including policy and social initiatives;

2b.3 [MCI] explorations of media production and innovation processes;

2b.4 [SMS] data analysis and critical studies of social media, networks, and their roles in society.

2c The ability to situate oneself within the diverse needs of actors within specific media fields, and to actively anticipate the needs of professionals within media fields in society.

3. Graduates have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements with incomplete or limited information, but that include reflecting on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgements.

3a A professional attitude that is aware of the ethical and policy aspect of media, including:

3a.1 [J] ethical and judicial policies with regard to journalistic activities;

3a.2 [DDL] governmental and societal priorities regarding digital literacy;

3a.3 [MCI] fair use, copyright, and other access and media use policies;

3a.4 [SMS] legal and social considerations around privacy and data in society.

3b An awareness of the professional media field, including changes, policies, developments, and innovations.

3c The ability to read, weigh, interpret and construe a wide range of information and sources in the light of the value, dependability and usefulness of information and sources in a professional media context.

4. Graduates can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously.

4a The ability to transfer complex information through deliberately chosen and well-considered presentation forms and channels, taking context and target audience into account.

4b The ability to fairly and efficiently interact with sources, audiences, and combinations thereof.

5. Graduates have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous.

5a The ability to systematically and creatively handle complex issues and to establish well-founded opinions.

5b The ability to independently direct the process of assessing and solving problems creatively.

5c The ability to independently plan and execute academic research.

5d The ability to study independently with an aim towards continuous professional development, in the course of which knowledge and experience can be applied within new contexts.

Appendix 2. Programme curriculum

Bachelor's programme Media Studies

Year 1: Knowledge and Skills (all courses are 5 ECTS³)

Block 1a	Block 1b	Block 2a	Block 2b
Media Platforms and Industries I	Media Platforms and Industries I	Introduction to Media Studies I	Introduction to Media Studies I
Media, Culture and Society	Media History	Imagining the Digital	Media Spaces and Practices
Studying Media in Everyday Life	Academic Skills	Professional Writing	Social Lab

³ In 2023-2024, Introduction to Media Studies 1 and 2 were merged into one 10 ECT course.

Year 2: Theoretical and Methodological Understanding (all courses are 5 ECTS)

	Block 1a	Block 1b	Block 2a	Block 2b	
Mandatory courses	Audiovisual Culture	Analysing Media Production Use	Media Theory Mediatiation and Effects	Media Theory II: Form and Technology	
	Analysing Media Texts			Transmedia Production	
Profiles					
Audiovisual Culture (AC)	Visual Culture	Technology and Creative Destruction	Professional Skills courses (students choose 1 out of 4) 1. Journalistic writing and storytelling 2. Media Entrepreneurship 3. Web Design 4. Digital Curation	Research Seminar	
Cultural Industries (CI)				Research Seminar	
Digital Culture (DC)				Research Seminar	
Journalism Studies (JS)				Professional Skills courses (students choose 1 out of 4): see above	Research Seminar
Politics and Global Citizenship (PGC)				Professional Skills courses (students choose 1 out of 4): see above	Research Seminar
			Methods courses (student chooses 1 out of 4) 1. Social Media Analysis 2. Statistics in Media 3. (New) Media Archives 4. Media Ethnography		

Year 3: Research and Specialisation (all courses are 5 ECTS, unless indicated otherwise)

Block 1a	Block 1b	Block 2a	Block 2b
Minor	Minor	Theories and Thinkers	Bachelor's Thesis (10 ECTS)
		Research Seminar (10 ECTS)	Specialisation Course

Master's programme Media Studies

Journalistiek

Block	Course unit	Student workload in ECTS
1a/b	Journalism Studies: Theory & Methods	10 ECTS
1a	Vaardigheden 1: Houding en Interactie	5 ECTS
1b	Vaardigheden 2: Het Journalistieke Verhaal	10 ECTS
1a/b	Theoretical Specialization I-IV	5 ECTS
2a/b	Onderzoekscollege (NL) or Research Seminar (EN)	10 ECTS
2a/b	Master's Scriptie Journalistiek: Voorbereiding	5 ECTS
2a/b	Vaardigheden 3: Profilering en Verdieping	10 ECTS
2b	Journalistieke Innovatie en Ondernemerschap	5 ECTS
Y2	MA-Stage Journalistiek	15 ECTS
Y2	MA-Scriptie Journalistiek	15 ECTS

Journalism

Block	Course unit:	Student workload in ECTS
1a/b	Journalism Studies: Theory & Methods	10 ECTS
1a	Journalism Skills I: basics of news and feature writing	5 ECTS
1b	Journalism Skills II: news reporting	5 ECTS
1b	Journalism Skills III: audio	5 ECTS
2a	Journalism Skills IV: audiovisual reporting	5 ECTS
2b	Journalism Skills V: video	10 ECTS
1a/b	Theoretical Specialization I-IV	5 ECTS
2a	Business and Ethics	5 ECTS
2a/b	Research Seminar	10 ECTS
2a/b	Preparation for MA Thesis	5 ECTS
Y2	MA Internship	10 ECTS
Y2	MA Thesis	15 ECTS
Y2	MA Thesis Plus (optional, replaces internship)	25 ECTS

YEAR 1				YEAR 2	
Media Creation & Innovation, Datafication & Digital Literacy Social Media & Society					
Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4	Block 1	Block 2
Transformations in the Digital Society	Conceptualizing Audiences	Research Seminar: MCI, DDL, or SMS	Research Seminar: MCI, DDL, or SMS	Thesis	Internship
Cultures of Creativity	Forms and formats	Innovation: Contemporary Debates	Thesis lab		
Algorithmic Culture	Digital Literacy	Datafication: Contemporary Debates			
Network Theory	Platform Studies	Connectivity: Contemporary Debates			
Multimodal Discourse Analysis	Capturing Media use	Data for Society	Start-up lab		
Statistical Analysis with R	Analysing Social Media Data	Media Policy and Regulation	Story lab		
Legend:					
All students: theoretical pathway					
MCI students: theoretical pathway					
DDL students: theoretical pathway					
SMS students: theoretical pathway					
Methodological pathway electives (choose 1 per block)					
Professional pathway electives (choose 1 per block)					
All 5 ECTS courses, except for:					
Research Seminar	10ECTS	Thesis	15ECTS	Internship	15ECTS

Appendix 3. Programme of the site visit

Monday 2 June 2025

09.00	09.15	Arrival and welcome
09.15	09.45	Internal panel meeting
09.45	10.15	Interview faculty management
10.15	11.00	Interview programme management Media Studies B and M
11.00	11.30	Internal panel meeting
11.30	12.15	Interview students B Media and Culture
12.15	13.00	Interview students M Media Studies
13.00	14.00	Lunch
14.00	14.45	Tour
14.45	15.45	Interview teaching staff Media Studies B and M
15.45	16.30	Interview representatives professional field and alumni
16.30	18.00	Internal panel meeting; establishing findings

Tuesday 3 June 2025

09.00	09.30	Arrival
09.30	10.15	Interview programme management CIW
10.15	10.45	Internal panel meeting
10.45	11.30	Interview students B Communication and Information Sciences
11.30	12.15	Interview teaching staff B Communication and Information Sciences
12.15	13.15	Lunch
13.15	14.00	Interview teaching staff M Communication and Information Sciences
14.00	14.45	Interview students B Information Science
14.45	15.30	Interview teaching staff B Information Science
15.30	16.00	Internal panel meeting
16.00	16.45	Interview students and alumni M Communication and Information Sciences
16.45	17.45	Internal panel meeting; establishing findings

Wednesday 4 June 2025

09.00	09.15	Arrival
09.15	10.00	Interview exam board
10.00	12.30	Internal panel meeting / establishing findings
12.30	13.15	Lunch
13.15	13:45	Closing interview management Media Studies
13.45	14.15	Closing interview management CIW
14.15	14.45	Internal panel meeting / establishing findings
14.45	15.30	Development dialogue Media Studies
15.30	16.15	Development dialogue CIW
16.15	16:45	Oral feedback

Appendix 4. Materials

Prior to the site visit, the panel studied 15 theses of the bachelor's programme Media Studies and 17 theses of the master's programme Media Studies. Information on the theses is available from Academion upon request.

The panel also studied other materials, which included:

- Faculty introduction self-evaluation
- Appendices:
 - Strategic Plan RUG 2021-2026
 - Strategic Plan Faculteit der Letteren 2021-2026
 - Assessment policy RUG 2021-2026
 - Rules and regulations faculty Board of Examiners
 - Annuals reports Board of Examiners
 - Policy plan studying with a disability
 - UG policy on AI in teaching
- Self-evaluation B Media Studies
- Appendices:
 - Programme learning outcomes of the BA
 - Onderwijs- en Examenreglementen (OER) / Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER)
 - Toetsplan / Assessment Plan
 - Teaching team
 - Quantitative Data
 - Assessment form BA Thesis Media and Culture
 - Overzicht scripties BA / thesis overview BA
 - SWOT Analysis
 - The Global Pandemic: A Reflection
 - Onderwijsjaar kaarten 2023 en 2024
 - Annual reports Programme Committee 2022-2023 and 2023-2024
 - Thesis syllabus 2024
 - Materials from a selection of courses
- Self-evaluation M Media Studies
- Appendices:
 - Onderwijs- en Examenreglementen (OER) MA / Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER) MA
 - Toetsplan / Assessment Plan
 - Extended Overview DDL, SMS, MCI
 - Overzicht stages / Overview internships
 - NSE Results 2024
 - NSE 2024 Observations
 - MA Thesis Topics Overview
 - Alumni Data DDL/ MCI / SMS / JJ
 - Student Inflow per track 2018-2025
 - Onderwijsjaar kaarten 2023 en 2024
 - Thesis Syllabus Media Studies 2024-2025

- Annual reports Programme Committee 2022-2023 and 2023-2024
- Materials from a selection of courses
- Internship reports and assessments of a selection of 10 students (2 per track)